

**THE IMPLICATIONS  
OF THE ABOLITION OF INFLUX  
CONTROL LEGISLATION IN THE  
WESTERN CAPE**

**Ceridwen Oliver-Evans**

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Department of Social Anthropology  
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**ABSTRACT**

Influx control legislation was formally abolished in South Africa in 1986. This thesis investigates the social processes set in motion with its abolition in the spheres of employment and urbanisation and argues that the way in which influx control has been defined is central to any analysis concerned with its abolition. In this regard, influx control has been viewed in two senses: a narrow one in which it has been equated with formal influx control legislation, 'the pass laws'; and, secondly and more broadly, through definitions which embrace all methods of control over African urbanisation and associated labour mobility. This thesis argues that, in the macro domain, while influx control in its narrow sense has been abolished, it has been replaced with far more complex and subtle forms of control. These ostensibly racially neutral measures, an 'orderly urbanisation' policy and a wide variety of laws existing on South African statute books continue to circumscribe African rights.

The research focuses on a specific region, the Western Cape, an area where influx control has been more harshly implemented than elsewhere through the implementation of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy. This thesis investigates on a micro-level, via the medium of a company compound, how people at both an individual and institutional level have interpreted the legislative changes and acted upon them. The particular range of actors include government officials, employers and employer organisations, union representatives, and migrant workers and their families living in the company

compound. The evidence I present was obtained primarily through interviews and ethnographic field-research conducted in 1988.

A particular concern of the thesis has been to examine the disjunction between policy and practice as pursued by government officials and the effects and implications arising from this among the actors mentioned above. The main themes which have emerged from this research are those of confusion and a lack of knowledge among many of the informants. It was found that high-ranking government officials lack consensus on vital issues of citizenship and employment which affect the lives of thousands of Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens. Employers, confused by the confusion in government departments, and confronted by a new situation and new sets of rules have either ignored these or succumbed to government policy. Equally, unions have been slow to respond or systematically adopt a policy on the 1986 legislative changes. Finally, it was found that migrant workers and their families are availing themselves of opportunities presented by the abolition of influx control legislation in terms of freedom of movement, although as I argue, this takes the form of a complex range of fluid and dynamic movement patterns between the compound, the rural areas and urban townships. This complexity, as the thesis demonstrates, is reflected both in the attitudes and in the practical daily living arrangements of the workers as they respond to and interpret the macro-level forces which affect them.

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## PREFACE

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Finally, I would like to thank my husband, David Gilmour, who believed in my abilities and who offered continual encouragement throughout.

## Notes on names

In order to protect the identity of informants the use of pseudonyms has been adopted where names appear in the case studies.

## Notes on terminology

### *African, Coloured and White*

Capital letters have been used when referring to Africans, Coloureds and Whites to show that these are official designations rather than descriptive terms. My use of these terms does not imply support for any system which classifies people in racial or other ways for purposes of political and economic discrimination.

### *'Homelands'*

I have used inverted commas when referring to the 'homelands' because I do not accept that the 'homelands' necessarily constitute home for the people who are compelled to live in them. The choice of the term 'homeland' as opposed to 'national state' or 'bantustan' is due to this term being used almost exclusively by the people with whom I spoke. I have used inverted commas when referring to 'homeland' 'independence' because I do not recognise the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei as independent states.

*'White' South Africa*

I have used this term to denote the 87% of South Africa's land which is not scheduled for African occupation in terms of the 1913 Natives Land Act and the 1936 Natives Trust and Land Act. My use of this term does not imply that Africans should not have full rights of citizenship and residence in these areas.

**Abbreviations**

CAWU	Construction and Allied Workers Union
CCC	Cape Town Chamber of Commerce
CCI	Cape Chamber of Industries
CLPP	Coloured Labour Preference Policy
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CP	Conservative Party
CPA	Cape Provincial Administration
CPA (CS)	Cape Provincial Administration, Office of Community Services
CTCC	Cape Town City Council
DB	Development Board
FAWU	Food and Allied Workers Union
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ID	Identity Document
NAD	Department of Native Affairs
NHC	National Housing Commission
PWV	Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vaal Region
SA ID	South African Identity Document
SANTA	South African National Tuberculosis Association
SATS	South African Transport Service
TB	Tuberculosis
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei
ULPP	Urban Labour Preference Policy
WCHDA	Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH METHODS

#### Introduction

Influx control has been regarded as one of the central pillars of apartheid, and for decades it has been used to control African labour and urbanisation. In 1986 certain key legislation pertaining to influx control was abolished, and, virtually overnight, pass laws, the arrests associated with these, and the various institutions which upheld influx control disappeared.

While this deregulation was much heralded as a significant reform, in this thesis I argue that the way in which influx control is defined has important implications in any analysis concerned with its abolition. In this regard, a review of the literature reveals that influx control has been viewed in two senses: a narrow one in which influx control has been equated with the formal influx control legislation, 'the pass laws'; and, secondly and more broadly, through definitions which embrace all methods of control over African urbanisation and associated labour mobility. Thus the issue of whether or not influx control has been abolished depends upon which definition is embraced. Those who ascribe to the narrow definition of influx control would be justified in claiming that it had been fully abolished in 1986, while those who define influx control more broadly quickly point to the wide-ranging

controls which remain firmly in place. This is an area to be investigated in the thesis.

Questions arising from this are, firstly, what effect has the abolition of influx control in the narrow sense had on the broader concept of controlled urbanisation? More concretely, given the end of pass law arrests, are there mechanisms which could achieve the same aims indirectly, and are these being implemented? Secondly, in the context of broader influx control measures, what are the major issues relating to labour mobility?

While the questions raised above are important in terms of promoting a general understanding of macro processes, the primary focus of this thesis is an examination of the ways in which policy changes at the macro-level impinge upon the micro-level. In this regard I am particularly interested in the social processes set in motion with the abolition of influx control legislation and how people at an individual and institutional level have interpreted these changes and acted upon them. This thesis focusses on particular categories of actors: namely policy-implementers or middle range government officials, employers and employer organisations, union representatives, workers and their families. The choice of these actors as the focus of research is based upon a number of important considerations which will be elucidated below.

A review of the literature has revealed that while much has been written about the impact of influx control upon the lives of ordinary working people, relatively little has been

written from the perspective of policy-implementers and employers. For example, authors who have written most usefully in this regard nevertheless tend to leave officials out of their research design (Bernstein, 1985:94) or focus exclusively on them (Greenberg, 1987). Given the distinction between policy - as embodied in law - and practice - how the law is interpreted and enforced or acted upon - the relationship between policy and practice is a crucial one, particularly in light of past evidence of officials reinterpreting or even frustrating aspects of policy (Hindson and Lacey, 1983:110; West, 1982:468). A crucial question then is how are officials interpreting and implementing the new policy? What are their roles and attitudes? Similarly, how have employers and their organisations as well as workers and union representatives both interpreted and responded to the changes? How has this change impacted at the work place and in African residential areas?

The research focus and types of questions posed naturally influence one's methodology and research design. In essence, as I argue below, these types of questions can best be answered through micro-level research within a specific geographical area which will promote an understanding of what the abolition means in practical terms 'on the ground'.

### Discussion of Research Methods

The methodology employed to do this study is somewhat eclectic and drawn from a range of anthropological methods. The work of urban anthropologists, in particular Gutkind (1974) and Mitchell (1969) have been a great influence in broadly shaping the research design while Gluckman's (1958) use of "social situations" in the context of a micro-study has also significantly influenced the focus of research.

In dealing with the conceptual and methodological issues of studying African towns Gutkind (1974) advocated the use of what he termed a complementary approach which operates at two basic levels. This consists, firstly, of a macro analysis of the urban system (town) which serves as a baseline to be followed by a micro analysis of its sub-systems (subdivisions). In this context macro-level research should encompass a comprehensive study of the historical evolution of the town, the major political and economic determinants which shaped the structure and the institutions as a whole and how these changed over time, and finally the towns wider regional and national linkages (1974:63). Gutkind argued that research at the macro-level served to establish the major parameters from which micro studies spring.

This complementary approach, although developed by Gutkind as a means of revealing the urban totality, has much wider applicability. It is in fact well suited to a study which seeks to examine the changing nature of legislative policies.

In this context, the next three chapters can be seen as the "baseline" which is essential in informing the ethnographic research which follows. In following Gutkind's theme this ethnographic research is in itself comprised of two parts: an investigation of organisations and agencies representing various government officials, employers and trade unions, and an intensive study of a company compound. Here again it is possible to view the ethnographic data in terms of moving from an essentially macro-level towards a smaller micro study.

As Gutkind (1974:64) has pointed out the use of the micro study in urban anthropology is based on the assumption that entry into the urban system at almost any point will, through the process of documentation and analysis, reveal the most significant features of the macro system.

Gluckman's (1958) classic, *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand*, clearly demonstrates how micro analysis, focussing on a specific event or events, can successfully reach the macro-level. Other disciplines have also made use of this approach. In a recent work, historian Shula Marks (1986) has used this approach in her analysis of twentieth-century Natal and acknowledges that in her use of "specific bounded happenings" she was "subconsciously" influenced by Gluckman's work. In this context the issue of an appropriate "unit of study", Marks concludes, is basically a non-issue for "[m]ore important than the starting point is the way in which this point 'opens to infinity', the way the local and the particular are located within a wider context, and in

turn enable us to refine our understanding of that wider context" (1986:10).

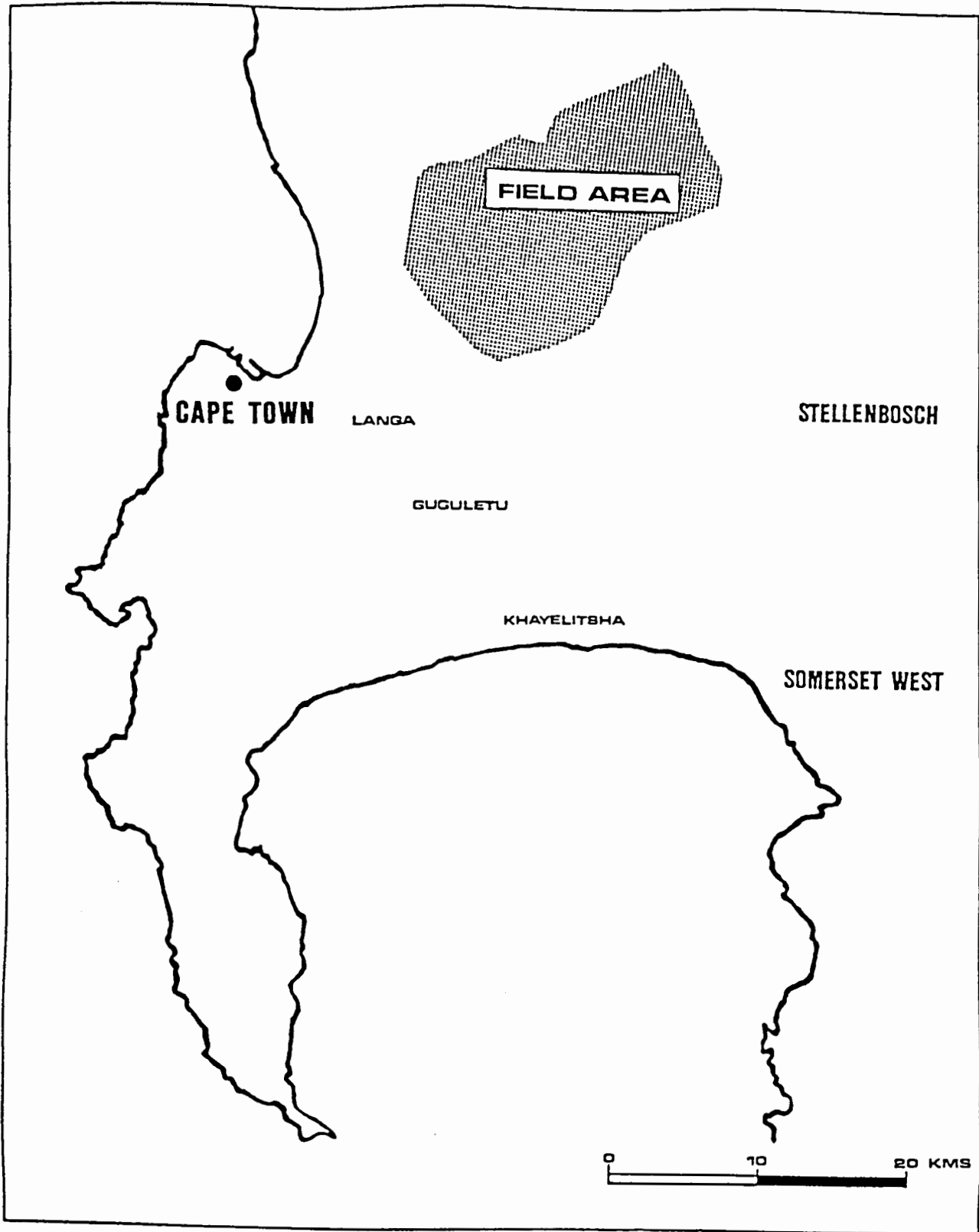
At the micro-level, the company compound<sup>1</sup> provides an ideal entry point for it is one of the very institutions perpetuated by influx control. How have macro policy changes affected this institution? By focussing on the company compound and tracing the external determinants which affect it, wider linkages within society will be revealed. The value of the micro study then arises from its ability to illuminate various processes which may remain hidden or obscured at the more general level of investigation. In addition, research findings at the micro-level should serve to inform the more general interview data as well as the larger macro analysis.

I now turn to a discussion of the methods used in conducting this research. The field area is indicated in Map 1 overleaf.

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<sup>1</sup> Some authors do not make a distinction between employer built and municipal accommodation and term both 'hostels'. I am adopting Southall's (1986:177) definition in which he draws a distinction between a compound (employer built accommodation) and a hostel (municipal built accommodation).

Map 1: The Western Cape Field Area



## Research Methods

The choice of research area, Greater Cape Town within the Western Cape, was based on the fact that, as I will show, influx control has been more vigorously pursued in the Western Cape than elsewhere in South Africa due primarily to the Coloured Labour Preference Policy. On these grounds it was felt that the abolition of influx control legislation would have the greatest impact in this region.

When I talk about the impact of legislative changes, I am talking about investigating what that means for a specific range of people, the key actors on which the research focuses: migrant workers and their families, employers, government agencies and trade unions.

Exactly how to research such disparate groupings presented some problems and, as Ellen (1984:83) has observed, the determination of a research style is largely influenced by the subject being studied. One of the objectives of the study was to find out from a range of informants what impact the abolition has had and what their understandings, perceptions and interpretations were of these changes. The method used in this instance took the form of open-ended interviews which were conducted with government agencies, employers and trade unions.

This part of the thesis research design stems from a project which was jointly undertaken with Professor M.E. West and sponsored by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). Interviews were conducted jointly with government officials,

employers and trade unions and these were recorded and written up by me. Likewise the data was written up as a first draft by me and the research findings were presented to the HSRC in the form of a report which was submitted jointly, entitled *Policy and Practice in Labour Mobility in Selected Areas* (1990).

Although the above approach was valid in terms of some of the research questions which informed the thesis, it needed to be balanced with a more intensive study, which in contrast, sought to examine what was actually happening on the ground. The second approach is my own independent research and takes the form of a micro-study, in this case, of a company compound. Here the methods adopted included a social survey, interview schedules, and life-histories, as well as detailed observations of daily life.

### **The First Approach**

Interviews were first sought with a range of government officials in order to gain an official view on policy prior to interviewing employers and unions. Interviews were solicited and obtained from officials in the Cape Provincial Administration (Office of Community Services), the Cape Town City Council, the Department of Manpower and the Department of Home Affairs.

Following this, selected employer representatives were identified and interviewed, namely the Cape Chamber of Industries and the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce. The Cape

Chamber of Industries provided a directory of members, as well as advice on which industries employed African labour in particular. A total of eight companies were selected for interviewing. On the basis of the data available these companies were felt to comprise a representative spectrum. The companies were involved in construction and various associated industries, manufacturing and agriculture. They included large and small firms, with African workforces ranging from 50 to 42 000 people.

Interviews were also conducted with union officials representing the major areas of African employment in the Western Cape: COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), FAWU (Food & Allied Workers Union), CAWU (Construction & Allied Workers Union), and the WCHDA (Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association).

The interviews were conducted over a four month period from December 1987 through to March 1988 and the procedure adopted in all the interviews was similar. Interviews were solicited telephonically and when possible a referral was first sought prior to making the call. The project was introduced and identified as originating from the University of Cape Town Department of Social Anthropology with funding from the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and an appointment was arranged with an identified individual from each organisation. At the beginning of each interview the respondent's anonymity was guaranteed. The interviews all followed an open-ended format although the same basic topics were covered in each interview.

## The Second Approach

The choice of where to conduct the intensive study was determined by the need to find a company which housed its own African workforce. The problem of gaining access to such a company was solved by the Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association (WCHDA) who wanted a survey undertaken of a particular company's hostel accommodation (compound) in the Greater Cape Town area. The WCHDA negotiated with the employer as well as with the representative trade union. Following this, permission to undertake the survey was granted. Research was carried out from September through to November 1988.

The fact that the compound study represents a convergence of interests between the researcher and the WCHDA meant that specific information had to be collected to satisfy their requests for, inter alia, basic demographic information, a description and documentation of living conditions, and workers' attitudes towards upgrading of accommodation.

The initial fieldwork strategy was to complete a 100% sample of two dormitory blocks in the compound. This decision was based on the longer term interests of the WCHDA who wanted a 100% survey of the compound, in which case the two blocks would represent a pilot survey which could be continued by them at a later stage. However, in reality this approach to sampling was considered problematic in terms of adequate representation, and after an initial few days at the compound in which fifteen interviews in two dormitory blocks

were conducted, a reformulation of both sampling strategies and an upgrading of interview schedules was found necessary.

Rather than focussing on the dormitory block as the unit of investigation, the bed-holder was chosen as the unit of study. This sampling technique is based on recent work done by Ramphele and Segar (1987) in this field. It is a useful and sensitive approach to studying hostel and compound accommodation which is both overcrowded and often fluid in nature. In this context, the bed-holder is theoretically an African male who is housed in single sex accommodation. However, with the critical housing shortage in urban African townships the bed space is often shared by dependants. Thus, by focussing on the bed or bed-holder, a more accurate picture of networks, relationships and demographics emerges.

In this light, a 50% sample (n=106) of the total number of bed-holders (N=212) at the compound was considered sufficiently representative in terms of statistical sampling methods, as well as satisfying the WCHDA. The actual sample, however, was slightly less than this (47% or n=100) as residents of one hostel block declined to be interviewed or take part in the survey.

## The Interview Schedule

The primary fieldwork technique used was a structured interview schedule (see appendix). The schedule<sup>2</sup> is divided into three main sections dealing with firstly, basic demographic data, secondly, details of rural resources and, thirdly, knowledge and experience of legislative changes. In cases where a bed-holder had other adults living with him, an additional interview schedule, comprising the third section, was filled out for each adult dependant.

A copy of the interview schedule was sent to the WCHDA executive for comments and/or revisions before fieldwork began. After an initial two-block survey was completed some of the questions were refined or enlarged upon to provide more comprehensive and detailed information. This was primarily in the area of collecting more detailed information concerning the workers' place of origin and their rural resource base.

## Interviews

During the course of fieldwork open-ended interviews were also conducted with the company's Managing Director, labour officer and the union shop steward.

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the demographic questions were adopted from Ramphele and Segar's (1987) interview schedule which was formulated for a WCHDA survey. The format was retained in order to enlarge their data base and facilitate processing.

### **Life-histories**

Important to the research as a whole is the emphasis on qualitative information. Life-histories and case-studies therefore make up an important component of the study. These were gathered after the structured survey which captured the quantitative data. One of the added benefits in doing this last was the fact that meeting and speaking to the bed-holders during the course of the survey gave one a good idea of who would make good informants. Additionally it was felt that people would be more open to talking about their private lives and personal experiences with someone who was not a complete stranger.

### **Research Assistant**

As Xhosa is the main language spoken by bed-holders and dependants living in the compound, an interpreter fluent in Xhosa was vital to the research. In this regard a research assistant previously employed in a similar type of project (Ramphele and Segar, 1987) was hired. For various reasons however, I was ultimately obliged to use three different assistants. This caused obvious delays as each person had to be trained anew.

### Problems: Research Methods

The methods utilised in the first approach worked well. Only one employer (in the dairy industry) refused to be interviewed due to work pressures. Repeated attempts to gain an appointment at a later date failed and finally a similar firm in the dairy industry was selected as a replacement.

One union also refused to be interviewed. The request was put before their executive committee who decided against taking part in the study on the grounds that it was funded by the HSRC, which in their view "helped to support and perpetuate the state". This incidence highlights the need for researchers to reveal the nature of their research projects and funding sources prior to commencing research. In a politically charged situation this is especially important as failure to disclose such information could endanger the research process or project entirely.

The methods used in the second approach were best suited to investigating the company compound. While participant observation, the hallmark of anthropology, was not possible in this instance, nevertheless the amount of time spent on a daily basis at the compound as well as information gathered from interviews and life-histories provided a good insight into the lives of the workers and their families and their relationship with the company.

Gaining access to the company turned out to be a complex and time-consuming event. The negotiations between the union and the WCHDA over rights of access lasted for a period of two

months. While teaming up with the WCHDA was advantageous in terms of access to the company it was also disadvantageous in that I was seen to be working for the WCHDA rather than as a "neutral" researcher. This created problems in a number of areas.

Firstly, both the union and the employer were suspicious about the survey. This was clearly evident in that the company's labour officer and the union shop steward were both present for the first few days of fieldwork, listening to and observing the proceedings. When questioned about this the labour officer replied that he had been sent "to keep an eye on things" by the managing director. The presence of these two men had a marked effect on the workers who were being interviewed. As one informant stated a few months later "I just said those things because they were listening I didn't really mean it". A successful way around this problem was to arrive at the compound at different times during the following week. Since both men could not wait about the compound indefinitely their shadowing soon stopped. I surmise also that the company was not prepared to have two employees spending so much time off the job and had satisfied its curiosity concerning the survey. The interviews which had been conducted during this time were relegated to pilot sample status.

Further problems concerning combining research interests with the WCHDA survey surfaced when workers in one particular hostel block refused to take part in the survey. The workers, the majority of whom were older men, were suspicious about the survey because of questions relating to

their rural resources, which they felt had nothing to do with the WCHDA. Despite a lengthy explanation of my research interests they refused to have anything to do with the survey.

Although the WCHDA claimed that the workers were keen to have the survey done and the majority took part quite willingly, some felt threatened by the survey: either specific aspects of it as mentioned above, or more generally. As one informant stated: "I never came to you to complain about how I'm living - you have come here and see how I live. If you take down information about me I might lose my job - I'm not complaining". On the whole, however, individuals were keen to participate and membership of the WCHDA grew dramatically after the first day of fieldwork when something was seen to be happening, and people, both workers and dependants, queued up to pay their membership fees.

The incidents cited above raise important issues concerning the nature of participatory research which will be discussed in the final chapter.

### Chapter Outline

Chapters Two, Three and Four are concerned with detailing the historical background to influx control; understanding theoretical linkages of this legislation to broader state policy, and thirdly, with examining in detail the actual

legislative changes in relation to the wider state policies of 'orderly urbanisation'.

From this base of the macro-level background, Chapters Five, Six and Seven begin to successively focus on more and more detailed micro-level phenomena in an attempt to understand the impact of the legislative changes considered above.

Thus, Chapter Five investigates the impact of the legislative changes and how government agencies, employers and trade unions have interpreted these in the areas of employment and urbanisation. It examines the processes set in motion by change in terms of the disjunctures between policy and practice.

Chapter Six begins the method of disaggregating these wider responses by focussing at a micro-level on the company compound, and in particular on the relationship between company management and workers.

Chapter Seven tries to move beyond the homogeneous category of worker by examining the inter-relationships between the men living at the compound and focuses on the importance of origin and home boy networks at the compound. A key element in understanding workers' attitudes resides also in the complex of relationships with the dependants living at the compound, and this chapter analyses how these relationships affect the responses of all parties to the changes in legislation. Finally, this chapter examines the impact of overcrowding at the compound and how, in such circumstances, the social organisation of space is constructed.

The concluding chapter, Chapter Eight, attempts to draw these micro-level compound experiences back into the domain of the larger macro forces discussed previously. These external determinants are analysed in terms of how they have shaped experiences at both individual and institutional levels, and in this way the multiple discourses of the actors are brought together.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE LEGISLATION

#### Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief review of the ways in which influx control has been defined in the literature and attempts to show the considerable variation in legal and academic definitions concerning the components which are said to make up influx control. These definitions are useful inasmuch as they expose different facets of control: direct or specific influx control measures embodied in legislation, and more indirect or general controls over such things as housing and services. These in turn have a direct bearing on the interpretation of the Abolition of Influx Control Act. The main focus of this section, however, deals with an examination of direct influx control measures in terms of an historical background, details of key legislation as well as the actual mechanisms of control and how they operate. In other words, the 'nuts and bolts' of specific influx control legislation recently abolished since 1986.

#### Influx Control: A Question of Definition

At the simplest level influx control refers to specific measures aimed at limiting the growth of a permanent, settled urban population. In the South African context, the government has almost exclusively used influx control as a method of restricting the entry of Africans into towns and

cities - the urban and industrial areas of South Africa. In this regard influx control has served the dual purpose of controlling urbanisation and channelling African labour into the economy thus further entrenching the migrant labour system. Legislation which regulates the movement of Africans from the rural peripheries to the urban areas has a long history. Indeed, the large body of literature on the subject bears testimony to the harsh realities and all-encompassing controls that successive governments have utilised for over a century in order to prevent or severely limit African urbanisation.

Influx control has generally been defined in two ways: in a narrow and restricted sense, and in a broad and more general sense. These definitions of influx control are important in the sense that they highlight two aspects of the policy of control. The first aspect relates to influx control measures embodied in specific legislation: the 'high-profile' legislation which is commonly referred to in the literature as 'influx control regulations'. Inclusive in this definition would be for example Section 10 (1) of the Urban Areas Act; the Black Labour Act and its Regulations and pass law controls relating to curfews and documentation such as reference books. The second type of definition includes more general and indirect measures of control such as, for example, trespass prosecutions, endorsement out of urban areas on the grounds of vagrancy, idleness or undesirability, restrictions on access to housing and services, deproclamation of African townships, as well as deportation of citizens of 'independent homelands'. As a

consequence definitions of 'influx control' have varied in terms of both legal and academic interpretations.

In respect of more specific interpretations in the legal domain, Corder (1987) refers to a 'system of direct influx control' comprised of Sect 10 (1) of the Urban Areas Act; the Black Labour Act and its Regulations and the pass laws. By contrast, Schoombee and Davis state that "... influx control has always presented itself as a complex web of intricate legislative measures" (1986:1) and include in addition to the above, housing regulations and the Status Acts which subject Africans deemed to be citizens of 'independent homelands' to the provisions of the Aliens Act (Act 1 of 1937).

Equally, many academic definitions seem to follow one or other of these interpretations. For example, West adopts a similar position to Corder in emphasising two aspects of control commonly referred to as 'influx control regulations': legislation which has attempted to restrict and control the flow of workers to urban and industrial centres, thereby severely limiting the opportunities for permanent urban residence, and legislation as a means of controlling the distribution of African labour (1982:463 .ftn.2). By contrast, Zille (1984) uses the phrase 'influx control' to refer to all-encompassing attempts by the state to restrict the urbanisation of Africans: pass laws, housing permits, deportation, prevention of illegal squatting, and workplace control.

From this brief review it becomes apparent that the way in which influx control is defined has important implications in any analysis concerned with its abolition. The two approaches outlined above, of what influx control is and what it encompasses, are related to various authors' interpretations of particular aspects of the states' legislative and administrative machinery. They also reflect an historical reluctance on the part of the state to provide official classification of influx control laws. As Savage states "there is no official classification of which laws are 'pass laws' and differences exist between various efforts to classify those laws relating to passes and influx control" (1984:5).

Differences in the way one chooses to define influx control become vitally important when interpreting changes in legislation. Thus the legal removal of key legislation found in the Abolition of Influx Control Act, 68 of 1986, and the Identification Act, 72 of 1986, does away with high-profile legislation commonly known as influx control regulations. In this sense many people who have defined influx control along narrow lines in the past would be justified in claiming that it had been fully abolished, while those who define influx control more broadly quickly point to the wide-ranging controls which remain firmly in place. In other words one cannot assume that simply because certain legislation has been removed, access to urban areas is not controlled.

A thorough understanding of influx control legislation involves focussing on three primary areas: an historical dimension of urban policies; a review of key legislation

which controls and restricts the entry of Africans into prescribed (urban) areas; and the ways in which the legislation is operationalised - the actual mechanisms of control or enforcement.

An historical perspective of the legislation, its creation as well as changes over time, is useful in terms of allowing us to gain insight into processes of continuity and change underlying government policy in the twentieth century.

Policy, once created and embodied in legislation, is by no means static. Thus through time a complex and intricate web of amendments usually develop around core legislation. In addition the creation of new legislation serves to bolster and interlock with existing legislation resulting in a colossal edifice of control. This process has been interpreted in different ways. One interpretation has been to view the evolution of influx control as being directly linked to changing political and economic circumstances, or put in another way, to the changing needs and role of the state (Hindson, 1987b; Savage, 1984).

A second interpretation (Stadler 1987) suggests, by contrast, that throughout most of the twentieth century government policy has consisted of two strands: an exclusive approach which relies on direct influx control measures and an inclusive approach which relies on indirect controls over, for example housing and services. This view further argues that one approach has usually had ascendancy over the other at varying times in history, although it stresses the continuity of policy over time. It further maintains that present 'reforms' such as the Abolition of Influx Control

Act, have their roots in earlier, less overt government strategies.

### Historical Dimension: Urban Policies

Historically, African urbanisation has always been a central issue in government policies in South Africa. This is reflected in almost a century of legislation which has sought to circumscribe the terms of African urbanisation. Although various pieces of legislation at the turn of the century, as well as in the first decades of the twentieth century, impinged on the rights of Africans living in cities (Saunders, 1979a) it was not until the 1920's that a decisive and uniform policy was created which dealt with the issue of African urbanisation. Two reports which formed the basis of this policy were the Stallard Commission report published in 1922 and the Godley Commission report of 1923, set up to look into local government and the pass laws respectively (Stadler, 1987:88). The Stallard policy recommended that Africans were to be regarded as impermanent or temporary sojourners in the 'white' towns, residing there only as long as they were able to "minister to the needs of the white man" (Stadler, 1987:88). This doctrine was underpinned by the belief that Africans belonged in the rural areas and raises what Stadler terms the central contradiction inherent in all subsequent policies and legislation stemming from the Stallard doctrine, namely that:

it promoted and encouraged proletarianisation of the labour force, and thus undermined the social and economic system of the reserves which might sustain or subsidise it on a temporary basis in towns. ... although Stallardism did not prevent the emergence of a permanently settled African work-force in the urban areas, it had a profound effect on the character of their communities (Stadler, 1987:89).

In terms of urban administration Africans were regarded as:

mere objects of administration, subject to arbitrary and discretionary powers of the state. Stallardism was in essence a system of control over entry into the urban areas. It provided no explicit guidelines for the government of urban communities. In theory it provided for a form of managerial control over the lives of urban Africans. In practice it created the conditions for arbitrary and authoritarian controls above and near-anarchy below (Stadler, 1987:89).

Stadler provides an illuminating analysis of the impact and effects of the Stallard and Godley reports (1987:88-91). He states that the Stallard doctrine, insofar as it became the guiding principle of state policy over urbanisation, had the effect of inhibiting social and economic stratification in the urban areas by treating the African labour force as homogeneous. Simultaneously it effectively reinforced the contract migrant labour system and also encouraged competition between urban workers and migrants.

In contrast, the more liberal Godley Report emphasised the economic aspect of proposed controls over urban Africans. Thus a central thrust of the proposals was that African labour should be entitled to enter the towns and cities freely albeit subject to certain requirements of registration. In effect it proposed a pass system for urban Africans (Hindson 1987b:40). However, the report recommended that certain Africans (voters, property-holders and certain classes of skilled or white-collar workers such as artisans

and clerks) be exempt from the obligation to carry passes. In this sense, unlike Stallard, the Godley report encouraged social stratification of black urban areas.

Stadler suggests that both these reports represent an alternative yet complementary system of management and control which essentially "became the basis for the 'native policies' of rival political parties and for political controversies over the 'native question' in white politics" (1987:90). More specifically, they formed the basis of the Native (Urban) Areas Act of 1923, which established the legislative framework that government policy has utilised and developed over the last half-century. The Act set out a "... national structure for urban African administration directing municipalities to provide housing and services for African populations, and giving them the power to restrict entry in towns and expel those Africans 'habitually unemployed ... idle, dissolute or disorderly'" (Savage, 1984:26). The Urban Areas Act was later bolstered by the Native Administration Act of 1927 which served to consolidate existing controls over the movement of Africans in the country (Stadler, 1987:88).

As a consequence of shifting administrative control from central government to local authorities, the immediate impact of the Urban Areas Act was uneven and felt in varying degrees throughout the country. Savage notes that by 1937 as few as 11 towns had implemented these powers to limit and control African immigration (1984:26). Due to these variations the Urban Areas Act has had numerous amendments since its inception. In 1930 it was amended to give local

authorities increased powers to effect removals in terms of public health, and later, the 1937 amendment attempted to turn back the tide of African migration to the cities by strengthening influx controls on a number of levels<sup>1</sup>. Ironically, however, it was also the first piece of legislation which acknowledged the existence of permanent urban dwellers, thus combining features of both Godley and Stallard (Stadler, 1987:90-1).

The reality of African urbanisation was given further expression in the appointment of the Fagan Commission which was specifically "... charged with investigating ways of creating an institutional framework within which a permanently settled urban African population could be accommodated" (Stadler, 1987:91). The Commission which reported in 1948 argued that urbanisation was an 'economic phenomenon' which could be guided and regulated but not prevented or reversed. This standpoint, as well as numerous recommendations stemming from the Commission<sup>2</sup> were rejected by the Nationalist Party which came to power in the same year, although many of these recommendations found legislative expression almost forty years later in the Abolition of Influx Control and Identification Acts of 1986. Stadler draws our attention to the two-sided nature of urban

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1 Hindson (1987b:45) states that workseekers leaving the rural areas were refused entry into towns if a surplus of labour existed, labour tenants had to prove they were free before a contract was registered and women were required to obtain certificates in their home districts before they could enter or reside in an urban area. Employers were faced with stricter penalties for failure to repatriate workers to the rural areas, and finally, the Minister of Native Affairs could force local authorities to implement controls.

2 The Commission argued, among other things, that Africans had to be accepted as permanent urban dwellers, that the labour force should be stabilised and that both government and employers should contribute financially to urban housing. It also argued that the pass laws which discriminated on the grounds of race be replaced with a uniform identity document for all the inhabitants of the country, which, they in principle, might be required to produce on demand (Stadler, 1987:93).

policies, which, while recognising and accommodating certain realities of African urbanisation, nevertheless imposed increasingly stringent controls in other spheres. Thus, even the Fagan Commission, for example, which essentially followed the more liberal Godley line, recommended a stricter form of labour control which laid the foundation for a national system of labour allocation (Stadler, 1987:92).

This dual pattern of relaxing certain controls while reinforcing others, Stadler argues, has been a central feature of all government policies down to the present. While it is undeniable that the Nationalist government heralded a new era in which controls on African urbanisation were systematically and relentlessly pursued, previous governments, as discussed above, had already made substantial strides in this direction. One of the last major pieces of legislation the United Party enacted was the Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (25 of 1945), which, as its title suggests, consolidated existing legislation, effectively creating a more cohesive framework of control. This was further refined by the Nationalist government and given subsequent expression in legislation from the 1950's onwards. As will be discussed in the following section, however, the Urban Areas Act remained the most formidable weapon in the government's arsenal.

## Review of Key Legislation

The Blacks (Urban Areas ) Consolidation Act (No. 25 of 1945) as amended has been viewed as the single most important piece of legislation which restricted African urbanisation (West, 1982; Schoombee and Davis, 1986). As West points out, a key amendment, the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952, extended a uniform policy of influx control throughout South Africa. Influx control was extended to all urban areas, for the first time women were included in its provisions, and the state was empowered to remove people deemed undesirable from urban areas. Additionally, the Act reduced the length of time in which Africans could visit a prescribed (urban) area to a maximum of 72 hours before seeking official permission to be there. The actual rights of urban residence, however, were regulated by a key section in the main act, the infamous and oft-quoted Section 10:

.10(1) No Black shall remain more than 72 hours in a prescribed area unless he produces proof in the manner prescribed that -

(a) he has, since birth, resided continuously in such area; or

(b) he has worked continuously in such area for one employer for a period of not less than ten years or has lawfully resided continuously in such area for a period of not less than 15 years, and has thereafter continued to reside in such area and is not employed outside such area and has not during either period or thereafter been sentenced to a fine exceeding R500 or to imprisonment for a period exceeding six months; or

(c) such Black is the wife, the unmarried daughter, or the son under the age of 18 years, of any Black mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) of this subsection and, after lawful entry into such prescribed area, ordinarily resides with that Black in any such area; or

(d) in the case of any other Black, permission so to remain has been granted by an officer appointed to

manage a labour bureau ... due regard being had to the availability of accommodation in a Black residential area (West, 1982:465-466).

As can be seen, the Act sought to exclude all but a small minority of Africans from permanent residence in the urban areas. It should be emphasised that Section 10 'rights' is a misnomer as historically apartheid policy regarded all Africans as 'temporary sojourners' in 'white' South Africa. Thus while no Africans had actual rights to permanent urban residence, section 10 introduced an administrative distinction between those claiming permanent or temporary exemption (Jankowitz, 1987).

In terms of the above legislation, the onus of proving qualification fell upon the individual. The proof required took the form of valid documentation either in the form of a reference book, or later, of a passport where citizens of the four 'independent homelands'<sup>3</sup> are concerned. Reference books, or the 'dompas', have been a central feature of control in the lives of Africans for well over a century (see Savage, 1984; Chalkason and Duncan, 1984; Hindson, 1987b). With the advent of the Nationalist government, however, the pass system was more uniformly imposed and administered through the creation of the Bantu (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act (67 of 1952). In terms of this Act every African over the age of sixteen was required to possess a reference book. In order to obtain this the applicant had to provide his or her fingerprints which then went on record at the central reference bureau.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Homeland' is the official term used by the South African government. The four 'homelands' which gained 'independence' from South Africa are: Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), Venda (1979) and Ciskei (1981).

As Chaskalson and Duncan (1984:19) state, this provided a point of reference over the person concerned for the rest of their life. Having a reference book was essential in terms of the following: contracting employment, the right to be in a prescribed area, urban accommodation, and the right to take up employment. This information was recorded in the reference book which, in terms of the Act, had to be produced on request of an authorized officer at any time. The following section examines how the legislation was enforced.

#### Mechanisms of Control

Savage has calculated that since the beginning of the twentieth century "... over 17,250,000 Africans have been arrested or prosecuted under a battery of pass laws and influx control regulations in South Africa" (1984:1). These figures indicate the scale in which freedom of movement of the African population has been controlled and access to both rural and urban labour markets circumscribed. As Savage states "the pass laws have occupied the central position in the process of policing the African population and directing them into places dictated by whites. In short they are a key part of the legal-administrative apparatus aimed at maintaining white domination" (1984:1).

The actual apparatus which the government had at its disposal for policing influx control consisted of Inspectors employed by the Administration Boards as well as the South African Police. This combined force had wide-reaching powers

in carrying out their duties in apprehending offenders. Although dawn pass-raids in townships and squatter settlements have been one of the most high-profile methods used, an individual could be apprehended at any time or place on the grounds of lack of, or invalid, documentation. As West (1982:468) points out, officials interpreted the legislation to mean that passes had to be produced on demand and consequently failed to allow time to fetch documents. One of the consequences of this is the fact that many legal residents were repeatedly harrassed or caught up in pass-raids. Failure to produce a reference book or invalid documentation resulted in a range of penalties from arrests, fines, and imprisonment through to deportations.

The immense bureaucratic and legal institutions created to process and prosecute influx control offenders have been well documented elsewhere. West illustrates how people arrested for pass offenses were speedily processed through both Aid Centres and Commissioner's Courts. A typical case lasting three minutes may have resulted in a sentence of two months (1982:470; see also Bekker and Humphries, 1984:25-28). As West points out, the onus in terms of the Urban Areas Act, rested on the individual to prove innocence whereas the norm under South African criminal law is for the state to prove guilt. In addition the accused also found themselves at a serious disadvantage in terms of adequate representation and language barriers.

Suffice it to say that on a national level influx control was carried out at an enormous cost in terms of human suffering and lost productive work-hours, not to mention at

a great cost to the country as a whole (Savage, 1979:390-1). For various reasons, however, the Western Cape in particular has borne the brunt of some of the harshest applications of influx control regulations. The following section examines why this is so.

### Influx Control in the Western Cape

The Coloured Labour Preference Policy differentiated the Western Cape from the rest of South Africa as far as the implementation of influx control is concerned. This policy (in 1954) noted that "workers classified as Coloured were to be given preference in the Western Cape, and that as a result the Black population would be controlled" (Horrell in West, 1983:15). As a consequence of this policy pressures on Africans living, and seeking employment in this area increased substantially.

Africans have been an integral part of the Western Cape regional economy since the early nineteenth century. As various authors have pointed out (Saunders, 1979a; Wilson and Mafeje, 1963) already by the 1830's and 40's, Africans from the Eastern Cape and Transkei, including women and families, had made up an important component of the population living and working in Cape Town. By the end of the nineteenth century the African population was composed largely of people from within present-day South African borders (Saunders, 1979a) as well as a small contingent of black Mozambican indentured and free workers (Harries, 1979). Accommodation for Africans at this time was for the

most part not prescribed, although some African workers were housed by their employers in specially-designated compounds. For instance, dock-workers by 1890 were being housed in barracks at the harbour (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963:3) and by 1900 these accommodated some 1,500 workers. At this time approximately 10,000 Africans were living in Greater Cape Town (Ellis, 1983:107), and, as we shall see, the growing urban African population elicited some form of government control.

While access to employment in the urban areas and indeed freedom of mobility had always been regulated in some fashion - through travelling documents and various passes (Hindson, 1987b), residence in the urban areas presented a different problem for the authorities. Lack of legislation governing African urbanisation forced local authorities and municipalities in the interim to fall back upon Acts relating to slum clearance and public health as a means of controlling urban African populations (Saunders, 1979b; Stadler 1987:90).

Because of these measures, the resident African population of Cape Town suffered a continual erosion of their rights to live where they pleased. Saunders states that in 1899 White perceptions in general of a 'Kafir invasion' prompted suggestions of enclosing Africans in a compound system similar to those in Kimberley. These calls were backed by an ostensible humanitarian concern to prevent Africans from becoming 'demoralised', and were further justified on the grounds of public health (1979b:168). While these suggestions were indicative of what Saunders sees as the

'rise of racism in the Cape, they were not given concrete expression. The Locations Act of 1899, however, was introduced which permitted industrial employers to establish private locations for their employees, and was later amended to give municipalities power to apply its provisions by regulation (Saunders, 1979b:169). This did not affect Africans already living in town. The bubonic plague of 1901, however, proved to be the decisive turning-point in this regard. On the grounds of public health safety, government officials felt justified in establishing a new native location on the outskirts of the city - Uitvlucht (renamed Ndabeni in 1902). Indeed the various public health safety Acts were the only legislation available for controlling the urban African population at this time. One of the major results of the new location, Saunders argues, was to enable:

a government previously without any control over the 'kafir invasion', and not even knowing its proportions, to attempt to regulate the supply of African labour in the Cape Town area on a monthly basis. The number of passes issued in the Transkeian territories for travel to Cape Town could now be determined by both the demand for labour in the city and the accommodation available in the location (1979b:175).

Fierce resistance to the new location on the grounds of forced accommodation and travel costs took the forms of rent and transport boycotts (Ellis, 1983:107). This resulted in new legislation such as the Native Reserves Locations Bill (Act 40 of 1902)<sup>4</sup> which sought to crush the boycotts and

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4. In terms of this bill (Act 40 of 1902 as amended by Act 8 of 1905) certain sections of the African population (registered voters, bona fide domestic servants and special cases) were exempt from its provisions, which made payment of rent a condition of residence, failure of which resulted in summary ejection; provided for the establishment of locations outside city limits and renamed the existing location Ndabeni (Saunders, 1979b:186).

tighten existing controls. Once again, though, a privileged minority of the African population (registered voters, bona fide domestic servants and special cases) remained exempt from the provisions of the Act. It is important to note that the Act was the first piece of legislation which enabled the Cape government to establish residential areas outside the city limits (Hindson 1987b). Thus with the steady growth of Cape Town, and in keeping with the ideology of segregation, each new location was located at increasing distances from the city centre causing further hardship for African residents (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963:6).

The end of first World War was accompanied by a further influx of Africans into Cape Town. This, combined with the overcrowding at Ndabeni and the decision to turn it into an industrial site, necessitated the creation of another location (Langa) to house the growing population (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963). As in 1899 the immigration of large numbers of Africans was perceived as a further 'kafir invasion' and calls for its reversal and removal of the 'alien presence' became increasingly strident:

[t]he council blamed the central government for failing to tackle the 'problem' of African influx into the Cape Town area. Africans were taking labour from 'coloureds', and even, indirectly from whites. Cape Town should look after the interests of its 'civilised labour force' (Saunders, 1979b:197).

As will be discussed later, the call to protect the coloured labour force became a recurring theme throughout the next few decades and resulted in legislation being implemented during the 1950's which entrenched preferential treatment of

'Coloured people at the expense of their African counterparts.

In the meantime, however, the Urban Areas Act of 1923 was the government's major response to the African 'problem'. The main aim of the Act was to standardise laws in all four Provinces relating to urban locations and 'improve urban African administration' (Davenport, 1971). Basically this Act enabled the central government to shift the onus of control and responsibility of African urban locations onto local authorities. As mentioned previously, the shift in control to the lower tiers of government meant that the Act impacted differently throughout the country. For instance, in Cape Town, in order for the Act to be invoked at all, municipalities and divisional councils had to co-operate in forming a sole local government authority in the Peninsula. The Act itself was applied to Cape Town in stages and it was not until 1926 that section 5 (compulsory residence in locations - except for those Africans qualified for exemptions) and 12 (registration of workseekers) were imposed (Saunders, 1979b:206).

Ellis indicates that by and large the attempt to implement the Urban Areas Act in Cape Town was largely unsuccessful because, despite 10,000 Africans being registered, the attempted removal of 3,000 Africans failed. This was largely due to defective procedures used under the Act (1983:107), and proved that further amendments were necessary. What the legislation during the first few decades of the twentieth century helped do, however, was successfully to implant the principle of segregation. As Saunders states:

[b]y the 1920's ... the principle of segregation for Africans was almost universally accepted by whites, even in the mother city ... [however the council] ... never got to grips with the implications of accepting Africans as 'permanent residents'. Not only was there no thought of accepting them as equal citizens, there was not even provision of adequate housing for all those who worked in the city (1979b:225).

Despite the increasing number of controls, the African population in Greater Cape Town grew steadily and in 1936 there was yet another White public outcry due to the influx of Africans (Saunders 1979b). The 1937 amendment (Act 46) to the Urban Areas Act attempted to counteract further migration to the cities by strengthening existing influx controls, but despite this the African population continued to grow with a particularly massive increase during the war years (Ellis, 1983:107). The census of 1939 recorded 18,500 Africans in Cape Town, and, by the end of the second World War the number had risen to 38,000. By 1955 there were 65,000 Africans, four-fifths of whom lived in squatter camps around the Peninsula (Saunders 1979b). Due to the extensive squatting an 'emergency camp' was established at Nyanga in 1956 and thousands of Africans were forced to move there while government officials established who had urban rights (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963:5). Despite this, in 1957 Nyanga was awarded the status of a township and six years later Gugulethu township was established at Nyanga West (Ellis, 1983:108).

The rapid rise in the urban African population, particularly in the periods during and after the second World War, reflected the growing employment opportunities available in the Western Cape as a whole. As Evans notes, prior to the

war Africans were employed primarily as manual workers in agriculture, public service and as dockworkers. The end of the war, however, saw a rapid increase of African employees in the private manufacturing sector (1985a:51-2). As Posel has indicated, the economic realities of the Western Cape revealed:

a profound industrial dependence on African labour, particularly in the unskilled positions. Between 1933 and 1948, according to one estimate, the number of Africans employed in industries in the Western Cape increased by 534%, so that by 1951, 55,413 male Africans were employed there. Of these, the large majority were unskilled labourers - 90% in 1949. The demographic consequence of this accelerated "economic integration" was a rapid growth in the size of the resident African population during the 1930s and 1940s, which reached a size of 178,000 by 1955. Yet these were "realities" which the state was not prepared to accommodate in the Western Cape (1986:2).

It is against this background that the Coloured Labour Preference Policy must be reviewed.

### **The Coloured Labour Preference Policy**

In 1954, during a Parliamentary session, the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd gave the first policy statements on the desirability of a coloured labour preference area. This was given more concrete expression in 1955 when Dr. W.M.M. Eiselen, Secretary of Native Affairs "demarcated an area of the Cape Province west of certain points (subsequently known as the Eiselen Line) which would become a 'Coloured Labour Preference Area', and stated that it was government policy eventually to remove all Blacks from this area" (West, 1983:15). Geographically, this area included the "Cape south of the Orange River and west of the

magisterial districts of Gordonia, Hopetown, De Aar, Murraysburg, Aberdeen, Willowmore, Uniondale and Knysna" (Hendrie, 1983:96).

Essentially the Coloured Labour Preference Policy (CLPP) sought to impose stricter measures governing the influx of Africans into the Western Cape. As such the policy was directed towards freezing the number of African families in the region, removing "foreign" Africans on termination of their contracts and, where African women were concerned, barring access altogether (Posel, 1986:15). The policy further stipulated that provided "insufficient local Coloured or African labour was available, then single, male African migrant workers could be recruited, on a strictly temporary basis only. But emphasis was placed on the need to first utilise fully the resident labour pool ... giving preference to Coloureds over Africans in the process" (Posel, 1986:15).

Ultimately, the justification for this policy was expressed by Dr. Verwoerd in 1956 during an interview with a deputation from the Christian Council in which he stated that:

[i]t is generally well known that there is not enough coloured labour [in the Western Province] available at present. But the government must look to the future, and in the Cape Peninsula particularly there is a restricted area for industrial development, and only a certain amount of living space for all sections of the population. ... within the next fifty years the Coloured population of the Western Province will have increased to three and a half million; what will happen to them? Is Christian care confined only to the Bantu? The only means by which a far-seeing government can ensure employment to the coming generations of Coloureds is to allow Bantu labour there only

temporarily to aid in tiding over the interim period (Christian Council, 1956:41).

The official view of the Cape Western Province as the traditional home of the 'Coloured Community' and thus in need of protection from encroachment by Africans was couched in moral overtones: the Coloured population had a moral right to demand job protection against Africans and the government had a moral duty to comply. In addition, justification was sought on the grounds that a continued symbiosis between 'Coloureds' and 'natives' would have a demoralising effect on both, leading to the demise of social and cultural differences (West, 1983:16). As has been pointed out, however, the notion of cultural contamination rather than job competition lay at the heart of the policy (West 1983:16). In essence the Western Cape became the model testing ground for the Nationalist government's grand apartheid strategy: "... the Western Cape (is) the area where, due to a whole series of circumstances, the policy of apartheid in regard to the Bantu can be applied with the greatest ease" (Dr. W.M.M. Eiselen quoted in West, 1983:16).

However, whilst the CLPP was accepted as official policy from 1955 onwards, as Humphries states "it was to be a number of years before the policy was ... fleshed out, given teeth and implemented with some zeal" (1986:9). This was to be accomplished through, on the one hand, the creation of a variety of government bodies whose principal aims lay in advancing the Coloured population in terms of employment, and on the other, through a series of legislative Acts which circumscribed African rights in the Western Cape (Hendrie, 1983:95-106).

The implementation of the CLPP, in effect, set the Western Cape apart from the rest of the country in terms of the restrictions placed on the African population in both urban and rural contexts. The greatest impact of the policy was felt in three spheres: the stringent application of influx control regulations; a shift to migrant labour to meet growing labour demands; and, a freeze on urban accommodation (West 1983:17). These three aspects are discussed below.

### **Influx Control**

The CLPP has been acknowledged as the primary cause for the harsh implementation of influx controls in the Western Cape (Horner 1983; West 1983; Savage 1984). In fact, nowhere else in the country during this period had influx control regulations been enforced to such a high degree, and African women in particular have borne the major brunt of this policy.

As West notes, the Western Cape was the first area in the country where African women were required to carry passes, and with the advent of the CLPP women became the prime targets in terms of pass law arrests (1982:464). In this regard "[t]he Cape Peninsula is the only area in the country where more women than men [were] arrested under the pass laws. There is no demographic disproportion of this sort ... and it is clear that there [was] a special assault against women in the area in line with government policy of preventing Black family life from taking further root in the Cape Peninsula" (West, 1983:21).

Despite the severe restrictions imposed by the CLPP and influx control, Africans continued to migrate to urban areas such as Cape Town. Illegal entry into the Western Cape took two predominant forms: women and children joining husbands who were legally or illegally in the region, and the entry of workseekers (Humphries, 1986:9). The scale of illegal entry into the region during the 1960's for example, is indicated by Humphries who stated that in terms of prosecutions under Section 10(4), for staying in an area longer than 72 hours:

[i]n 1965 alone, nearly 14,000 successful prosecutions were undertaken in 11 prescribed areas in the western cape region, of whom nearly 4,000 were women. This figure excluded police actions in 10 of the areas (the exception being Cape Town). The final figure would have been somewhat higher if police actions were included. In the Peninsula alone 24,101 men and women were prosecuted between May 1963 and June 1965 - a rate of 893 per month. In the 12 months between June 1965 and May 1966, 15,152 prosecutions were undertaken in Wynberg, Cape Town, Athlone, Stellenbosch, Belville, Worcester, Paarl, Woodstock - a smaller region than the figures covered by the 1965 [prosecutions] (1986:13).

Faced with the stark alternative of unemployment and poverty in the rural areas and 'homelands', migration to the Western Cape, remained a viable option notwithstanding influx control. Dr. De Lange estimated in the 1980's that compared with living in a 'homeland' workers would be considerably better off coming to an urban area "even if they [spent] nine months of every year in prison; less imprisonment than that could result in living standards several hundred per cent better than had they remained in a rural area" (cited in West, 1983:17).

It is clear, then, that influx control was vigorously pursued in the Western Cape under the CLPP from the time of its inception in 1955. It was not until ten years later, however, that legislative measures were brought about to safeguard employment opportunities for Coloureds - despite the fact that this formed one of the major justifications for the CLPP in the first instance (Humphries, 1986).

### **Migrant Labour**

In terms of legislative measures, Evans (1985a:24-5) identifies the amendment to the Black Labour Regulations of 1965 as the pivot of the CLPP. The amendment limited African employment in the Western Cape, in the first instance, by granting labour offices the right to refuse to sanction employment or further employment of any African worker, and secondly by creating a cumbersome procedure for employing migrant labour. As Evans states, in practice all employers first had to apply for coloured labour - either through the Department of Labour or a magistrate's office. If coloured labour was unavailable a certificate was granted to the employer to this effect. The certificate was then taken to the black labour office concerned where provided "... black labour [was] not available from local sources, supplementary black labour on a single basis [was] allowed from the Xhosa speaking black states, through the labour bureau system, on a contract basis provided suitable accommodation [was] available" (Evans, 1985a:24-5).

Employers of migrant labour were obliged to pay R15 per worker to cover administration and transport costs and employment contracts could not exceed a period of twelve months (Evans, 1985a:25). In order to renew a contract, either with the same or a new employer, workers were required to return to their 'homeland' where all contracts had to be attested through the local labour bureau. This process effectively prevented contract workers from qualifying to live permanently in the Western Cape or having their families with them under Section 10(1)(b) of the Urban Areas Act (Evans, 1985a:25). These controls were later extended to the rest of the country by the Black Labour Regulations proclaimed in 1968.

In addition to the above regulations further restrictions were imposed in 1966 when the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development announced that African contract workers employed in the Western Cape would be reduced by an average of 5% per annum. Additionally, the African labour complement of Western Cape employers was frozen in the same year (Hendrie, 1983:98). As many authors have pointed out (Humphries, 1986; Posel, 1986) employers in the Western Cape expressed an overwhelming preference for African labour, and more specifically migrant labour for a variety of reasons. The freeze on labour quotas sought to countermand this preference by forcing employers to hire coloured workers in the first instance, and as a last resort Africans who qualified to live in the Western Cape.

In a further attempt to ensure the full utilisation of coloured labour, employers were further encouraged by a

range of decentralisation concessions which were granted on the basis of employing coloured labour, and, more negatively, through the Physical Planning Acts and prohibitive employer levies on African labour (Hendrie, 1983:97-103; Evans, 1985a:30,53).

One of the major consequences of the CLPP has been to relegate Africans, legal or otherwise, to the most unskilled and low paid sectors of employment; what Evans terms an employment "cul-de- sac" in which workseekers have to compete not only against the CLPP but each other in order to obtain employment (1985b:3). As Evans has pointed out, in a legal sense, then, industry in the Western Cape has been able to draw on a composite labour force comprised of groups with specific mobilities attached to them. In this light "illegals" and contract workers find themselves at the bottom of the occupational ladder as they are "... subject to the strictest controls and therefore [have] the least bargaining power with employers ... [i]n the employment of unskilled labour, therefore, it would be a natural consequence of market forces that labour with the least rights be employed and forced to accept sub-economic wages" (1985b:3-4).

### **Accommodation**

, In addition to the restrictions on African employment, there was also, in terms of the CLPP, a freeze on family housing. In 1966 an official freeze on African family housing in the Cape Peninsula was declared and as Hendrie states this was

"... in line with Government intention to reduce progressively the number of African families in the Western Cape" (1983:98). The freeze served to exacerbate the existing housing shortage in the Peninsula which was rooted in the early decades of the twentieth century. Thus while the building of family housing ground to a halt the reverse held true for municipal and employer built hostels and compounds which housed the growing migrant labour force. By the end of 1971, for example, accommodation for single migrant workers in the Cape Peninsula totalled 55,537 beds (Wilson, 1972:70). As Wilson has pointed out, in contrast, "[t]he number of black families with rights to live in one of the three townships serving Greater Cape Town was under 12,000 whilst the vast majority of workers lived as 'single men' (1972:68-9). Ultimately, Africans, faced with an acute and chronic shortage of housing for the better part of a century have had little alternative other than squatting. Yet ironically, the rise of massive squatter settlements, particularly in the Western Cape, played a major role in altering government perceptions of the feasibility of reversing African urbanisation.

• In summary then, the implementation of the CLPP led to a tripartite attack on African rights to reside and work in the Western Cape. In the initial stages this took the form of stringent influx controls in an attempt to stem the growing migration from the 'homelands' and rural areas of 'white' South Africa. In this regard African women were specifically singled out in order to prevent African family life from taking further root. Additionally, at a later

stage, legislation was introduced which sought to entrench Coloured rather than African labour preference amongst employers through a range of concessions on the one hand, and discriminatory policies on the other. In this context the role of migrant labour became an increasingly contradictory one, for while it suited the official policy of providing labour in the form of single African men on a temporary basis, the majority of employers preferred this type of labour over the resident Coloured and legal African population. Government response to this situation involved two main aspects. Firstly the number of migrant workers was to be reduced annually; and secondly, a freeze on the African labour complement of Western Cape employers was imposed. In line with the restrictions on African labour an official freeze on African family housing was implemented in the same year (1966). Indeed the official freeze in both these spheres was intended to work hand-in-hand as the major means of reducing the African population in the Western Cape. To this end influx control provided the overarching framework of control. The next chapter examines the nature of these controls from various theoretical perspectives.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE NATURE OF CONTROL: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

#### Introduction

Whilst the previous chapter has dealt with various government policies in the first half of the twentieth century and traced their effects on the African population as these policies became enshrined in legislation, it is equally important to look at a number of theoretical interpretations of these historical realities. Thus the primary focus of this section rests on the need to contextualise influx control within the broader political economy of South Africa. This necessarily involves examining various theoretical stances dealing with the relationship between racial state policy and the economic system.

#### Phases of Control

On a macro-level influx control has been seen as a system of control which serves the political and economic needs of the state. In this regard both Savage (1984:2) and Giliomee and Schlemmer (1985:1) espouse similar views: the states's system of control has been used to balance two apparently contradictory white needs: the political exclusion of Africans from 'white' areas and the economic reliance on a supply of cheap African labour within these areas. Furthermore, in continuing to meet these two basic needs the state has been involved in a process of creating and re-

defining legislative and administrative practice over time. In other words, the system of control has evolved in the face of changing political and economic circumstances. This macro-level approach is useful insofar as it advances our understanding of the historical continuities and discontinuities of state policy, although as has been pointed out, it is limited insofar as 'the state' is conceptualised as a homogeneous and monolithic entity (see Greenberg, 1982; Helliker, 1987; Hindson, 1987; Posel, 1987; Westhuizen, 1987). However, for the present purposes, such an approach provides a convenient framework of analysis.

Savage has identified four major phases of state control in an analysis of the "the historical forces behind state efforts to control and limit African urbanisation and to erect a labour supply system based on 'independent' and 'economically viable' Bantustans" (1984:24). The first phase, which covers the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century, was aimed at propelling and regulating the movement of African labour into the economy. The second phase, the period between 1920-1948, was geared towards creating a national policy to control and regulate African presence in urban areas. The third phase, lasting until the late 1970's, consolidated existing state controls, extended a uniform system of control onto a national basis and restructured the relationship between Africans and the 'native reserves' in terms of a policy of separate development. The fourth phase, lasting until the mid 1980's, was characterised by an attempt to exacerbate the division between 'urban insiders', who were granted increased

privileges and rural 'outsiders', who were denied permanent residence in urban areas. These four phases, particularly the latter two, are important in providing a framework in which to advance a range of theoretical interpretations of state policy as well as providing a background against which the abolition of influx control legislation will be examined in Chapter Four.

### Phase One

The first phase of control encompassed the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century, and was characterised by legislation which was "designed to propel the African population into the white controlled economy" (Savage, 1984:24). To this end control over the movement of Africans was the predominant concern as was reflected in the variety of documents, which essentially functioned to "regulate labour and lay down conditions under which labourers could move" (Savage, 1984:24; see also Hindson, 1987b).

Whilst the major concern during this period was the need for control over African labour, no national structure existed which could uniformly control African entry into urban areas or administer Africans residing there. As a consequence, wide-ranging disparities existed over access to urban areas and the provision of basic services such as housing and sanitation. As Savage indicates "[l]ocal, and later provincial, authorities were left relatively free to impose such controls as they desired " (1984:25). Thus the second

phase of control was geared towards creating a national policy which would regulate and control the African presence in urban areas.

## Phase Two

It was during this period that the recommendations of the Stallard, and to a lesser extent, the Godley Commission were translated into legislation. While the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act laid down a national structure of administration of urban Africans, this proved insufficient as it relied primarily on local authorities to enforce its provisions. Further amendment proved necessary to redress the situation and the 1937 Native Laws Amendment Act served this end. As Savage indicates, though, during the 1940's the Stallard doctrine, which formed the basis of the Urban Areas Act, was called into question by no less than Smuts himself in view of the realities of rapid African urbanisation and industrial growth during this period.

This realisation, together with increasing demands for labour, led both to an easing of influx control, which was suspended in many areas over the economically boom years of the second world war, as well as to a series of official investigations as to what policy the state should adopt towards urban Africans (Savage, 1984:27).

The Fagan Commission which reported in 1948, provided a major statement on African urbanisation. In summary it argued that total segregation was impractical, rather "efforts should be directed toward regulating the flow of labour and encouraging its stabilization in urban areas

under a changed system of influx control" (Report of the Native Laws Commission cited in Savage, 1984:27).

### Phase Three

The victory of the Nationalist Party in 1948 swept aside the Fagan recommendations and reaffirmed the Stallard doctrine that Africans should be temporary sojourners in 'white' South Africa. In so doing the third phase of control was ushered in heralding a new era in terms of policy and administrative developments:

[t]he new minister of Native Affairs, Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, moved toward entrenching the migrant labour system, to addressing farmers' requirements for cheap labour and to evolving an overall policy concerning black urban workers and their relationship to 'native reserves'. The policy as it unfolded extended a uniform system of influx controls throughout the country and was marked by several key pieces of legislation. (Savage, 1984:28).

While the seeds of Verwoerd's plan for total segregation germinated during the 1950's, it was not until the 1960's and 1970's that grand apartheid flourished. As Posel argues, the 1950's and 1960's-70's mark two distinct phases of apartheid policy and, as such, apartheid policies during the 1950's have been frequently misunderstood. In effect the long-term goals of apartheid, the policy of separate development, was left to lie fallow during this period as "apartheid planners ... during the 1950s, were arguably more concerned with the consolidation and extension of state power than the pursuit of a 'grand plan', and in so doing,

introduced measures which (involuntarily) impeded rather than promoted the long-term goals of apartheid" (1986:3).

The problems confronting apartheid planners in the 1950's were twofold: on the practical side state policies had to accommodate the existing economic and demographic realities, while politically, the major objective revolved around strategies to contain urban growth. The political objective, though, remained predominant and, as such it constrained and channelled economically "practical" objectives (Posel, 1986:5). As Posel indicates, the willingness of the Department of Native Affairs (NAD)

to meet the labour requirements of urban employers was fundamentally counterbalanced by a nagging discomfort at the prospect of ever-increasing numbers of Africans "swamping" whites in the towns, and posing mounting threats to the political and industrial peace. The rising tide of African political and industrial militancy during the 1940s had thrust these dangers to the centre of the political stage, alongside the problems of labour allocation and control. The persistence of African resistance, concentrated in urban areas, during the 1950s, ensured that strategies to contain the rate of growth of the urban African population remained a major political objective within the NAD throughout the decade, and an important constraint on the logic of "practical" politics (1986:6).

Given the practical and political exigencies, the strategy devised by the NAD to combat the major problems during this period i.e. shortage of farm labour, alleged misuse of urban African labour, massive squatter settlements, and growing African resistance took the form of a strict urban labour preference policy (ULPP). As Posel states, while urban employers did not suffer the imposition of labour quotas, the ULPP was aimed at making optimum use of economically active Africans already resident in the urban areas

(including women and youths) and thus eliminating the need for workers from the outside to be brought into these areas. In essence this strategy would serve the dual functions of renewing the processes of urban accumulation and simultaneously reducing the number of Africans required in the towns (1986:7).

One of the major problems with the ULPP strategy, however, rested on the NAD's erroneous assumptions that industrial employers would be prepared to sacrifice their migrant work force for the greater good of state policy. For the most part employers preferred migrants in unskilled occupations, which numerically comprised the majority of urban jobs in the early 1950's, or else jobs which relied more on low wages than "stabilised" urban workers for profitability (Posel, 1986:8). Thus continued employer preference for migrant workers threatened the basic premise on which the ULPP was founded: "... as the NAD saw it, the size of the resident urban African population had become excessive even by 'practical' standards. There were economic costs too. The continuing build-up of needlessly large 'surpluses' of economically active Africans in the towns exacerbated the existing 'maldistribution of labour' which favoured the towns at the expense of the farms" (Posel, 1986:9).

In light of the above, the ULPP was doomed unless stricter provisions could be made for its enforcement. The NAD's response entailed a restriction on the entry of workers to the towns. Only once the urban labour pool was used up were single migrant workers to be allowed into the urban areas on a temporary basis. This was to be achieved through coupling

the administration of influx control with state control over the African labour supply through "efflux control" at the rural source, and ultimately, served both the practical and political aspects of NAD policy (Posel, 1986:9-10).

In line with the logic of "practical politics" the NAD was engaged in at this time, it set out to accommodate the reality of the de facto urbanised African population by conferring residential rights to those Africans and their families, irrespective of employment. As Posel stresses, however, these rights were granted indefinitely, or "for the foreseeable future" as Verwoerd announced at the time, and did not represent a liberal or altruistic concession on Verwoerd's part.

Rather, the concept of a "residential right" possessed by "urbanised" Africans, formed part of a strategy aimed at drawing rigid boundaries between the urban 'insiders' and 'outsiders', which would shut out the 'outsiders' from the urban enclave. Given the existing pattern of widespread "illegal" entry and residence in towns, this administrative differentiation was deemed the most appropriate "practical" means of restoring state control and eradicating these "illegal" practises. The division also slotted in with the ULPP, by defining the local labour supply on which employers were required to draw before recruiting outsiders" (Posel, 1986:10).

Posel's primary argument is that the ULPP lay at the heart of NAD's attempt to combine its dual economic and political objectives. However, this strategy was not translated into law in line with the intentions of NAD policy-makers, and as a result, "the strategy lost some of its internal logic and coherence" (1986:11). The main piece of legislation responsible for this was the 1952 amendment to Section 10(1) of the Urban Areas Act which conferred permanent residence

rights to urban Africans in such a way as to partially undermine the desired freeze on further urbanisation and contradict the logic of the ULPP in the sense that:

Section 10(1) in fact created and protected the restricted, but important, avenue whereby African urbanisation could legally continue - contrary to the NAD's original intentions. The clause allowed firstly, that the natural increase of the existing urban population would acquire the same "residential right" to remain in the area as "urbanised" residents (in terms of 10(1)(c)). Secondly, rural workseekers who originally entered the urban area from outside with the permission of the labour bureaux (in terms of 10(1)(d)) could acquire "urbanised" status after ten or fifteen years residence and employment in the urban area, after which their wives and children could acquire comparable status. The NAD ... had intended to prevent further "detrribalisation" by compelling migrant workers to interrupt their service by returning periodically to their rural homes. However, this intension failed to materialise on the statute books, and the amended Section 10(1) in fact rewarded uninterrupted service with the "residential right" to de facto permanent urban residence. In addition, 10(1)(c) cut one important hole in the barriers intended to prohibit rural African women from settling in the towns. Subsequent legislative amendments ... narrowed such loopholes, but did not eliminate them altogether (Posel, 1986:12).

Additionally the Labour Bureau Regulations instituted in the same year, which empowered local (municipal) labour bureaux to enforce the NAD's ULPP, were rendered useless by Section 10(1)(a),(b) and (c) rights which granted Africans the "residential right" to remain in urban areas irrespective of finding and keeping employment. Thus the primary group which the NAD had targetted for maximal employment in terms of the ULPP were able to legally resist these efforts (Posel, 1986:13).

Apartheid policies during the 1950's, then, were not concerned with comprehensively eliminating residence and employment rights of Africans. Rather strategies at this

time were intent on creating an administrative division between two categories of Africans: the de facto urbanised 'insiders', and the 'outsiders' or temporary sojourners whose rights to reside permanently in 'white' South Africa were severely restricted. This was in keeping with the creation of the ULPP which attempted to synthesize the practical economic and political objectives of the NAD which, in turn, were directly related to economic and demographic realities inherited from the previous government.

In this light the creation of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy in the Western Cape can be seen as a variant of the ULPP for it reproduced the national strategy for meeting urban labour demands according to a policy of ULP whilst simultaneously serving economic and political objectives unique to the region (Posel, 1986:16-17).

Posel (1986) has argued that the emphasis on "practical politics" during the 1950's, and the way this was translated into legislation impeded rather than promoted the long term goals of grand apartheid which came to fruition in the succeeding decades.

In this context, legislation and policy measures created during the 1960's and early 70's, such as the Bantu Laws Amendment Act (42 of 1964); the Black Labour Act (67 of 1964); the Black Labour Regulations of 1965 and 1968; the freeze on African family housing in urban areas in the late 60's; the enlargement of the Coloured Labour preference area; and the creation of Administration Boards under the

Bantu Affairs Administration Act (45 of 1971) worked to effectively tighten influx control measures and close various loopholes existing in the legislation (see Hindson, 1987b:68-70; Savage, 1984:28-9). As Hindson has argued, the overall "effect of influx control during the 1950s and 1960s was to stabilise one section of the workforce and migrantise another, thereby reproducing differentiated African labour power" (1987b:52). Meanwhile, the state's policy of separate development - the other side of influx control, gained further momentum as the reserves underwent a major process of political restructuring.

The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 made provision for the establishment of Tribal, Regional and Territorial Authorities in the reserves, effectively turning chiefs and headmen into loyal government functionaries who became key functional elements within the system of domination in the reserves (Hammond-Tooke, 1975; Spiegel and Boonzaier, 1988). However, it was not until 1959 that the policy of separate development was fully launched. The Promotion of Black (formerly Bantu) Self-Government Act (46 of 1959), which was based on the principle of ethnicity, allowed for the subdivision of the African population into distinct national units based primarily on language and cultural affiliations. As West notes "[o]n the basis of this policy a number of groupings were identified, into which all black people in South Africa were compulsorily placed, with these groupings being formally associated with what Robertson ... refers to as 'ethno-geographic units' ('homelands', 'national states', 'Bantustans', etc.). In theory each of these geographic

units was to be the putative political home of each grouping... " (1988a:106).

Initially only eight 'national units' were recognised: North-Sotho, South-Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Swazi, Xhosa, Tsonga and Venda. However later refinements to the system included splitting the Xhosa into two groups- Transkeian and Ciskeian, and creating a new 'national unit' for the Ndebele in the mid-1970's (Platzky and Walker, 1985:113).

Thus the Self-Government Act transformed areas which had been set aside for African occupation under the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts into 'homelands' for recognised 'national units'. The policy of separate development was given subsequent expression in terms of the National States (formerly Bantu Homelands) Citizenship Act of 1970 which conferred compulsory dual citizenship on all African people in the form of South African citizenship and citizenship of a national state. West indicates that the former was conferred primarily for 'international' purposes, while the latter was conferred on people by virtue of the normal criteria for citizenship (birth, domicile) or by a set of extremely vague criteria including being 'identified' or 'associated' with a population of a given area by virtue of language, dialect, cultural or racial background (1988a:108). As Platzky and Walker state, the 1970 Act "was influx control at its most radical... for even those African people who had permanent urban residence rights were in danger of having those rights swept away" (1985:124).

Over the next decade Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the so-called TBVC states) gained 'independence' from South Africa. As a result their citizens lost their South African citizenship and, in addition, millions of putative citizens living outside these territories became instant foreigners, and as such, subject to the provisions of legislation dealing with and controlling aliens (West, 1988a:108). As West further points out, the definition of citizenship was set out in 'Status' Acts accompanying each national state's 'independence'. These Acts laid down criteria similar to, and perhaps even more vague than those set out in the 1970 Act (1988a:108).

A logical consequence of the homelands policy has been the wholesale relocation of Africans into putative 'homelands'. To this end a general circular issued in 1967 by the Secretary of Bantu Administration and Development stated that:

It is accepted Government policy that the Bantu are only temporarily resident in the European areas of the Republic, for as long as they offer their labour there. As soon as they become, for some reason or another, no longer fit for work or superfluous to the labour market, they are expected to return to their country of origin or the territory of the national unit where they fit in ethnically if they were not born and bred in the homeland (reproduced in Mare, 1980).

According to the circular, the 'non-productive Bantu' who were to be resettled in the homelands were 'conveniently classified' into three groups and included the old, the disabled, widows, women with dependent children, farm workers, squatters, free-holders (black spots) and professionals. The relentlessness with which this policy was

to be pursued is expressed clearly: "it must be stressed here that no stone is to be left unturned to achieve the settlement in the homelands of non-productive Bantu at present residing in the European areas" (reproduced in Mare, 1980).

The Surplus People Project's quantified statistics indicate that, excluding influx control removals in the urban areas and 'rationalisation' programmes within the 'homelands', between the period 1960-82, 3,5 million Africans have been subjected to removals (1983:5; see also Savage, 1984). This was accomplished by the state through a range of legislation: the various Land Acts allowed for the relocation of people from vast areas of land, deemed "black spots" in official terminology, as well as from poorly situated black areas which did not fit into the proposed consolidation plans: townships were either deproclaimed and populations forcibly relocated to 'homelands' or were incorporated into 'homelands' through the redefinition of political boundaries (Hindson, 1987b:82; Malan and Hattingh, 1976). Additionally, the increased mechanisation of agriculture (Bromberger, 1984; de Klerk, 1984) and the prohibition on employment by farmers of labour tenants which came into effect in 1970 forced Africans off white-owned farms and into the already crowded 'homelands' (Wilson, 1972:91).

Such relocations resulted in a " massive shift in population loction towards the Bantustans, where [the] population after dropping slightly between 1950 and 1960 (from 39.7% to 39.2% of the total African population) rose rapidly to 47.4% in

1970 and 52.7% in 1980 ... [accompanied by] ... a marked decline in the proportion of Africans in rural areas outside of the Bantustans ... and only marginal increases in the proportion of the domestically born African population in towns" (Savage, 1984:22). The increased population density further strained existing resources within the 'homelands', which already by the 1950's were incapable of sustaining subsistence production (Hindson, 1987b:9).

The impoverishment of the 'homelands' (see, for example, Green and Hirsch, 1983; Haines, Tapscott, Solinjani and Tyali, 1984; Kotze, 1986; Moody and Golino, 1984; Muller and Tapscott, 1984; Niehaus, 1987; Schutte, 1984; Sharp, 1987; Sharp and Spiegel, 1985; Simkins, 1984; Spiegel, 1987) is clearly linked to apartheid policies which were developed during the 1950's and executed during the 1960's and 70's. Influx control measures combined with the 'homelands' policy turned millions of Africans, both physically and politically, into outsiders. The fourth phase of control was aimed at exacerbating this division.

#### **Phase Four**

The fourth phase of state control involved what Zille has termed a 'two-track' urbanisation policy (Savage, 1984:29). One track involved restricting Section 10 privileges in terms of the 1978 amendment to the Urban Areas Act which decreed that no person born after the date of 'independence' of their 'putative' homeland would be eligible to obtain permanent urban residence and included migrant labourers in

its provisions. Thus as each 'homeland' was granted 'independence' Section 10 rights were to fall away without being formally abolished (Savage, 1984:30). As a consequence "urban areas [would] contain migrant workers and others with permission to be in them but ... these persons [would] not have legal rights of permanence and their permission to be in urban areas at any time [could] be administratively withdrawn, without reference to the courts" (Savage, 1984:30).

The second track involved state attempts to improve the conditions of the 'urban insiders' who held Section 10 rights. In the wake of the Soweto uprising of 1976 and discontent on a national level, various concessions were granted to urban Africans by the state. In 1978 this group (excluding Africans in the Western Cape) were granted 99 year leasehold rights on housing. The following year saw the state embark in earnest on a programme of urban reform. The Riekert Report on Manpower Utilisation of 1979 made a series of recommendations based on the need for better utilisation of 'Black manpower' specifically in terms of the urban labour market (Hindson, 1987b:83).

As Hindson indicates, the Commission's recommendations differed from prior Nationalist policies in terms of advocating that urban Africans' rights to remain in the urban areas of 'white' South Africa should be recognised. In this context "Riekert argued that "de facto permanence be acknowledged in law, not merely through administrative fiat. Urban Africans who had acquired Section Ten rights should be

able to move to and work in any urban area, subject to the availability of housing" (1987b:83).

The intentions behind this policy lay in a move away from overt influx control measures, to a more indirect form of control in which population movement and settlement were subject to the availability of employment and approved accommodation. To this end increased fines for illegal employment and residence were to be imposed, effectively shifting the onus of influx control onto employers and township householders (Hindson, 1987b:84). In this way "the report argued that if the new housing and employment controls were successful Section Ten could be abolished, as well as racially discriminatory pass control measures associated with it. This was double-edged because Section Ten was not only an influx control measure, but afforded a degree of protection against removal" (Hindson, 1987b:84).

Concomitant with the 'concession' to Section 10 holders, the Riekert Commission envisaged political decentralisation and privatisation of township housing and services, in the long term this was to be accomplished through the creation of black local authorities which would gradually replace the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (Hindson, 1987b:84). As Hindson notes, however, the success of this strategy depended on the ability of the local authorities to be self-financing, and this in turn depended upon a rise in African wages- hence the recommendation that urban Africans be protected from competition from rural workers (1987b:84). Thus the natural consequence of "accepting permanence of urban Africans and liberalising urban labour markets was

intensified influx control. This implied further segmentation of labour markets and deepening of the division between the living standards of urban and rural African proletariats" (Hindson, 1987b:84; see also Hindson and Lacey, 1983).

In summary, then, Hindson argues that the Riekert strategy attempted to perpetuate 'orthodox' or 'territorial' apartheid by exacerbating the insider/outsider divisions in the workforce and promoting industrial decentralisation as a major means of expanding employment for residents of the various 'homelands'. As such "it tried to solve the urban crisis by reinforcing the division between urban and rural proletariats. But in the face of mounting rural unemployment and poverty, every attempt to tighten influx control would widen wage and income differences and so increase pressure for rural migration to the cities" (1987b:86).

The four phases of control under discussion clearly emphasize the strategies implemented by the state in response to changing political and economic needs. Yet we have also seen that numerous contradictions lie at the heart of each of the state's major policies as new realities overtake them, in turn forcing new policies to the fore. The following chapter explores these contradictions in the context of the abolition of certain influx control legislation and the shifting terrain of control.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ABOLITION OF INFLUX CONTROL LEGISLATION

#### Introduction

In 1985, in his opening speech to Parliament, State President, Mr. P.W. Botha, raised two major issues: the recognition of the permanent nature of African urbanisation in 'white' South Africa, coupled with a strategy for 'orderly urbanisation'. As Thomas and van der Horst (1986) point out, the 'green light' for reform in this sphere came at a time when the debate concerning African urbanisation and the abolition of influx control had reached a crescendo.

The 'green light' given by the State President was followed by a report produced in a record five months by the President's Council Committee for Constitutional Affairs. The report, which among other things, advocated the abolition of influx control, was received favourably by the government and in particular amongst senior officials in the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning who were responsible for many of the issues (Thomas and van der Horst, 1986). The President's Council Report formed the basis of the White Paper on Urbanisation, tabled in April 1986, which set out the government's official policy as well as its future strategy for managing urbanisation. These were given legislative expression in a series of Acts which came into effect on 1 July 1986: the Abolition of Influx Control Act (No. 68 of 1986), the Identification Act (No. 72 of 1986), the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act (No.

73 of 1986), the Black Communities Development Amendment Act (No. 74 of 1986) and the Abolition of Development Bodies Act (No. 75 of 1986).

### Changes in the Legislation

Firstly, the Abolition of Influx Control Act 68 of 1986 repealed some thirty-four laws controlling Africans. Corder (1987:3) singles out the following as being most significant: the Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act; Chapter IV of the Development Trust and Land Act of 1936, which determined, among other things, the setting of labour quotas; the Black Labour Regulations of 1968; Proclamation 270 of 1966, which dealt with the right of entry and search of Africans on private property; the Blacks (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act of 1927, which authorised the removal of tribes.

At the same time, however, the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (52 of 1951) was addressed, making its provisions applicable to all, and imposing harsher penalties for its infringement. In addition, the provisions of the Slums Act (76 of 1979) have been extended to include the areas controlled by the Black local authorities.

Secondly, the Identification Act (72 of 1986) repealed the Blacks (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act. In its place a new uniform identity document for all South African citizens over the age of sixteen was substituted. In terms of the Act all persons eligible for a

document must apply for such at which time a full set of fingerprints (including palmprints) are taken. However existing identification documents and passes remain valid and present holders of existing identity documents ("non-Africans") are exempt from providing their fingerprints for the population register, unless they require new identity documents. Finally, people of all population groups are required by law to carry an identity document and produce it on demand. Failure to do so "without lawful cause" constitutes a criminal offense resulting in a fine of R500 and/or six months imprisonment.

Thirdly, the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act (73 of 1986) provides for the restoration of citizenship to those citizens of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the "TBVC" countries) who are eligible by virtue of birth, descent, registration and naturalisation.

Fourthly, the Black Communities Development Amendment Act (75 of 1986) granted full property rights for Africans in urban areas.

Fifthly, the Abolition of Development Bodies Act (75 of 1986) abolished all Development Boards (formerly the Bantu Administration Boards).

### Orderly Urbanisation

The legislation discussed above represents a significant departure from the ideology of separate development which has dominated Nationalist policy for decades. The Abolition of Influx Control Act has removed many of the direct controls preventing African urbanisation, most notably the Urban Areas Act which contained the infamous Section 10(1) clause made effective through reference books or the 'dompas' system as it was widely known. However, the repeal of these laws has not taken place in a vacuum. In this regard two major points need to be considered: firstly, the demise of influx control had been coupled with an 'orderly urbanisation' policy which many critics perceive as a far more subtle form of control cloaked in an ostensibly racially neutral guise, and secondly, numerous laws remain on the statute books which ultimately control the rate and pace of African urbanisation as well as dictating where this should occur.

In this context the government's stated policy is very important. The White Paper already referred to defines 'orderly urbanisation' with the following qualifications:

[It] implies the freedom of movement of all **citizens** and also refers to the operation of economic and social forces and the concomitant obligations. It means further that the process of urbanisation must be ordered, planned and directed by predominantly **indirect forms of control**, such as incentive and restrictive measures, as well as by **direct measures comprising legislation and ordinances** (emphasis added, 1986:71).

This is a crucial passage, and it will be part of the aims of the research to examine in what measure these intended controls have been implemented. Firstly, however, it is important to examine how the urbanisation process is to be controlled through both direct and indirect means.

### Urbanisation: Direct And Indirect Controls

Influx control has been largely unsuccessful in preventing African urbanisation: the numerous and mushrooming squatter camps on the peripheries of major metropolitan areas from the early 1970's onwards bears testimony to that fact. By the mid-1970's some officials were privately acknowledging that influx control was ineffectual and artificial, the reality of which did not effect government policy until a decade later when it was openly acknowledged. Influx control in the Western Cape was declared unworkable by officials in 1984, for example (Giliomee and Schlemmer, 1985:340), and the failure of the system was further acknowledged at higher levels in both the President's Council report and the government's White Paper on Urbanisation. The President's Council report took pains to emphasize Simkins' 1985 calculations that the actual number of Africans who would migrate to urban areas through abolishing influx control would be negligible when compared with the projected natural growth of the existing urban African population (Schoombee and Davis, 1986:15). As these authors argue, influx control legislation had been largely ineffectual since the sixties and thus could be dispensed with without fundamentally

altering the status quo. Important in this respect, however, is the range of legislation which remains which fulfills, or can fulfill, the function of circumscribing African urbanisation.

The Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 have been singled out as the most important legislation which limits African urbanisation, particularly Section 1 of the 1913 Act which stipulates that purchase of land or any rights to land outside the areas defined for African occupation is illegal (Robertson in Jankowitz, 1987). Land which falls outside this definition is subject to the provisions of the Group Areas Act (Jankowitz, 1987:38). The Land Acts restricted Africans to specific geographical areas which later formed the basis of the government's separate development policy. In terms of urban settlement, the Group Areas Act although applicable to Africans, was never utilised in this regard, primarily because the Blacks (Urban Areas) Act made provision for African settlement in government-approved accommodation on proclaimed land set aside for such purposes.

The actual allocation of land for African urban settlement is controlled by four Acts: the Group Areas<sup>1</sup>, Black Communities Development, Black Administration, and Prevention of Illegal Squatting Acts (Jankowitz, 1987), with the provisions of the Illegal Squatting Act, the Trespass Act, the Health Act and the Slums Act all critical in determining the availability of housing for Africans. The control over the housing supply is vested in three

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<sup>1</sup> This Act was repealed in 1991.

government departments: the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning, the Department of Health and various Black local authorities (Corder, 1987:6-7).

In terms of urbanisation, the above Acts all create a tight web of control over land and accommodation and constitute the direct measures alluded to in the government's definition of 'orderly urbanisation'. Given the twin legacies of separate development: namely a shortage of land and an enormous housing backlog, the release of land and the provision of housing are crucial in any positive urbanisation strategy. As Dewar and Watson (1986:23) point out, the real issue is the supply of serviced land to which the urban poor can afford access. In this regard, although the concept of "informal settlements" has been embraced by the government as a means of coping with the acute housing shortage, in real terms this means the provision of an infrastructure which consists of some form of basic sewerage and water supply, with the onus falling upon the site-dweller to erect his or her own accommodation.

Essentially, then, the process of urbanisation has been overshadowed by restrictive measures which can be invoked wherever urbanisation occurs which does not conform to the government's notions of what constitutes acceptable or 'orderly' urbanisation. Thus, in terms of the amendments to the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning is empowered to prohibit the owner of land not zoned for residential purposes from allowing squatting to occur. The onus of preventing squatting falls upon the land owner who may be

prosecuted if he or she fails to evict squatters. As Schoombee and Davis (1986:13) point out, given present circumstances, this may cast a duty on a land owner to evict thousands of squatters.

The Trespass Act (No. 6 of 1959) requires that any person who enters or remains on land must have the permission of the lawful occupier or owner to be there. Failure to do so renders the person liable to prosecution and penalties have been greatly increased. A convicted person now faces a maximum fine of R2 000 and/or a two year prison term. The Slums Act (No. 76 of 1979) empowers all local authorities or central government in terms of its default powers, to force owners to clear slums on their land and to eject occupants thereof. Furthermore, lack of suitable alternative accommodation is not a mitigating factor in terms of the Act. In addition the Health Act (No. 63 of 1977) requires the prevention of possible health risks arising in urban township dwelling by the local authorities responsible. Municipal ordinances such as vagrancy and health regulations and various by-laws can also be invoked by the authorities as a means of controlling and monitoring urbanisation (Jankowitz, 1987:67).

Finally, despite the fact that the 1927 and 1936 legislation dealing with forced removals has been repealed, Africans living in established townships may still be forcibly relocated under the provisions of the Black Communities Development Act (No. 4 of 1984) which empowers the Minister to alter or disestablish any African township, relocate its inhabitants and demolish existing structures. In addition

proposed legislation such as the Borders of Particular States Extension Amendment Bill, will allow for the incorporation of established African communities into the 'homelands' at the stroke of a pen.

While the above constitutes one side of the 'orderly urbanisation' coin, the other side consists of indirect forms of control which are to serve as a means of more evenly distributing both population and economic activity on a national level. In this context the nine development regions, which encompass urban and rural areas and cut across the artificial political boundaries of the 'homelands', form integrated planning and administrative units and provide a framework within which incentive and restrictive measures are used to influence settlement patterns.

Incentives are used to encourage and support residential and industrial growth at various deconcentration points within the development regions. As Hindson remarks "[w]here geography allows, new deconcentrated areas are at present being sited in locations which are at once on the metropolitan peripheries and on the bantustan borders, and old commuter areas already located in such areas are being redefined as deconcentrated areas" (1987a:94). Dewar and Watson point out that Africans will be effected almost exclusively by this deconcentration policy in that the future urban population growth, both in terms of migration and natural increase, will be among Africans and not other population groups. The authors conclude that deconcentration "reflects [a] determination to divert African urbanisation

away from close contact with existing (white-controlled) metropolitan areas " (1986:23-24). In keeping with this policy major metropolitan areas are disadvantaged by numerous restrictive measures which act to severely curtail urban growth and industrial development<sup>2</sup>.

The responsibility of financing and implementing the urbanisation process has devolved principally upon lower tiers of government, the individuals and communities concerned, as well as private enterprise. In terms of government structures, the Regional Service Councils (RSCs) created in 1985, are responsible for administering the metropolitan areas within the development regions. In the first instance the RSCs serve the purpose of subsidising infrastructure in African townships which fall within their ambit and taxes levied on businesses constitute the major financial means to achieve this (Hindson, 1987a). Once this has been achieved "the aim of metropolitan fiscal policy is to ensure the standard of services supplied in an area is tied directly to the level of contribution of the local authorities concerned, allowing for residential differentiation on the basis of wealth and expressed preferences of the communities concerned. The essence of the policy is to privatise the supply of services and individualise the costs of their consumption" (Hindson, 1987a:91-92).

It has been pointed out that local authorities will become responsible for "... inter alia low-income housing,

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<sup>2</sup> For a critique of deconcentration policy, see Dewar and Watson, 1986; Thomas and van der Horst, 1986; and City Planner's Department, City of Cape Town report, 1987.

transport, trunk and social services; and implementation responsibilities for monitoring urbanisation. What is not devolved includes the power to set urbanisation policy and establish legislation, power to determine development priorities and the distribution of financial resources, and power to release land for industrial and residential development. Local authorities therefore become the administrative buffer between those who set policy in central government and the citizens who experience the policy at local level" (City Planner's Report, City of Cape Town, 1987:ii). Thus Black local authorities who have taken over from the now defunct development boards are to bear the burden of African urbanisation, despite such obstacles as lack of legitimacy, administrative experience and a sound financial base with which to effect the urbanisation process.

In summary, it is apparent that the government, whilst abolishing key legislation which served to restrict African mobility and urbanisation, has placed considerable emphasis on controlling and directing urbanisation under the guise of an 'orderly urbanisation' policy. In terms of this policy central government has shrugged off major responsibilities, including the financial burden of urbanisation, which have consequently devolved upon local government, the private sector and individuals concerned. When this is coupled with the fact that urbanisation is occurring almost exclusively among the African population who occupy the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder the 'reform' is seen in a new and disconcerting light.

The following chapter examines how the abolition of influx control legislation has affected key actors in the Western Cape. The impact of the changes on government officials, employers and trade unions is investigated.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### POLICY AND PRACTICE: GOVERNMENT, EMPLOYERS AND TRADE UNIONS

*'hamba dompas' that was the message. It is actually incorrect. You don't need a pass book but you don't automatically get a SA ID book. The way it was made known ... the impression of restoration seemed to have much wider application than in reality. (Senior official, Department of Home Affairs).*

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the impact and implications arising from the legislative changes discussed in Chapter Four, and seeks to examine key actors such as government officials, employers and trade unions in the light of their understandings, perceptions and interpretations of the legislation, and their responses in terms of how these have been translated into practice.

In the field of political and administrative science it is well known that the aims or intentions of policy makers which are translated into law are often thwarted in practice; either through inaccurate or inept legislation, through lower level bureaucrats within the government administration failing to comply with or to execute policy, or through ignorance or defiance by those towards whom the policy is directed (see also Simon, 1965; Lindblom, 1970). This chapter attempts to reveal the divergence between policy and practice as explored in the Western Cape and for purposes of analysis has been divided into three sections.

The first section focuses on government policy and practice in the crucial areas of citizenship and orderly urbanisation, while the second and third sections explore the consequences of these policies and the ways in which they have influenced specific interest groups: namely employers and trade unions respectively.

### Government Policy and Practice

In looking at government policy and practice in terms of citizenship and orderly urbanisation this section attempts to shed light on Simon's observations that:

[i]n the first place the legislative body will often wish, for political reasons, to avoid making clear-cut policy decisions and ... pass these on to an administrative agency. In the second place the administrator ... may (and usually will) have his own very definite set of personal values that he would like to see implemented by his administrative organization, and he may resist attempts by the legislation to assume completely the function of policy determination, or he may sabotage their decisions by his manner of executing them (1965:58-59).

### **Citizenship**

According to government policy, freedom of movement has been granted to those Africans with South African citizenship. However, this would on the face of it appear to exclude the majority of TBVC citizens who lost their South African citizenship when their 'homelands' attained 'independence'. With the abolition of influx control legislation the issue of citizenship has become crucial. Although the Restoration

of South African citizenship provides for the restoration or granting of South African citizenship to certain categories of TBVC citizens, as Schoombee and Davis (1986:8-10) point out, the legislation is fairly complex and the key issues revolve around whether and for how long the person in question has been "permanently resident" in the Republic and when he or she entered the Republic. In the latter case, the date of commencement of the Act serves as a cut-off point for those who qualify under this provision.

Initially it was estimated that only one and three-quarter million of the nine million people who lost their citizenship through 'homeland independence' would qualify in terms of these categories for restoration of citizenship (SAIRR, 1986). It has been suggested by Budlender, however, that the figure is closer to three million, although no test case has yet challenged the legislation: applicants who have been refused citizenship and who have threatened court action have been granted citizenship status without a court battle (Jankowitz, 1987:46). Research findings confirmed this. A senior official in the Department of Home Affairs, interviewed in 1988, stated that the government would settle before the case gets to court to avoid bad publicity and also to avoid testing the legislation in court. It was his opinion that several loopholes remained to be sorted out.

Critical to restoration of South African citizenship for TBVC citizens is that they can show that they were lawfully and permanently resident in South Africa. As Corder points out, an exemption under the Aliens Act makes all TBVC citizens in South Africa lawful residents for this purpose;

all that is further required in theory is proof of at least five years of residence in South Africa prior to application:

The meaning of the phrase "lawful resident" requires that the person must be in the country legally, which means that all TBVC citizens qualify in this regard because all of them are at present exempted from the requirement of possession of a temporary residence permit by the Minister of Home Affairs, acting in terms of section 7 bis of the Aliens Act. As regards "permanent residence", it appears that **five years residence with or without the rest of the applicant's family is sufficient to qualify in this regard.** It must be pointed out however that the applicant must have entered South Africa before the 30th of June 1986 in order to qualify by virtue of birth, registration or descent, although the channel of naturalization, as under the Citizenship Act, 44 of 1949, still remains open. It goes without saying that the chances of an African satisfying the requirements of naturalization are extremely slender, due mainly to the lack of availability of employment opportunity. According to the only statistics available, it is likely that approximately one million Transkeians and Ciskeians are potentially affected by these changed legal provisions (emphasis added, Corder, 1987:4).

The conflict between the legislation and official interpretations of it became clear during research. A senior official of the Department of Home Affairs in the Western Cape charged with these matters, claimed for example that no TBVC citizen with a family residing in an 'independent homeland' would be eligible for restoration of South African citizenship. In addition he stated that contract workers would also be ineligible since they would not be officially regarded as permanently employed<sup>1</sup>. In another view, Laubscher, who conducted research in the Western Cape in 1987, found that Africans who qualify in terms of categories of restoration of South African citizenship and apply for

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<sup>1</sup> This interpretation appears to ignore the rights of contract workers won in terms of the Rikhoto and Komani judgements.

such cannot be turned down: the Director General has no discretion in this regard (Corder, 1987:4).

In fact, however, senior officials were not clear on the new regulations and their interpretation. One Home Affairs official, when asked about the position of TBVC citizens under the Aliens Act pointed out he was still learning about it from the Departmental Procedural Manual. Yet another official mentioned his department had been receiving new directives almost weekly in early 1988. As he put it: *"things have changed so fast and are still changing..."*. Similarly senior Cape Provincial Administration (CPA) officials were found to be unsure about the Aliens Act and how it related to their area of jurisdiction: *"We have a group of legal experts who translate the new legislation into 'layman's language' but it's totally confusing even to myself. I've had colleagues try and explain it to me and I've had to say 'hold on! - lets go back to the beginning'"*

Despite differences in interpretation, an administrative procedure exists for the restoration of citizenship. The Restoration Act requires that TBVC citizens desirous of regaining South African citizenship must inform the Director-General of the Department of Home Affairs in writing. Basically, though, all a TBVC citizen has to do is fill out an Application for an Identity Document - form B1-9(E). This form serves the dual purpose of an application both for restoration of citizenship and for the new identity document. For purposes of restoration, the document is stamped to this effect and then signed by the applicant. Finally, if a TBVC citizen is eligible for South African

citizenship and applies for a South African passport this is the one case where he or she gets South African citizenship before applying for such via an identity document.

The application for an identity document must be accompanied by a birth certificate or photocopy thereof, or where unavailable a sworn declaration in lieu of a birth certificate, and two passport size photographs. The procedure is quite straightforward for South African citizens. In respect of TBVC citizens, however, an identity document is only granted "... to **immigrants** and to persons who were born in TBVC countries but now **reside with their families permanently** in the Republic" (B1-9 (E)). As has already been shown, this is a problematic interpretation. On the face of it, families appear to be the sole criterion, and a strict interpretation would apparently exclude single people. As already mentioned, though, no aspect concerning the restoration of citizenship had, at the time of writing, been tested in a court of law.

While experts and officials could argue about interpretations under the new law in terms of policy, investigations on the ground presented a rather different picture in practice.

In the Western Cape, in the case of Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens, as it turns out, practically everyone who applies for new identity documents does not experience any problem in having their applications accepted because the Department of Home Affairs has not been monitoring or checking the forms. One official stated that many people who handed in

their forms had them rejected outright. When asked why, they were told by the clerks that they had not been in the Republic for the necessary five year period. The same people would return later in the day and fill out new forms correctly which were then accepted by the clerks. As the official pointed out: "look, these guys aren't stupid! A lot of guys get them [ID's] that way". So it seems that the issue of permanent residence is largely academic since no proof is asked for or required by the Department. In fact the official mentioned that the issuing of new identity documents had been a bureaucratic nightmare, particularly in 1986 when the legislation was first passed:

*there were so many people in the halls that people couldn't get out of the lifts. We eventually had to close the building. Clerks were working practically twenty-four hours a day to try and process them. We were told by Pretoria that nobody should have to wait more than an hour to be processed. Practically its an impossible task to check ID applications, there are too many - the applicant - he's home and dry.*

In the ensuing chaos, the Department of Home Affairs came under considerable pressure, and was ill-prepared to process all the applications. The South African Police were not prepared to undertake the finger-printing required, and Home Affairs had in addition to set up systems for this. As the statement below reveals the Department had neither the expertise, the staff, nor the will to check applications. An official stated:

*All I can tell you is its absolute madness. Here and in Observatory. Employers can't take fingerprints and the SAP refused to because its not a criminal matter. With the initial rush we had stand up battles when it first started. The guys who make the rules don't know what is going to happen in practice. We weren't allowed to increase our staff - our staff threatened to walk out, eventually they gave us*

*five people. We had real hassles. It looks nice on paper but... .*

This raises another important issue regarding the bureaucracy. The administrators best able, in government terms, to deal with applications were those in the old Development Boards, with their inspectorate which had been responsible for the bulk of influx control enforcement over the years. The shift in policy entailed a shift to a different bureaucracy. The abolition of development boards saw many of the inspectorate seeking early retirement. Those that remained were transferred to various other government departments. In the Western Cape these people are now employed by the Departments of Home Affairs, Manpower, Education and Training and the South African Police, with the largest number having been transferred to Home Affairs (Hansard, 1987:1170). Apparently the latter transfer included the law enforcement personnel complete with uniforms, guns and radios. This was confirmed by a senior official in the Cape Provincial Administration who detailed some of the changes in the structure of government:

*the old labour bureau in Nyanga has been taken over by the Department of Manpower. The law enforcement side of the DB has been taken over by the Department of Home Affairs - a chunk of personnel were moved over, everything moved over - uniforms, badges, guns, radios, personnel... . The enforcement side of Home Affairs has been active opening up offices in Cape Town - taking over the old DB offices ... going to start going out into the field and looking at ID's.*

In 1987 forty-six inspectors were employed by Home Affairs (Hansard, 1987:1170-1172). One senior official in Home Affairs stated that the inspectors "are being used for all kinds of things everywhere. A lot are being used in clerical situations like checking marriage registers - there are far

more inspectors than available work at the moment". The official further mentioned that many of the old Development Board inspectors were unhappy with the changes: "Yeah, I've spoken to a lot of these guys. They had quite exciting lives. Some are dissatisfied - no car to take home, no uniform allowance and lower salaries over here [Home Affairs]. Most are on the top [of the salary scale] and can't go very far". The official was adamant, however, that none of the inspectorate were being used for checking identity document applications by Africans, but were concerned with the checking of what he referred to as 'real aliens'.

Before [the abolition] we had one immigration inspector for the whole area and he wasn't too successful in tracking down illegal, mainly white aliens. Now the old DB inspectors are now alien inspectors, they will be out looking for 'real aliens' - whites not blacks so much and they have ways and means of getting information that we don't have ... These alien inspectors will have some forms in the back of their cars. He gets to the factory - there is a form employers must fill in about aliens, the inspector would go back and get the forms and tell the employers what to do - like a 'walking guidance desk'.

From the above statement it is appears that the Home Affairs official was sending out contradictory signals concerning the role of the new alien inspectorate. On the one hand he hinted that their past experience as development board inspectors (in terms of their methods of getting information) would be useful in their future role within the department, yet on the other hand he took pains to emphasise the benign role the inspectorate would play in terms of their future duties. What is clear from the above, however, is the fact that the old development board inspectorate although transferred to Home Affairs were not being utilised

by the department in checking applications for South African identity documents. According to the CPA official, however, the inspectorate would be checking on South African identity document holders at some future stage.

Likewise the records kept by the local Development Board have been transferred to the Department of Home Affairs who have also taken over their old offices. But the records have not been utilised in cross-checking applications. As the official mentioned *"we have the old records that used to belong to the board, now they're part of our department. The old DB [office] in Observatory is now the district representative's office for the Department of Home Affairs. We're not adding to the files and we don't check ID applications against the files in Observatory"*. It does appear that random spot checks occur in Pretoria where all identity documents are processed. Occasionally an application is rejected, with no reason being given to the applicant and often none to the Department of Home Affairs itself. This same official was vague on the procedures which occurred in Pretoria:

*You must remember we have records in Pretoria. I don't know what they do there. I think they must do random checks. Sometimes we get an ID back from Pretoria saying the guy does not qualify. Every ID goes to Pretoria. No reasons are given for rejecting the application. All the laws state we don't have to give reasons. Pretoria often doesn't give us reasons.*

As mentioned previously people who have been refused citizenship and taken issue with the department have had out of court settlements. The official was aware of these cases and suggested the strategy behind these actions: *"I've*

*noticed the government tends to settle before we get to court. Their lawyers say 'is it worth the publicity?' The problem is, to be honest with you, there are a lot of things to be sorted out - a lot of loopholes. We are not going to argue something in court at this stage".*

Finally, the restoration of South African citizenship leads to a situation of dual citizenship, whereby the individual retains citizenship of one of the TBVC areas. The restoration of citizenship to residents of the TBVC states is subject to continuing negotiation between the South African government and the TBVC governments. In the meantime, however, all TBVC citizens are exempt from border control and visa requirements, although, as has been pointed out this is a precarious freedom as the exemption under the Aliens Act is a matter of administrative discretion which can be withdrawn at any time (Schoombee and Davis, 1986; Corder, 1987).

Africans with South African citizenship thus enjoy freedom of movement within the country. In the Western Cape, at least, citizens of the TBVC areas appear to be able to regain, or acquire, South African citizenship more or less at will, and at the time of writing were not subject to any effective restraints on their mobility.

On the face of things freedom of movement has been achieved, although as Schoombee and Davis (1986) point out, passes for Africans have been done away with by requiring everyone in theory to carry a 'pass'. In concluding this section, it is important to emphasize that the issue of citizenship is

still critical to mobility. TBVC citizens can be made immediately subject to normal aliens control legislation by a single administrative decision withdrawing exemption. Similarly, it is apparent that the influx control inspectorate is intact, and could be administratively deployed at any stage to resume its former activities, acting under different legislation. And finally, the restoration of citizenship procedures could be tightened administratively to exclude applicants.

From the above discussions a picture emerges of a Department ill-prepared and equipped to deal effectively with legislative changes that to all intents and purposes preceded any administrative planning for its implementation. As senior officials within the department revealed, the department and its staff were hopelessly underprepared for their new role. Interviews with Department of Home Affairs officials revealed considerable variation in their interpretation of policy developments concerning citizenship and South African identity documents and they appeared unhappy at being thrust into the role of surrogate enforcers of influx control. It is evident that the major result of the factors described above was the practical implementation of restoration of citizenship applications, as the research findings have revealed.

Ultimately, though, freedom of movement is largely meaningless without adequate access to land and housing and, as examined in Chapter Four, it is in this sphere that the state has concentrated its energies on an 'orderly urbanisation' strategy. The section below focuses on the

government officials responsible for urbanisation in the Western Cape, and examines, in practical terms, how the policy is unfolding in this region

### Orderly Urbanisation in the Western Cape

The Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning estimated that in 1985 there were 210 518 'legal' Africans in the Cape Town area<sup>2</sup>. When 'illegal' Africans are included it has been estimated that prior to the abolition of influx control the African population numbered around half a million in 1986 (Interview, Cape Provincial Administration). Statistics on the de facto African population living and working in the Western Cape have always been notoriously difficult to establish, as those classified as 'illegal' in terms of influx control laws have evaded official population counts. In the post-abolition era reliable statistics are still unavailable and estimates of the African population in Cape Town have ranged from 500 00 to over 1 million<sup>3</sup>. In 1987 the Black local authorities in conjunction with the CPA were involved in conducting a population survey (Hansard, 1987:1168), but by 1988 the CPA had approached the Human Sciences Research Council to undertake a fuller demographic study. This study placed the African population of Greater Cape Town at about 462 989 (HSRC, 1988).

There have been mixed views as to whether or not the Western Cape has experienced a massive influx of Africans

<sup>2</sup> Cape Times, 9/4/86.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfgang Thomas (1988) calculated that the African population in Planning Region 39 in 1987 was 780 000 or 28.67% of the total population (in Dewar et.al., 1991:5).

immediately after the abolition of influx control. It has been pointed out that the population in the Cape has doubled since 1985 and that Cape Town leads the country in terms of population growth; an estimated 30% compared with the national urban average of 5% (Africa Now, 1989:44). It should be noted that CPA officials who were interviewed in 1988 had conflicting views on the subject: the Director of Housing and Labour felt that in-migration was minimal, rather there had been a dramatic expansion coming from existing, seriously-overcrowded townships in the Cape Peninsula. In contrast, the Community Services official felt that many people were coming from outside the Peninsula. He mentioned that in the six month period ending in February 1988, the number of squatters had tripled in Crossroads and in Green Point in Khayelitsha: approximately 15 000 - 20 000 people had arrived between November 1987 and February 1988. Recent research findings, however, tend to support the former view that population growth in areas such as Khayelitsha represent a complex phenomenon comprising resettlement from existing townships, intra-urban migration, staged urbanisation as well as in-migration (Seekings et.al., 1990) and circulatory migration (Dewar et.al., 1991:4).

In the face of this increase or expansion, Khayelitsha has been clearly earmarked as the major residential area for Africans in the Peninsula. In 1986 the Minister of Information stated that 350 000 Africans would eventually live there<sup>4</sup>. According to the Community Services' official,

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4 Cape Times. 18/9/86.

by early 1988 the population was estimated to be in the region of 180 000 to 200 000. Of these 2 000 were classified by the CPA as forced removals - squatters from around the Peninsula, the rest were seen as 'voluntary' and there through 'free movement'. However, it should be borne in mind that the devastation of the Crossroads squatter camp in 1986 left thousands homeless and without many options other than to move to Khayelitsha (Cole, 1987).

The total area of Khayelitsha comprises 3 200 hectares of which 2 500 has been set aside for residential purposes. In line with the policy of providing basic infrastructure, approximately R98 million had been spent by early 1988 over an 18 month period for sewerage, earthworks, water and electricity reticulation, and a further R10 to R20 million had been earmarked for further development in the Blue Downs and Khayelitsha areas (Source: CPA officials).

In terms of housing in Khayelitsha, there were no plans for the state to erect any more housing beyond the initial 5 000 core houses which were built prior to the abolition of influx control. Provision of further housing would then devolve upon the private sector and upon individuals. A senior CPA housing official was pessimistic about private sector involvement. He felt that the private sector would not get involved due to low profit margins and that central government had read the market entirely incorrectly. Despite this, large amounts of residential land have been opened up for private sector development in Khayelitsha. Current

policy means that the urban poor will continue to be relegated to site and service plots.

It should be mentioned that although the Black local authorities have in theory taken over the day-to-day administration of African residential areas, in reality these bodies are ill-equipped to do so, at least in the Western Cape, due to a shortage of qualified staff (Corder, 1987:7). Thus the Community Services Branch of the CPA has been administering these areas for the last four years and continues to do so at present<sup>5</sup>.

It appears that as far as the allocation of housing is concerned the CPA has changed its policy over time. A comparison of research findings shows that in 1987 allocation of housing was contingent upon two conditions: the applicant had to be a South African citizen or the holder of a South African identity document and housing had to be available (Corder, 1987). In 1988, however, the Community Services official stated there was no housing policy based on nationality. Furthermore he added that it would be too difficult to do so with the large influx of people and doubted whether it would happen in the future. As far as the allocation of sites is concerned, the CPA does register people, however. According to the Community Services official a plot is only given to a family group and dependants must be listed on the registration form.

The enhanced powers of local authorities over the control of the urbanisation process has raised the question of

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<sup>5</sup> The CPA was still involved in assisting Black local authorities in 1991.

corruption: research undertaken in 1987 found that the allocation of sites for squatting purposes in areas such as sites B and C in Khayelitsha is "carried out by an informal system, in which local strong-arm tactics are used and fees are paid, not to the local authorities, but to the various so-called leaders in these areas" (Corder, 1987:7). The same situation prevailed at the time research was conducted in 1988. One official described the local leadership as a 'mafia' and stated the CPA were unable to control or stop them. The election of local authorities held in October 1988 further entrenched the power of some squatter leaders in Khayelitsha and Crossroads. Charges of corruption and violence have continued, restraining orders have been sought, and prosecutions have followed. These events continue to enjoy wide local publicity<sup>6</sup>.

Black Local Authorities (BLA's) have been controversial from their inception for a variety of reasons. Regarding their role in housing policy, Hendler (1989:40) suggests that in general the role central government desires black local authorities to play in advancing state housing objectives does not appear to have met with widespread success. One of the primary reasons lies in the fact that black local authorities have been invested with significant powers and responsibility, particularly in terms of controlling developers' access to land and the building of township housing. Hendler argues that this formal power to dispense

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<sup>6</sup> See Cape Times 19/4/89, 15/6/89, 1/3/90; Argus 13/2/89, 9/9/89 for just a few examples of convictions for fraud and theft, interdicts, murder and attempted murder prosecutions and assassinations.

patronage and influence development has actually hindered central government's policy of housing delivery.

In this context it is useful to look at research undertaken in the Pretoria - Witwatersrand - Vaal (PWV) region which found that black local authorities had not made substantial headway in gaining the support of residents nor have they initiated any large scale self-help schemes. Rather allocation of land it seems has gone to private developers at exorbitant prices. Indeed "evidence ... suggests that BLAs are not using their powers to ensure that developers provide affordable housing: on the contrary, they appear to be driving up the price of land [and] inhibiting the delivery of affordable housing. This is likely to erode the BLAs' support and frustrate government housing goals" (Hendler, 1989:47). As Hendler concludes:

the developers' experience confirms that BLAs do use their formal powers independently, but not in ways which advance the spread of homeownership and the stability it might bring. Their narrow support base and low credibility have ensured that many councillors see their participation in the BLAs, as a means of advancing their own rather than their constituents' interests: this has given them an interest in encouraging upper income housing and in artificially increasing the cost to residents. The individual gains which councillors make by allocating 'elite' housing to developers may well, therefore, be made at the expense of further eroding their political support among potential township allies. Far from advancing central government housing goals, the BLAs' land allocation powers, and the way in which they have chosen to use them, appear to be frustrating them, adding to pressure for alternative solutions (1989:49).

While it is important to take cognisance of regional variations and differences it can safely be assumed that similar trends are occurring elsewhere in the country. To return the focus to the Cape Peninsula, it is evident that

private companies involved in building upmarket homes in the African townships are not catering for the vast majority of residents. For example in 1989 hundreds of houses were being built in Crossroads at an average cost of R18 000 - well beyond the reach of most residents<sup>7</sup>, and in Mfuleni, Khayelitsha, Guguletu, and Langa houses ranging in price from R29 000 to R90 000 have been built by developers and promoted through extensive advertising campaigns aimed at a minority of aspirant African homeowners.

In strong contrast self-help schemes have been slow to get off the ground and have had little impact in the face of the vast housing backlog. For example, in Khayelitsha the Lingeletu West Town Committee obtained funds from the National Housing Commission (NHC) and made loans available for self-help housing. However only a hundred families benefited from the scheme, although apparently a further R1,05 million loan has been granted to the town committee by the NHC to continue the scheme<sup>8</sup>.

In summary, then, it appears that critics' fears concerning black local authorities and their role in the urbanisation process have been confirmed to a large extent. In this context the role Regional Services Councils (RSC's) play in terms of the implementation of services which facilitate the urbanisation process is a crucial one. The RSC's, while theoretically sharing a horizontal relationship with primary local authorities, are in reality potentially more powerful as the control of hard services makes their relationship

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7 Argus. 4/3/89, advertising campaign.

8 Cape Times. 20/6/89.

vis-a-vis primary local authorities essentially hierarchical.

In terms of the Regional Services Council Act members are nominated from the ranks of the primary local authority representation. Although no local authority can have more than 50% of the votes in an RSC, the voting formula which is based on services used, has effectively ensured that the controlling power in the RSC's is vested with white local authorities. The 16 RSC's which have been established in three provinces so far (Transvaal 12, Free State 1, Cape 3) are all controlled by white local authorities. The breakdown of representation on the Western Cape RSC is as follows: the 19 white-controlled municipalities wield 63,64% of the voting power as compared with the 26 coloured management committees (20,87%) and the 7 black local authorities (15,49%)<sup>9</sup>. As Hindson points out "[c]osts passed on to consumers within the RSCs will reduce the incentive of workers to move to these areas, and are intended to weigh most heavily on low income earners and people with large numbers of dependants - in short, African families who attempt to move from the rural areas to the core metropolitan areas" (1987:91).

Squatting has occurred in the Western Cape throughout most of this century in the face of high costs of living and lack of formal, legal accommodation in the proclaimed urban areas. In the Cape Peninsula, apart from the large, high-profile squatter camps such as Crossroads and Modderdam which came into existence in the early 1970's, pockets of

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<sup>9</sup> Cape Times. 22/3/89.

squatter communities such as those found in Hout Bay, Noordhoek, Fish Hoek, Red Hill and Ocean View for the most part represent long-term settlements which are economically tied to employment in the local area and are characterised by dense kinship and affinal links (Boonzaier, pers. comm. 1990).

As discussed in Chapter Two, in terms of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy (CLPP), influx control has been harshly implemented in the Western Cape and both types of squatter settlements have been subjected to extreme forms of harassment ranging from dawn pass raids through to the destruction of shelters, forced removals and even mass deportation in the case of Crossroads residents (see Cole, 1987; West, 1982). In the wake of the abolition of the CLPP in 1985 and influx control legislation in 1986 the government embraced the idea of "orderly squatting"; however, this has not meant a reprieve for squatters who are squatting on unapproved sites. In this regard the plight of the Noordhoek squatters proves a useful case study insofar as it illustrates how the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act has been utilised by various government bodies.

In December 1987 the removal of some seven hundred Noordhoek squatters to Khayelitsha was carried out under the auspices of the CPA and accompanied by all the familiar trappings of the old pass raids. This large scale forced removal was preceded by numerous attempts on the part of the Divisional Council to invoke the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act. In terms of the Act squatters were issued with orders to dismantle their shacks and move to Khayelitsha and at the

same time individual land owners were identified and forced to give squatters notice to vacate their property or face prosecution. Under these circumstances at least one land owner was reported to have laid formal charges of trespass with the South African police.<sup>10</sup>

Following the December removal three squatters brought a civil action suit against the CPA. The Supreme Court ruled in April 1988 that the removal to Khayelitsha was unlawful and that squatters be allowed to return to their original sites in Noordhoek. While the order was only legally binding in the case of the three applicants, the judge's findings that the removal was illegal was logically applicable to all the squatters who were removed at the time and most of the squatters returned to Noordhoek following the ruling. However some four months later the RSC laid charges with the SAP under both the Prevention of Illegal Squatting and Trespass Acts against the squatters for unauthorised occupation of RSC land and in mid-1989 the Noordhoek squatters were still complaining of harassment by RSC officials.<sup>11</sup>

Some actions carried out under the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act have been successfully challenged in courts of law. Among the more highly publicised have been the Noordhoek case discussed above and the Lawaaikamp case in which authorities were ordered to rebuild homes which had been demolished in terms of the Act's summary demolition procedure (which permits officials under certain

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<sup>10</sup> Cape Times. 2/3/87.

<sup>11</sup> Cape Times. 25/5/89.

circumstances to demolish squatter homes without a court order and without a notice).

In light of these successful court cases the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Amendment Bill, published in 1988, contained provisions which sought to remove the courts' jurisdiction to examine the activities of government officials as well as granting wide discretionary powers to officials to carry out government policy. The Bill, although widely criticised and hotly debated in Parliament, has nevertheless become law as the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Amendment Act (No. 104 of 1988).

It is apparent that the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act has been refined in an attempt to eliminate squatting which fails to conform to the government's concept of orderly urbanisation, however, as Dewar et.al. suggest:

the new squatting legislation has been used selectively in the urban areas, primarily to move people who have settled close to, or within, parts of the city set aside for "white" occupation. In Cape Town informal settlement in the vicinity of the African and coloured townships is now tolerated to a far higher degree and the approach of the state to these settlements appears to be shifting towards one of negotiation over land and service provision (Dewar et.al., 1991:17).

Despite the recent shift in policy described above, the government's failure to provide adequate land quickly enough to meet growing demands coupled with the unavailability of housing near places of employment means that 'illegal' squatting is destined to continue irrespective of legislative controls.

In conclusion this section has examined some of the disjunctions between policy and practice within government departments which are responsible for implementing the new legislation in the areas of citizenship, South African identity documents and 'orderly urbanisation'. In turning to the sphere of employment below I examine how employers and employer organisations have interpreted these changes and the degree to which they have been internalised with regard to hiring practices.

#### Employer Policy and Practice

With the abolition of influx control all Africans who are South African citizens are free to seek employment subject to the ordinary labour legislation of the country. This does not apply, however, to citizens of the TBVC states who are considered aliens.

It has been noted that 95% of all Africans living and working in the Western Cape are citizens of either Transkei or Ciskei<sup>12</sup>, and in this regard it is important to understand how they are affected by changes in the legislation. For this purpose it is useful to take earlier research conducted in 1987 as a starting point and then proceed with a comparison of research undertaken in 1988 in order to highlight processes of change in perceptions and response on the part of employers, government officials and trade unions.

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<sup>12</sup> Cape Times, 17/4/87.

As discussed in Chapter Two, in the Western Cape context, the Coloured Labour Preference Policy ensured that industry drew heavily on an African workforce comprised primarily of contract migrant labour. With the abolition of influx control the status of Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens and the procedure for hiring them immediately became of great concern to employers. Government directives on this matter, however, have caused endless confusion amongst employers. Chief among these has been a Department of Manpower<sup>13</sup> circular which was sent to all employers in the Western Cape in the latter half of 1986 stipulating that only South Africans and those with work permits were not subject to the provisions of the Aliens Act. Thus Transkeians and Ciskeians would be in the same position as all foreigners, that is subject to the Aliens Act, and penalties for their employment without a work permit are severe.

Research conducted by Laubscher in 1987 found that reaction to the circular on the part of advice office workers and employers proceeded along the lines that since Transkeians and Ciskeians were now regarded as aliens they would have little chance of getting a work permit unless it could be proven that no local or qualified labour was available, and in this process the Departments of Manpower and Home Affairs had to be consulted (Corder, 1987:5). In practice, however, the situation appears to be quite different.

From the point of view of the worker, Transkeians and Ciskeians are exempt from having work permits at present, and they can come spontaneously to work in the

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<sup>13</sup> Although commonly referred to in the literature as the Department of Manpower circular it was actually sent out under the auspices of the Department of Home Affairs (document 86080602mb/ dated 30/9/86, Employment of Foreign Workers).

Republic. If they are recruited in the Transkei or Ciskei, however, they must attest a contract. There is no law under which they can be prosecuted for entry and/or working in the Republic at present. From the point of view of the employer, he or she is not liable to prosecution for employing Transkeians or Ciskeians because section 5 of the Aliens Act limits his or her liability to cases of employment of people in the Republic illegally. Transkeians and Ciskeians do not fall into this category as they are at present exempt (Corder, 1987:5).

Furthermore the procedure for recruiting labour in the homelands was found to be conditioned by bilateral agreements:

[s]everal bilateral agreements exist between the Transkei and the Ciskei on the one hand and South Africa on the other hand which require the employer to have a permit to recruit labour in the Transkei or Ciskei, a permit which is obtained from the South African Department of Home Affairs and which will only be issued on proof of non-availability of local labour. The effect in practice of these bilateral agreements, however, is virtually nil, because they have not been incorporated into municipal law, and non-compliance by an individual with such an agreement does not amount to a contravention of a legal duty. What has happened, is that the circular from the Department of Manpower has resulted in an informal form of influx control, through uncertainty of their position on the part of employers. The vital importance of the continuation of exemption under the Aliens Act is obvious (Corder, 1987:6).

One high-ranking official within the Department of Home Affairs stressed that employers were at fault in their failure to understand government policy as he stated in no uncertain terms: "*they've been pretty well informed with pamphlets and circulars but they don't study those bloody things!*". Uncertainty concerning the legality of hiring Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens was still very evident in 1988 when interviews were conducted with major industrial employers. It was found that the Department of Manpower

circular had indeed played a decisive role in influencing employers' attitudes in a variety of ways.

For some employers the circular, distributed some four months after the widely hailed abolition of influx control, represented the last straw in terms of government interference with hiring practices, and many employers chose to ignore it. As one major employer stated "we got the government circular around October 1986 and we're ignoring it. It's such a mess. Business men today must run a business. With all the chopping and changing we're waiting until they [government] decide what they're doing". In adopting this kind of response employers stated that they were more concerned about running their companies than breaking the law.

The general feeling employers espoused was that they would deal with the consequences of their actions "when the time came", meaning when the Department of Home Affairs' alien inspectorate caught up with them. In fact, none of the employers interviewed had received any visits from inspectors in the seventeen months following the Department of Manpower circular and several had been told by senior officials in the Department of Home Affairs "not to worry about it because the Department doesn't have any men to check up on illegal aliens at the moment". Elsewhere in the country, however, it was reported that in the first month of 1987 inspectors had visited some 3 000 companies to search for illegally employed foreign blacks and six employers had been prosecuted for contravening the Aliens Act<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Business Day, 4/3/87.

While one reaction on the part of employers was to ignore the circular, many sought clarification from the Department of Home Affairs concerning the employment of Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens. Two employers in the sample stated that they were told by very senior officials (the Director-General and the District Representative) that TBVC citizens were exempt from certain sections of the Aliens Act concerning temporary residence but had to follow the same procedure as aliens for getting work. The position espoused by these officials is contradicted not only by legal interpretations of the Aliens Act (see quote from Corder above) but by other high-ranking officials such as the Regional Representative and various experts on citizenship and temporary residence permits within the Department itself who adamantly stated that TBVC citizens did not need work or residence permits. The expert on temporary residence permits stated that *"TBVC citizens do not require work permits [and that] this is a departmental interpretation of their exemption from Section 2(b) of the Aliens Act"*.

In light of the confusion and lack of consensus within the Department it is not surprising, therefore, to find that some employers are labouring under the misconception that Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens are persona non grata in terms of the Aliens Act. The degree of confusion and uncertainty generated amongst employers by the Department of Manpower circular and Aliens Act legislation is aptly illustrated by the following two case studies.

### Case 5.1 Passing the Buck

The Cape Chamber of Industries (CCI) has an extensive membership who look toward the Chamber for clarity concerning hiring practices and procedures. In this respect the Industrial Relations Advisor of the CCI is responsible for disseminating information on the legislative changes concerning employment of Africans. The advisor, however, regarded the procedure for employing Africans as so bureaucratically complex that he referred anyone wanting to employ Africans to an industrial relations employee of a major Cape Town company whom he claimed 'knew the correct procedures'.

As this case illustrates a major service organisation such as the CCI did not know the procedures involved in employing Africans and thus directed their members to an alleged 'expert' on the subject, who, as it turned out, was following the procedures for hiring aliens as advised by the Department of Manpower circular to the letter.

The case below examines an employer who had resigned from membership of the CCI and struck out on his own in terms of what he considered to be legally correct procedures for hiring Transkeian contract workers.

### Case 5.2 Muddling Through

In 1981 the company was caught by the Development Board inspectorate and fined R2 000 for incorrect hiring procedures under influx control. With the abolition the employer wanted to be certain he was following the law to the letter. In this regard he approached a Nyanga Development Board official he had befriended and asked what the new procedure was and was told that there was no system for the renewal of contracts. At this time some of his fellow employers in the construction industry decided to ignore everything and employ whomever they liked.

The employer followed suit until the Department of Manpower circulars started floating around about hiring aliens. He then had his labour officer send workers to the Department of Home Affairs office in Observatory. One of these workers came back with a brown card from the Community Services branch of the CPA, presumably the employer felt, on the advice of Home Affairs. The employer contacted the CPA and was told to send any potential worker to them. The employer had been following this advice since 1986. He stated that

the company when wanting to hire a potential worker wrote a letter asking if his documents were in order and then sent the work-seeker and the letter to the Nyanga office. If the work-seeker returned with a brown card which listed the work-seeker's name, address and type of occupation and bore a Department of Manpower stamp the employer hired him. The employer then filled out the employment particulars on the brown card and sent it back to Nyanga. The employer felt that this was the legally correct procedure for hiring workers and saw a continuity in procedure in that under influx control workers were issued with a brown book from the Western Cape Development Board offices.

In reality the employer was following the procedures set out under the Guidance and Placement Act (No.62 of 1981) which are not compulsory. The functions of these centres are to provide information on the labour market for both work-seekers and employers, to place work-seekers in employment opportunities, and to keep a record of these activities (Bekker and Humphries, 1984:24). These activities were carried out by the Development Boards on behalf of the Department of Manpower. With the abolition of influx control and Development Boards the Nyanga office is now shared jointly by the Guidance Centre and the CPA. Thus it is not surprising to find confusion on the part of the employer in terms of which government department was actually responsible for brown cards. It is evident however that the employer felt he was legally correct in his hiring procedures.

The next case differs from the two cited above in that the company through utilising insider networks was informally exempt from influx control regulations a year before the abolition.

### Case 5.3 Insider Networks

In 1985 the company's workers went on strike and the company approached the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning and told him as far as they were concerned influx control was dead, people were pouring into Cape Town and the strike was unlikely to be resolved. The company got authority to bypass the influx control system informally. The Minister told the company it would be a great experiment for what was about to come and would send officials back the following year to see the results. The company had carte blanche and hired 2 900 workers without the old DB cards and did not render any returns. The company merely gave the new workforce their company ID and no inspections or harassment occurred except in the country districts where officials were not aware of the informal exemption.

Following the abolition the company made South African identity documents compulsory for their workforce. Although Cosatu opposed these documents the company was successful in their policy since the majority of union members affiliated to Cosatu had lost their jobs in the 1985 strike. In response to worker's worries about losing Transkeian land rights the company engaged in high level discussions with the Transkei and Ciskei governments and received written assurances that this would not happen.

Finally the company was aware of Development Board officials being transferred to the Home Affairs Department and had heard that inspections were on the cards.

The case above illustrates how a major industrial employer was able to manipulate insider contacts to suit its own purposes. In this regard there appears to be a direct correlation between the size of the company, the largest of those interviewed, and the political clout and insider knowledge it wielded. In stark contrast the remaining companies appeared far less sophisticated in their strategies.

In the face of what was perceived as a new and complex bureaucratic procedure for hiring Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens, many employers decided to start recruiting locally. As one major employer stated "we are not hiring any aliens due to the hassle involved in doing so. *Khayelitsha*

grows by 10 000 every Sunday - we recruit all our workers from Khayelitsha". He further stated that the company had saved a substantial amount of money by recruiting locally:

*the pass laws and the migrant labour system cost us two hostels built at a cost of almost R3 million and it cost us R60 000 a month to keep them running. We also had to bus these 5 000 guys back to the Transkei each year to attest a contract at an annual expense of R250 000. They had to be screened for TB annually at a cost of R9.50 per worker and we used to use brokers to handle it at an annual cost of R10 per worker.*

Given the perceived troubles of employing migrant labour and the high costs involved it is not surprising that the majority of employers interviewed stated that all future needs would be filled by local labour. This confirms Corder's (1987:6) above assertion that employers are in fact carrying out an informal form of influx control.

As far as existing 'alien' employees are concerned, however, employers, fearing the consequences of employing an 'illegal' workforce, embarked on extensive and successful campaigns to get their workers South African identity documents. The majority of companies interviewed had followed a similar procedure: all had approached the Department of Home Affairs and arranged for officials to be sent to their companies to process their workforce. One of the employer's commented that the procedure had resembled a production line with photographs being taken and tables lined up with officials filling in forms for the workers. According to several employers these officials processed all the workers en masse and turned a blind eye to those workers who clearly did not qualify in terms of the five years

permanent residence criterion. As one employer stated:

*the Department of Home Affairs guy came here and made it very clear that he was not wanting to have anything to implement or make waves. He said he would accept claims that black employees had been working here for five years. I asked him about an 18 year old - it's obvious that he hasn't worked here for five years - and the inspector said he would accept what was written down on the form.*

The position adopted by Department of Home Affairs officials, namely that of accepting applications for South African identity documents at face value, seems to have occurred both at their main offices and out in the field, as the above case illustrates. In this context it is important to note that one major employer admitted he had told his workforce when filling out the forms for new identity documents "for God's sake put the right date in" referring to the five year residence period needed in order to qualify. In a similar vein another employer stated:

*I went to the guys and told them the story. I said I wasn't condoning lying but these are the facts ... of the guys who applied for South African identity documents 90% got them.*

According to those employers who promoted South African identity documents the majority of applications, between 90-100% were successful. Thus Transkeian and Ciskeian workers who had been formerly on yearly contracts under the old influx control laws were granted South African identity documents without a hitch. In fact, as Chapter Six will reveal, Transkeian migrant workers and their dependants were processed by officials in the field and granted identity documents.

It is obvious that migrant workers applying for South African identity documents and citizenship would fail to qualify for either in terms of the 1988 interpretation of legislation. This would lead one to conclude that migrant workers who applied for and were granted identity documents and citizenship early on represent a successful minority. On the other hand, however, research findings reveal that wholesale perjury has occurred on the part of many individuals applying for South African identity documents; in some cases this has been actively promoted or condoned by employers. In any event, these applications have been accepted and processed by the Department of Home Affairs officials.

Ironically, then, it appears that officials are contributing to the confusion in two ways, firstly, by telling employers that Transkeians and Ciskeians must be treated like any other aliens in terms of employment and secondly, by processing Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens irrespective of whether they qualify for South African identity documents or citizenship.

One of the consequences of employers successfully getting their workforce South African identity documents has been a change in hiring practices. It was found that many employers have adopted a policy of hiring workers who have these new documents. One major company even threatened to fire their workforce if they did not get the new documents:

*we told our guys to go for the new ID's - in 18 months time if you don't have the new ID book you won't get a job. We also told them if they got the new ID they would get on the housing list faster - as an incentive.*

In hiring only those with South African identity documents employers are unwittingly or not implementing government policy. Whereas under influx control the workforce suffered from insider/outsider divisions, in terms of the Aliens Act the focus has now shifted to dividing the workforce along the lines of citizenship. In this context it is important to examine trade union response.

### Trade Union Policy and Practice

Of the trade unions interviewed Cosatu had initially been vehemently opposed to the new South African identity documents. Their position was outlined in a meeting held with the Cape Chambers of Industry and Commerce in November 1986, in which they stated that a decision had been made both nationally and regionally that members would not apply for the new identity documents. As Cosatu union officials stated at the meeting, the new documents were seen not as a common identity document but as a form of control similar to the old "dompas". Furthermore they claimed there had been a lack of consultation. The new system had been introduced over the heads of the workers and in this regard management was seen as collaborating with the Department of Home Affairs.

Cosatu's call to boycott South African identity documents appears to have been undermined in the face of employer determination and workers' uncertainty about losing their jobs. In addition the fact that at least one union

affiliated to Cosatu refused to comply with the boycott further undermined their position. Faced with these problems Cosatu's strategy of resistance failed. This was acknowledged by a Cosatu official in the Western Cape who stated that Cosatu now saw the abolition of influx control as a significant victory for which the unions had long battled. Cosatu's about-turn on the issue of identity documents, however, does not appear to have influenced some of their membership to apply. As one employer commented *"Cosatu having initially said that they were not supporting the new ID's now makes a 180 degree turn ... but the workers won't change overnight"*.

It appears that Cosatu was one of the few unions which was concerned about the implications of the new identity document. Other unions which were interviewed had not made a policy decision on the matter. As one union official stated *"more than once we've thought it should be reviewed [but] we've got other more important things to deal with ... of course when that becomes important it will be too late"*. This same union official added that as far as he knew the initial Cosatu view on South African identity documents had not been modified or discussed again. It would seem that the issue of South African identity documents and citizenship has not been on Cosatu's agenda since their initial position was made known in 1986. While Cosatu now views the abolition of influx control as a victory this viewpoint does not appear to have filtered through to other unions or altered attitudes among some of its membership who still steadfastly refuse to apply. On the whole, however, there appeared to be

no major resistance on the part of the workers to applying for the new identity documents (and consequent restoration of citizenship), despite the initial attitudes of organisations such as Cosatu and the Black Sash who saw the new measures as divisive of workers and inimical to their longer-term interests. On the contrary, evidence shows a considerable eagerness to apply, which tailed off markedly as it became clear that the authorities were not impeding employment of TBVC citizens.

It is evident from the above discussion that the initial response of some unions was either hostility or indifference to the new measures. Evidence suggests that there was little careful analysis of the implications of the new system, nor even much monitoring of its implementation. Initial interest in the acquisition of new identity documents, and in the restoration of citizenship seemed generated mainly by employers, however, as the stated policy of action against non-South African citizens turned out to be an empty threat, at least in the short term, so interest waned. An analysis of employer response to the new situation revealed wide variation in the understanding and interpretation of the new system and thus differing policies. Some firms ignored officialdom, and simply hired workers at the gate - irrespective of citizenship. Others adopted a safety-first policy of hiring only South African citizens, and also worked the system by processing their workers en masse. Very few firms interviewed were concerned about policy changes in the future; the majority had a short term perspective, preferring to deal with problems as they arose. Virtually

all the firms interviewed stated that their major problem regarding their African workers were now related to accommodation rather than controls on mobility.

In conclusion the main themes which have emerged from this chapter are those of confusion and lack of knowledge among many of the informants. It was found that high-ranking government officials lack consensus on vital issues of citizenship and employment which affect the lives of thousands of Transkeian and Ciskeian citizens. Employers, confused by the confusion in government departments and confronted by a new situation and set of rules have either ignored them or succumbed to government policy by promoting South African identity documents among their workforce and making it a necessary condition of employment. In the face of this unions have been slow to respond and, as in the case of Cosatu, failed to influence affiliated unions and their membership in rejecting the new documents. Finally the fact that these documents have been granted to citizens of Transkei and Ciskei irrespective of eligibility illustrates the disjunction between policy and practice.

With an understanding of the larger processes at work in the Western Cape, Chapters Six and Seven take the form of a micro-study which investigates what is happening on the ground at a company compound.

## CHAPTER SIX

## THE SOCIAL LANDSCAPE OF A COMPANY COMPOUND

*We are ashamed and embarrassed to have people visiting from home. Our places are not like this in the Transkei - we don't live like this!*  
(interview with 37 year old worker)

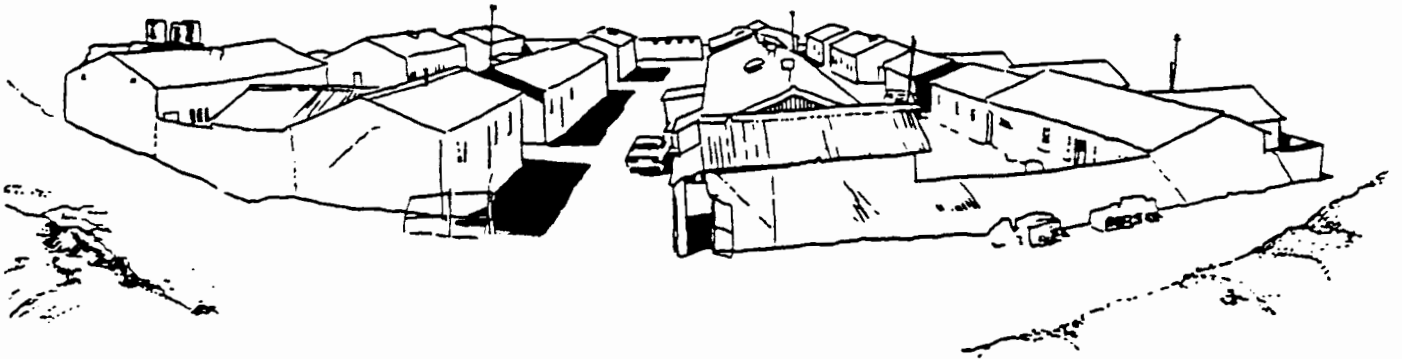
Introduction

The company compound, on which this chapter focuses, is situated on a large tract of land approximately fifty kilometres from the city of Cape Town within the greater Cape Town area. The company, which is one of a number of light industries in the area, is surrounded by farmland while residential suburbs and numerous commercial enterprises can be found in the general vicinity. Despite this one is still left with the overriding impression that the company is indeed 'in the country', no doubt enhanced by the vistas of rolling hills and the small country-style cafe encountered on the road directly leading to the company.

The company, initially a family business involved in the glazed pipe industry, was incorporated in the late 1940's. With the advent of PVC piping which revolutionised the industry the company decided to concentrate solely on the brick industry. In the late 1970's and early 1980's the company went through a growth period investing in sophisticated equipment and becoming partially automated. The range of products the company produces include facebrick

as well as paving, block and clay plaster bricks, the latter being used extensively for low cost economic housing.

### Physical Layout of the Compound



To reach the compound one turns left before entering the company gates into what is little more than a dirt track which becomes impassible by car after heavy rains. The track runs parallel to the company which remains visible, while dense vegetation occupies the other side of the track. It is in this area that one often comes across women cooking sheep's heads or other items to sell. The compound looms up quite unexpectedly due to the fact that it is directly adjacent to the company and obscured by a three metre high 'wall' of rubble and earth which acts as a divider between the two. A bare soccer pitch lies to the south of the compound while a large brick field is located on its east side. Front loaders and other heavy machine equipment are thus used in close proximity to the compound which is hemmed in by the company and its operations.

The company compound was built in the early 1950's on company owned land as single-sex accommodation for men<sup>1</sup>. The physical layout of the compound has changed over the decades thus the compound I found during fieldwork over three decades later was very different from that which confronted the first migrant workers who lived there. Initially the compound consisted of several single storey brick dormitory blocks and facilities were limited to two small buildings which housed a washroom and kitchen. Almost a decade later the compound underwent significant changes with the introduction of a company-run kitchen and dining hall as well as ablution facilities including showers, latrines, urinals and sinks which were added on to existing dormitory blocks during this period. In addition a compound manager's office was built and at this stage in its development a brick wall was erected around the compound with a single entrance being located on the north side of the compound near the compound manager's office. Until 1985 access to the compound was controlled by a security guard through two wire gates: one large enough to admit vehicles and the other for individuals.

By the late 1970's, in keeping with the company's growth, the compound had doubled in size with the addition of eight new single storey dormitory blocks. These differed from the older blocks in basic design. The newer blocks consist of two dormitory rooms with a communal ablution room in between as compared with the older ones which are open rooms. All

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<sup>1</sup> According to the company's Managing Director the compound has never officially 'existed' in that the company had never registered it or taken out a license with the Administration Board in terms of the Black Labour Regulations.

the ablution rooms are equipped with hot and cold running water, a urinal, toilets, showers and sinks. The older blocks are made of brick while the newer ones are made of prefabricated concrete. In total there are twenty-seven dormitory rooms with a total of 212 beds. On average there are thirteen beds per room in the older blocks and eight beds per room in the newer blocks. The roofs are metal with no ceilings and the floors bare cement. The company issues single-size iron bed frames with one foam mattress per bed and lockers, usually four per dormitory room, for storage of personal belongings. At the time of fieldwork twelve of the twenty-seven rooms had some type of stove while the rest relied on paraffin for cooking. The company was not charging their employees for rent, water or electricity, and coal, used for heating and cooking, was also being provided free of charge. Finally, the remaining features to describe which complete the compound layout are the three water storage tanks on the premises as well as two high-mast lights which stay on twenty-four hours a day. The old wash room and kitchen are found at the rear of the compound; the washroom's outside sinks are now used for washing clothes and preparing food and the kitchen has become a venue for teenage boys who gather there.

An air of neglect pervades the compound. When I first entered the compound in July 1988 this was immediately evident in the compound's outward appearance: the gates at the entrance lie twisted and broken, the buildings themselves are covered with years of grime and dust, doors sag on their hinges and numerous glass window panes are

broken and have not been replaced. The interior of the compound is untarred and an old vehicle lies abandoned and rusting in one of the alleyways between the dormitory blocks. An initial tour through the dormitory rooms in quick succession leaves one with the overwhelming impression of dirt, squalor and lack of space and privacy for the inhabitants. As fieldwork progressed, however, I began to appreciate the ways in which many of the residents have both adapted to and transformed the physical environment of the compound. In this I was lucky to have spent time there during the end of winter and beginning of summer as the types of scenes and activities that can be observed within the compound are to a large extent determined by the season and weather. For example, in inclement weather, especially during winter rainfall, the compound appears even more forlorn and desolate. Wet laundry flaps on outside lines strung up between blocks. People, mostly women and children, tend to stay indoors as much as possible huddled around smoking coal braziers, and when outdoors make their way carefully across the slippery mud surface of the compound or trudge through the ankle-deep mud on the track if errands or business take them away from the compound. In contrast in hot, sunny, weather residents have to contend with the heat, dust and flies and a great deal of activity takes place outdoors as people escape the heat of the rooms. Blankets are arranged in the shade created by the buildings and women can be found chatting to one another there while children of all ages play within the confines of the compound.

### Population Size

At the time of fieldwork there were approximately 377 people staying in a compound designed to accommodate 212 male migrant workers. This means that an additional 165 people were crowded into the compound leading to an average bed occupancy rate of 1,8 people per bed. It should be emphasised that this figure reflects the average occupancy rate for the compound as a whole, and indeed I found cases of bed occupancy ranging from one to over four people per bed. It is disturbing to note that this in fact compares favourably with recent research conducted in Western Cape municipal hostels which were found to have even higher person to bed ratios<sup>2</sup>. This overcrowding naturally places a great strain on people who have little or no privacy or personal space. Very often the bed is literally one's only personal space, and even then it is often a shared space. In this context it is significant that the bed -holder has become the standard unit of analysis in most contemporary research in this area (Ramphela and Segar, 1987; Ramphela and Boonzaier, 1988; Segar, 1988).

This degree of overcrowding has also had a negative effect on compound facilities which are strained with increased usage. For example in terms of ablution facilities a survey of fourteen of the fifteen blocks revealed the average ratio of 14,1 people per toilet, 10,4 people per shower and 8,4 people per sink. Again these figures are low when compared

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<sup>2</sup> Ramphela and Boonzaier (1988:157) found the average bed occupancy rate for hostels in Cape Town to be 2.8 people per bed, with a range of between one person to ten people per bed.

with findings on municipal hostel accommodation in the Western Cape<sup>3</sup>. What is important to realise, though, is that there is not an even spread of people living in each block. This means that overcrowding in some blocks puts a strain on the ablution facilities of that particular block. In the case of block 10, for instance, where both toilets and sinks were not functioning forcing the residents to use the toilets and sinks in the neighbouring block, thus increasing the strain on facilities. Table 1 below indicates the relevant ratios.

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**Table 1: Block, People by Ratio to Facilities**

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Bkck	People	Shwers	Ratio	Toilets	Ratio	Snks	Ratio
1	13	2	6,5	2	6,5	2	6,5
2	40	2	20,0	2	20,0	3	13,3
3	11	2	5,5	2	5,5	1	11,0
4	18	2	9,0	2	9,0	2	9,0
5	42	3	14,0	2	21,0	4	10,5
6	29	3	9,6	2	14,5	4	7,3
7	29	3 (1)	14,5	2	14,5	4	7,3
8	30	3	10,0	2	15,0	4	7,5
9	23	3	7,6	2	11,5	4	5,8
10	19	3 (1)	9,5	2 (2)	-	4 (4)	-
11	30	3	10,0	2 (1)	30,0	4	7,5
12	16	2	8,0	2	8,0	2	8,0
13	27	3	9,0	2	13,5	4	6,8
14	25	3 (1)	12,5	2	12,5	4	6,3

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Note: Bracketed figures indicates facility not functioning.

Thus far I have given some idea as to the physical layout of the compound, the size of its population and the conditions under which they live. The following section is concerned

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3 For example Ramphela and Boonzaier's (1988:157) survey recorded a person to working toilet ratio of 133:1; and a person to tap ratio of 117:1.

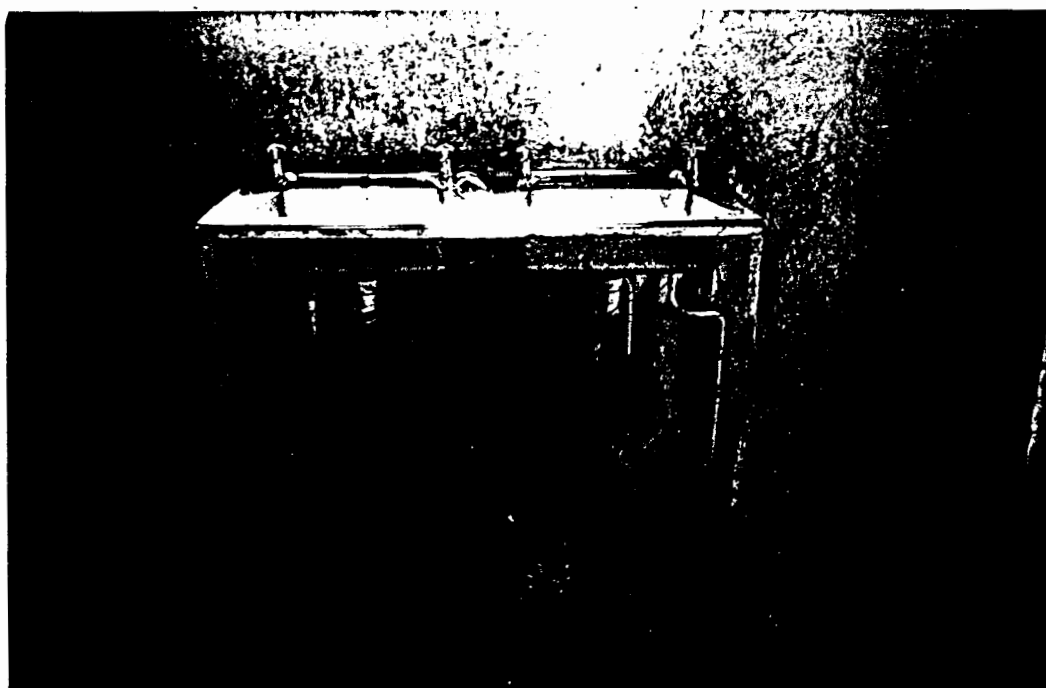
with providing basic demographic data on the people living in the compound. For this purpose I have found it convenient to divide the population into two categories: 'legal' bed-holders and dependants. By 'legal' bed-holders I refer to those workers who are permanently employed by the company. Dependants in this context refers to people who stay at the compound under the auspices of a 'legal' bed-holder. The majority of dependants staying in the compound at the time of research were in fact relatives. There were a few exceptional cases, however, where people were found to be bed-holders who were neither permanently employed by the company nor dependant upon 'legal' bed-holders.

The following photographs depict scenes and people of the compound.

*Scenes of the Compound*



*Scenes of the Compound*



*People of the Compound*



*People of the Compound*



*People of the Compound*



*People of the Compound*



*People of the Compound*



'Legal' Bed-holders: The World of Work

The number of bed-holders who were interviewed, 100 out of a total of 212 beds or 47% of bed-holders, can be considered as representative of the compound at large. The majority of these bed-holders (98%) were men, and of these (96%) were permanently employed by the company, either full-time (91%) or seasonally (9%). In terms of employment three of the four remaining bed-holders, revealed some interesting aspects of company practice. It appears that the company relies to a certain extent on sub-contractors who provide cheap labour for the company. One of the bed-holders stated that he had been working in this capacity as a labourer for a period of nine months, earning R54 per week. In addition the company makes use of casual labour, and the two female bed-holders had been employed as such earning between R50 to R55 per week. Although one of the women had lost this position and had been unemployed since December 1987 she still retained her bed at the hostel.

The company's use of casual and sub-contracted labour also occurs among the dependants living in the compound. This shall be explored more fully when focussing on this second category of compound inhabitants. The remaining bed-holder in the sample was found to have a casual job working as a labourer independent of the company and was also earning a weekly wage similar to that cited above. As can be seen these four bed-holders represent an anomaly in terms of the two categories of people that I have identified as living in the compound: 'legal' bed-holders and dependants. Their

ability to secure beds and become bed-holders will be examined later in looking at the networks and social organisation of space within the compound.

According to the company's Managing Director the company employs 250 Africans and they comprise the largest section of the company's workforce. It is immediately apparent that this number exceeds the number of beds provided in the compound by some 38 employees. An explanation for this discrepancy may in part lie in the fact that a few of the higher-ranking African employees live in the townships and have had section 10(1) rights to reside in urban areas. Thus, for instance, when asked whether he lived in the compound the labour officer looked incredulous and stated emphatically that he lived in Guguletu township. However, it is doubtful that all thirty-eight fall into this position especially given the fact that the most highly skilled employees within the company are those either classified as Coloured or White. A more probable explanation is that the accommodation for those legally entitled to it was inadequate prior to the overcrowding by dependants.

This in fact does seem to be the case by the Managing Director's own admission, for when discussing the problem of overcrowding at the compound, he stated "*in the mornings I see a stream of people leaving the compound. I've got 250 employees but I know them, I know their faces*". His statement reveals that as far as he is concerned his African workforce is, theoretically at least, housed in the company compound. The African workers referred to are in fact migrant labourers who come from the Transkei, and who until

1986 were on yearly contracts and were required by law to live in approved accommodation; in this case the company compound.

Since the 1986 legislative changes these migrant labourers are no longer on yearly contracts and are now regarded by the company as permanent employees. However, a segment of the workforce who are permanent work for only nine months a year owing to the seasonal nature of the industry, as bricks cannot be produced in outdoor kilns during winter. In terms of the overcrowding in the compound it is during periods of leave (either the one month allowed for permanent employees, or the three month period for seasonal employees) that a workers' bed is most vulnerable to being reassigned. A frequent response from workers interviewed was that they had lost the use of or right to a particular bed while on leave and on returning had found their bed had been reassigned to another worker and they in turn had been reassigned elsewhere. Although as we shall see when we begin to examine compound life more closely, bed reallocation through leave seemingly affected a relatively small number of workers.

The types of jobs available to migrant workers in industry in general tend to be unskilled and lowly paid (see Chapter Two, pages 47-48) and in this regard the company is no exception. As Table 2 indicates below the majority of workers interviewed were unskilled (73 or 76%) while 19 (20%) were in semiskilled positions with only 4 (4%) located in supervisory positions.

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**Table 2: Worker Skill Levels**


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Skills	No.	%
Supervisor	4	4
Skilled	--	--
Semiskilled	19	20
Unskilled	73	76
Totals	96	100

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A break down of these categories reveal the nature of occupations engaged in the brick industry. When asked to define their occupations the majority of unskilled workers identified themselves as being labourers (41 or 43%) and brick packers (20%). While these constitute the two largest categories, the remaining unskilled jobs ranged from brick sorters and checkers (5 or 6%) through to watchmen (4 or 4%) and sweepers (4%). Those in semiskilled positions were primarily machine operators (13 or 13%), although a few were employed as drivers (4 or 4%) and carpenters (2 or 2%). Those in supervisory positions included three foremen and one supervisor.

It is evident that the main skills required in making bricks tend to be low. This is reflected in the nature of the jobs done as well as in the education levels of the workers and

their wage levels as Tables 3 and 4 below illustrate.

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**Table 3: Worker Education Levels**

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Standard	No.	%
None	30	31
Sub A-B	5	5
Std 1-2	29	30
Std 3-5	24	25
Std 6-8	7	7
Std 9-10	1	1
Totals	96	99

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**Table 4: Weekly Wage Levels (Rands)**

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Wages	No.	%
100<	8	8
100-120	64	67
121-150	17	18
151-200	4	4
200>	3	3
Totals	96	100

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As can be seen the workers have a low level of education with only (8%) having secondary schooling. The wage data reveals that the majority of workers (67%) earn between R100-R120 per week<sup>4</sup>.

One would expect that those with the highest level of education would be found in the semi-skilled and supervisory

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<sup>4</sup> The highest hourly wage rate for labourers in Western Cape industries in 1988 was recorded as R3.69. (Saldru, 1990:77). Calculating from this basis, the wage would be R147.60 per week.

positions and receive the highest wages<sup>5</sup>. However, a further analysis of the data revealed little correspondence between the levels of education achieved and employment position nor between education and wages, or between length of employment and wages. Tables 5, 6, and 7 illustrate these relationships at this company.

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**Table 5: Employment Position by Education Level (n=96)**

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	None	A-B	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-10
Supervisor	1	0	1	2	0	0
Semiskilled	4	0	6	5	0	0
9Unskilled	25	5	22	17	7	1
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Totals	30	5	29	24	7	1

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**Table 6: Weekly Wages (Rands) by Education Level (n=96)**

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Rands	None	A-B	1-2	3-5	6-8	9-10
100<	4	0	1	2	1	1
100-120	23	3	21	12	3	0
121-150	3	1	4	8	2	0
151-200	0	1	2	1	0	0
200>	0	0	1	1	1	0
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Totals	30	5	29	24	7	1

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<sup>5</sup> There are two consistently observed phenomena in this regard, namely positive relationships between education and income, and between length of employment (experience) and earnings. See Gilmour (1984:97).

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**Table 7: Weekly Wages (Rands) by Length of Employment (n=96)**


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Rands	0-2Yrs	3-5Yrs	6-10Yrs	10+Yrs
100<	4	3	1	1
100-120	6	21	21	14
121-150	3	2	9	4
151-200	1	1	1	1
200>	0	0	3	0
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Totals	14	27	35	20

The only worker who had matriculated was located in the unskilled category, while the supervisors ranged from having no education through to primary schooling (standard 3-5)<sup>6</sup>. Similarly, there appears to be little relationship between education and wage levels, or length of employment and wages. The reasons for this probably reside in two main factors, the nature of the work and its skill embodiments, and the structure of employment at the company. Thus, if the jobs available require very little formal educational skill beyond basic literacy and numeracy, then on-the-job ability and experience are likely to be better predictors of success than education. Equally though, given that there are only four supervisory positions out of 96 jobs, the opportunities for advancement and hence any inducements to obtain better skill or educational levels are slim. Consequently, with restricted internal mobility, length of employment does not affect wage levels.

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6 As Gilmour (1987:181) notes, "in terms of entry into organisations, personal characteristics (race, sex, and familial connections) and experience are likely to be more important than impersonal, 'neutral' measures such as education."

Some of the workers interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with employment at the company in terms of wage levels in particular or more generally the nature of the job. As one informant stated "*I'm not prepared to stay at [the company]. I would like to change jobs sometime due to the salary - it's very little*". Others cited the nature of the job as reasons to look elsewhere: "*I'm not prepared to stay with the company due to the long work hours and for health reasons*". The majority, however, were realistic about future job prospects, realising that high levels of unemployment made gaining new and better paid jobs unlikely:

*I will stay with [the company]. Unemployment is high in Dadamba [location in the Willowvale District] there is no more recruiting there. [interview with 45 year old informant].*

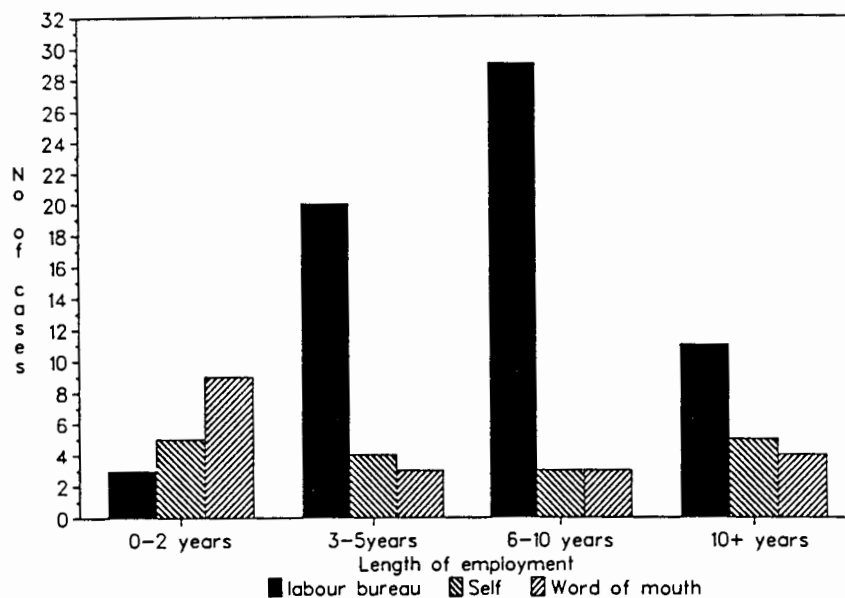
*I'm only prepared to stay in [the company] because it is very difficult to get a job. I won't leave here [interview with 25 year old informant].*

The low-turn over rate at the company was confirmed by the labour officer who stated that the company enjoyed a 100% return rate after the annual leave.

The length of time the men had been employed by the company varied. At the extreme ends of the spectrum, one individual had worked for the company for thirty-five years while another had been there for only three weeks. Twenty informants (21%) stated they had been with the company for over ten years, 36 (38%) had been with the company between 6 to 10 years, 27 (28%) had been there for 3 to 5 years and 13 (13%) had been employed in the period between 1986 and 1988. Mindful of the fact that these men are migrant workers it is

interesting to note that while the majority were employed through the normal route of recruitment via attesting a contract at a homeland labour bureau (63 or 66%), a large number had acquired their jobs informally (33 or 34%); either through word of mouth (18 or 19%) or by themselves (15 or 15%). A closer analysis of the time period in which these men were employed reveals the historic association between the migrant labour system and influx control under the CLPP.

**Graph 1: Length of Employment by Job Source**



As Graph 1 above reveals, the degree of flexibility in securing a job through informal contacts is apparent amongst those employed for a period of over ten years in which many workers gained employment during the 1950's and early 1960's. It is evident that almost an equal number of men gained employment through labour bureaus as through informal contacts. This suggests a relaxed hiring policy on the part of the employer and supports Humphries' (1986) contention that although the CLPP became the official policy in the

Western Cape from 1955 onwards, it was not until the mid 1960's that employment opportunities for Africans were restricted through a series of legislative measures (see Chapter Two, pages 45-48). As a few of the informants recollected, gaining employment had been much easier during this time.

*I first started working at [the company] as a labourer when I was 25 years old. I got the job myself. Looking for work was no problem with passes then [I] had to get a permit from Stellenbosch when employed. I first came to Cape Town in 1950, I was staying in Luzizi location at Elsie's River - there was no discrimination - various racial groups lived together [interview with 59 year old informant].*

*I first arrived in Cape Town in 1947, before that I was in Saldanha. [I've] been at [the company] for 35 years. I heard about the job through someone - a friend [interview with 59 year old informant].*

In stark contrast in the late 1970's and early 1980's it is apparent that employment through labour bureaus far outstrips employment through informal contacts during this period and reflects the intensification of influx control as well as state control over the African labour supply through "efflux" control at the rural source (see Chapter Three, pages 57-58, 65-68). In this regard the majority of workers interviewed had a similar story to tell: they had been recruited in the Transkei through the labour bureau system on a contract basis by the company's labour officer:

*I've been working here for 9 years. How did I get this job? I was recruited [by the company] through the labour bureau [interview with 45 year old informant].*

Despite the 'homeland' labour bureau system some workers were still able to gain employment via the back door through activating kinship networks as the cases below demonstrate.

*I've been working here on a seasonal contract for 6 years. I got the job through the foreman he's a relative of mine. I have five relatives here all working [for the company] [interview with 27 year old informant].*

*I got the job six years ago through my wife's brother who works here and stays in this same hostel [interview with 27 year old informant].*

In the period between 1986 and 1988, the reverse trend is apparent; here the men employed through labour bureaus pre-date the abolition of influx control legislation as they were hired at the beginning of 1986. The majority, however, all relied on informal means, most notably word of mouth via relatives, to gain employment at the company:<sup>7</sup>

*I worked in Johannesburg on contract on the mines until 1987 then I got this [job] in 1988 through my wife's brother who works here [interview with 31 year old informant].*

*I just came through my brother who works here. I first came [to Cape Town] in 1987 - worked with a building contractor, then I came here [to work]. I've been staying with my brother since I came here [interview with 20 year old informant].*

*I've been here since 1987 before that I worked at Groote Schuur. My uncle is here he stays in this same hostel [interview with 22 year old informant].*

As discussed in Chapter Five, the above reflects a growing tendency on the part of employers to hire locally rather than recruit in the 'homelands'. This was confirmed by the

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<sup>7</sup> As Gilmours' (1987:182) research in the Eastern Cape over nine different sectors of employment shows, in occupations below the skilled category, only about 13% of vacancies were filled via the labour bureaus.

company's labour officer who discussed how the company's policies had changed since 1986.

*Before 1986 the men worked on contract: either 12 or 9 month contracts. We used to recruit them in the Transkei through the labour bureau. When their contracts were up we used to give each worker R50 travel allowance to return home to the Transkei and they used to be fetched by the company bus at the start of a new contract. Since 1986 the 12 month contract is now continuous - permanent employment. We still have the seasonal [9 months] workers because you can't produce bricks outside when its raining. These workers leave at the end of April/May and return in September/October. Now we no longer give the R50 travel allowance and there is no transport to fetch them. They only get a bonus and leave pay - on average they go home with R900. We no longer recruit in the Transkei, if we have to we recruit locally, there are always people around.*

The company has also been active in getting their labour force South African identity documents. The labour officer recounted how he had phoned the Observatory branch of the Department of Home Affairs on two occasions, once in 1986 and again in December 1987 to have officials come out to the company and process the work force. According to the labour officer all 250 workers have applied for the new documents and they experienced no difficulty in doing so. The company now has a policy of only hiring workers who have South African identity documents.

*We tell them to apply in order to keep their jobs ... all 250 workers have applied - a lot of workers have ID's already - after a month they got them - some are still waiting.*

An analysis of the data (n=93) reveals that 76 of the workers (82%) are in possession of South African identity documents. The majority (83 or 89%) had applied through the company and 71 (86%) have received their identity documents; 12 are still waiting for documents. Of the remaining 10

workers (11%) who had missed the visits from the Department of Home Affairs officials and applied themselves, only five had received their documents. Thus it seems that applications processed through the company were far more successful than individual efforts. Table 8 below indicates the time delay between applying for and receiving the documents.

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**Table 8: South African Identity Documents: Bed-holders:  
Year Applied by Year Received**

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Year Appl	No.	%	Year Recvd	No.	%
1986	24	26	1986	4	4
1987	59	63	1987	38	41
1988	10	11	1988	34	37
			not recvd	17	18
Totals	93	100		93	100

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As Table 8 reveals, a considerable number of identity documents were granted by the Department of Home Affairs up to and including 1988. This confirms research findings among other employers who stated that migrants on contract were granted these documents. It also serves to highlight, once again, the disjunction between policy and practice in that these migrants were not eligible in terms of government interpretations of the legislation (see Chapter Five, pages 84-86).

It is evident that workers were pressured by the company to apply for the new identity documents and were threatened with losing their jobs if they did not. Their union did not dissuade them from taking the ID's despite the fact that it is affiliated to Cosatu who had initially called for a boycott (see Chapter Five, pages 116-118). An official of the union did however intimate in an interview that their decision had been heatedly debated among members of the executive.

Understandably, reactions to these events and the new identity documents varied among the workers interviewed. In this context it is important to note that on both visits by the Home Affairs officials dependants as well as workers were processed en masse. One informant recalled the second visit to the compound which occurred in December 1987:

*they used the dining hall and took our photographs, they lined everybody up and filled out the forms - wives as well - everybody who was here when they came - there was no problem with getting them ID's [interview with 39 year old informant].*

The informant's statement concerning the relative ease with which dependants were able to receive South African identity documents is borne out by Table 9 below.

Table 9: South African Identity Documents: Dependants: Year Applied by Year Received

Year Appl	No.	%	Year Recvd	No.	%
1986	2	12	1986	--	--
1987	13	76	1987	2	12
1988	2	12	1988	6	38
			not recvd	8	50
Totals	17	100		16	100

Note: One person applied twice (n=16).

From the above it is clear that half of the dependants who applied for the new identity documents received them. Of these the majority were granted in 1988. On the strength of this many of the workers wanted their family members living in the Transkei to come to Cape Town and apply for the identity documents at some time in the future as their comments illustrate below.

*My family is in the Transkei they only have a Transkei Passport and Book of Life. I would very much like them to apply in future [interview with 25 year old informant].*

*It took 6 months to get [ID] - no my family haven't applied you can't apply that side [in the Transkei] I would like them to have it [interview with 54 year old informant].*

*My parents are Transkeians they might like to apply. I would like them to have what I have [interview with 32 year old informant].*

*I intend sending fare for her [wife] to come to Cape Town and apply for an ID [interview with 30 year old informant].*

*My family is Transkeian [I] would like them to apply so when my wife is visiting she won't get harassed or picked up [interview with 64 year old informant].*

While the above constitutes one response on the part of workers towards the new documents the responses below illustrate how workers, lacking in information and control over events, were processed by the officials.

*I got this book [identity document] because it was wanted [by the company] I don't know anything about it [interview with 52 year old informant].*

*They gave us ID's we don't know anything about South African citizenship [interview with 30 year old informant].*

*I'm Transkeian. I only come here to work. It's because I am working here that's why I've got this book. I'm regarded as a South African citizen but I was not asked [to apply for restoration] [interview with 29 year old informant].*

*I just took it because I thought if you don't have it you might be arrested [interview with 25 year old informant].*

*I didn't notice what the book says because I am illiterate [interview with 30 year old informant].*

*I never looked at it they never told me what was in it [interview with 57 year old informant]..*

*I'm not clear what it means [interview with 31 year old informant]..*

Some of the workers I spoke to had not bothered to scrutinise their new identity documents. Many did so for the first time during the interviews. Some were both surprised and upset to find that they were recorded as being South African citizens:

*My legal citizenship is Transkei [after looking at the document] I am confused now [interview with 30 year old informant].*

*My legal citizenship is Transkei and that is what it [document] says [after looking at the document] I told them [officials] I was from the Transkei, I don't know about this [interview with 28 year old informant].*

*It's up to them what they [government] write. I'm taking the ID because I work here - I'm Transkeian [interview with 64 year old informant].*

*I've only come to work for my family here in Cape Town. I do not want to be a South African citizen. I don't like town life [interview with 52 year old informant].*

*I told them [officials] they wrote on the application that I was from the Transkei [interview with 48 year old informant].*

It is clear from the above responses that none of the workers had been clearly informed by the Department of Home Affairs officials about the implications of applying for the documents. Most of the workers I talked with had no recollection of being asked by officials whether they wanted restoration of South African citizenship nor were they informed that this would lead to them possessing dual citizenship. These findings also seem to indicate that the union representing the workforce had remained silent on the issue of implications arising from the new identity documents.

When asked about how their lives had been affected by the changes in the legislation the majority of workers referred to the fact that people were no longer arrested for the "dompas" and that it had been replaced with the South African identity document which had made their lives easier in a number of respects.

*There's a lot of improvement -this book [SA ID] has released us from harassment - from frequent visits from the police disturbing our peace [interview with 46 year old informant].*

*When there were passes I used to be chased in Langa but I was never caught. Now people can live in peace there is no more harassment [interview with 26 year old informant].*

*People were arrested but now things have changed. People used to come here on contract but now can come and stay as long as they want [interview with 46 year old informant].*

*There are changes - we do not have to go back home to get re-employment [ interview with 37 year old informant].*

*Our wives can come here [Cape Town] and stay freely. We used to be arrested [interview with 51 year old informant].*

*The Boers have stopped chasing us because we used to be arrested during the pass laws, but now we have an ID they no longer arrest us. I used to run away when there was still this pass problem to the forests [interview with 22 year old informant].*

*You'll be free to go anywhere with an ID [interview with 25 year old informant].*

As expressed by these informants a great burden has been lifted: people no longer have to carry passes and fear raids or arrests by police and inspectors and there is free movement in and out of the towns and across the neighbouring borders of the Transkei and Ciskei. While it is clear that influx control legislation impinged on their lives in countless ways a surprisingly low number of workers were found to have been prosecuted for pass offenses, as Table 10 below reveals.

Table 10: Bed-holders: Type of Prosecution By Year

Year	Pass No.	SA ID No.	Trespass No.	Other No.
1972	1			
1974	1			
1975	1			
1976	1		1	
1977			2	
1978	1			
1982				1
1983	1		2	
1986	1			
1988		1		3
Totals	7	1	5	4

Seven workers (7%) had been arrested for pass offenses, with all but one of these arrests occurring in the Western Cape between the years 1972 and 1986<sup>8</sup>. However three of these individuals stated they had been arrested more than once. One man recalled being arrested for pass offenses more than four times during the 1970's, and finally, out of desperation, had used the system in order to secure a bus ride back home to the Transkei as his story reveals:

*It was when I was working as a gardener in Sea Point that I was prosecuted several times. Once I was arrested for the pass walking in the street. Another time I was arrested working in the garden. The employer said nothing to the police because those police said that we had run from the Transkei. I had to pay a fine in Maitland. I had to give out all my wages on fines - I was arrested every Friday - I was working for nothing! I was sick and tired of being arrested. With influx control we used to get a free ticket home - get arrested and get a free ticket home. So I went to the Langa office which issues tickets and got one in the late 70's. I never paid a cent for it but I just did it that one time [interview with 50 year old informant].*

<sup>8</sup> One arrest occurred in 1985 in the Transvaal.

Five workers (5%) had been arrested for trespass offenses between 1976 and 1983 while four (4%) had been charged with offenses such as drunkenness and theft. Only one worker interviewed told of being arrested in 1988 for not having a South African identity document and described the incident.

*The Brackenfell police picked us up in August 1988. They asked us for the South African ID. I said it was here at the compound. I got taken by the police along with five others, we spent the night in the Brackenfell police station. The next morning the police said we could go and that we had been taken in for 'drunken noise' [interview with 48 year old informant].*

In terms of the Identification Act (see Chapter Four, pages 70-71) everybody is required to carry an identity document and produce it on demand and failure to do so "without lawful cause" constitutes a criminal offense which could result in a fine or imprisonment. In the case above the worker was not allowed to fetch his document and consequently spent the night in jail. This event quite clearly follows the approach taken by countless officials under influx control where individuals were refused time to fetch their documents (see West, 1982:468). In the case above, however, the worker and the other five men were not charged under the Act and released the next day. This incident clearly illustrates a case of harassment.

When asked what documentation they currently carry, it was found that some of the workers who have South African identity documents are still carrying their old reference books (13 or 14%). The majority (80 or 83%), however, had left them in the Transkei or thrown them away and three of the workers claimed they had never had a reference book. In

terms of Transkeian documentation it was found that 41 (43%) carried Passports, 8 (8%) carried a Book of Life and 47 (50%) carried both documents. One older worker told me he was 'playing it safe' and produced a South African identity document, reference book, Transkeian passport and book of life for my inspection.

Thus far I have briefly examined a range of workers' attitudes concerning their jobs, acquisition of South African identity documents and the demise of the "dompas". Their reactions to the broader legislative changes and specific events, such as being processed by the company for identity documents, have to be understood in terms of a complex range of personal and historical experiences which have shaped their world view. While this thesis does not attempt to present a 'definitive' emic world view, it is nevertheless important to try and understand the factors which may contribute to the kinds of responses evidenced above. In the following section I begin this process by examining events which occurred during fieldwork in order to shed light on how workers perceive their work situation.

Since it was not possible to observe interaction in the workplace itself in terms of workers' interaction with fellow workers; both Coloured and White, and with those in positions of authority, I have drawn upon various incidents, some of which occurred during fieldwork, in order to illuminate the tensions that exist between workers and management. The use of specific events or "social

situations"<sup>9</sup> in this context reveal the dynamics of the work situation in terms of relations between the workers and company management. In studying complex social relationships Van Velsen (1969) has argued, that emphasis should be placed on subjects as actors rather than informants. "Thus records of actual situations and particular behaviour have found their way from fieldworker's notebooks into analytical descriptions, not as 'apt illustrations' of authors' abstract formulations but as a constituent part of the analysis" (1969:140).

#### Case 6.1 Invisible Women

At the start of fieldwork the labour officer suggested a tour of the factory in which we (research assistant and I) were shown the operations and the various processes that go into making bricks. The labour officer was very proud to show off the state of the art equipment and especially the computer room which was situated on a second floor deck above the vast factory floor and quiet and cool in contrast to the dust, noise and heat of the factory below. On ending the tour the labour officer was suddenly called away, and left to ourselves we stepped out of a side entrance into the blinding sunlight and saw a group of women packing bricks onto pallets.

In response to our questions they told us they were getting paid between 70 cents to a R1.00 per pallet. The pallets consist of 500 bricks arranged in thirteen rows and on average the women said they could pack five of these a day. They mentioned they worked as casual labour at the company earning roughly R55 per fortnight and stopped work on December 24th with no bonus, beginning again in January. At this point the conversation was cut short by the arrival of the labour officer who hurried up to us and said "*don't worry about them [women] they work for sub-contractors - not the company*" and escorted us back to the compound. Obviously we had stumbled upon a feature which had not been intended as part of the official tour.

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<sup>9</sup> Gluckman (1958), working within a functionalist framework, pioneered the use of "social situations" in his analysis of the social structure of Zululand.

### Case 6.2 Visit from the Labour Officer

The second incident I would like to discuss occurred on a cold day in early spring. Workers who had come off shift were gathered in their hostel room, where they relaxed smoking and chatting among themselves, or engaged in activities such as preparing food, performing ablutions in the adjacent bathroom or sleeping. The atmosphere in the room was warm and smokey from the coal braziers and relaxed considering the intrusion on their privacy caused by our interviewing. Roughly a half hour elapsed in this fashion when the atmosphere was suddenly shattered by the arrival of the labour officer who strode in without knocking.

Upon entering the labour officer gave us (researchers) a perfunctory greeting and ignored the workers. Without asking anyone he stretched out full-length on one of the vacant beds near a brazier. Clasping his hands behind his head he directed his attention towards the interview taking place and after a few minutes stifled a yawn and surveyed the room. Suddenly with a loud exclamation he leapt up, strode across the room and stood in front of a bed which had a poster (a photograph of bricks with a rival company's logo superimposed) hanging above it. He asked who the poster belonged to and one of the workers replied that the owner was on shift. The labour officer replied "*take that bloody thing down!*" whilst ripping it off the wall himself. He remonstrated angrily with the workers saying "*you have no right to have this [poster] in here you are not working for them*".

The workers he was addressing did not protest this action nor engage in debate with the labour officer who by now had crumpled the poster up and thrown it on the floor. Workers who were in the room at the time did not say anything to the labour officer who left shortly thereafter, however they did talk quietly amongst themselves, and although I did not hear their conversations it seemed they were clearly unhappy about the incident.

### Case 6.3 Upgrading

The third incident, the upgrading of the compound, occurred towards the end of September. A few days after the compound had been paved I questioned workers whom I was interviewing about the recent changes. They mentioned that they had not been told in advance, that in fact some workers had just been assigned to come and work at paving the compound. When asked what they thought about the changes they said they were very pleased with the improvement but they didn't know exactly what was happening - whether it was done because of us (researchers) or the Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association (WCHDA), because, they said, they had been complaining to the company about the conditions for over a year and nothing had been done during that time. In fact the workers told me they had sent a delegation to the Managing Director to complain about conditions. This was not the first such complaint. A worker living in another block had

mentioned he had changed blocks a few years earlier because of the bad conditions. As he put it "*I moved from hostel 5A to 8B because the door was broken and the wind was coming in. When we asked the manager to change it he took no notice until the people did it themselves. By that time we [he and dependants] had already moved*".

Further upgrading which occurred in November included rooms being painted with a high-gloss enamel paint - emerald green in colour, and wall plugs being installed. The labour officer whom I met one day at the entrance to the compound was stripped down to shorts and was carrying an axe. He cheerfully informed me he had been put in charge of supervising the painting of the whole compound. The workers I spoke with, however, were not happy about these developments: either the lack of consultation or the choice of colour, and mentioned they had not requested that the rooms be painted.

The three incidents described above provide a valuable insight into the position of workers within the company, and in particular reveals their lack of privacy and limited control over events which occur at the compound. Within the structure of the company the labour officer mediates between the workers and the higher levels of management. Although he is an African, as some of his actions above have demonstrated, he does not identify with the workers, nor do the workers consider him as one of them. It is clear he stands in a position of authority and hence power vis-a-vis the workers, which he exercises in significant ways such as invading their rooms, lying on their beds and determining what is appropriate to have in their rooms. In this the labour officer can be seen to occupy an analogous position with "boss-boys" on the mine. Some writers refer to boss-boys treating workers more cruelly than Whites do (see Alverson, 1978; Moodie, 1983). In contrast, however, Gordon's (1977) study of a Namibian mine and compound found that the 'ideology of brotherhood' was able to subsume the ambiguity inherent in the occupational position of boss-boy.

His study focused on the 'social worlds' of the migrant consisting of the 'front region' - the mine and interaction with Whites, and the 'back region' - the compound which was made safe through the 'ideology of brotherhood'. In this context, as Gordon pointed out, although boss-boys occupied an ambiguous position in the interface between the mine and workers, they usually sided with the workers because they had to live with them at the compound and at home (1977:169).

This situation does not apply here where the company labour officer was found to be an outsider in three senses. Firstly he had only been employed at the company for one year while the majority of men who work at the company had predated his arrival. Secondly, he did not live in the compound, and as stated earlier, was shocked at the very thought. Finally, he stated he was from Keiskammahoek in the Ciskei. This is in contrast to the workers who all come from the Transkei, and many in fact from one single location or adjacent locations within particular districts.

The degree of frustration workers feel towards their work and living conditions is evident in their by-passing formal structures through which complaints are made, in this case the labour officer and the union shop steward, by sending a delegation to the top level of management: the Managing Director of the company. Rather than addressing workers' grievances the Managing Director promised to upgrade the compound accommodation. This process was only started in late 1988, and as discussed below, had been promised once before by the Managing Director.

It is relevant at this point to refer back to events which occurred in the mid-1980's in order to shed light on the company's actions - or lack thereof in addressing workers' grievances. According to various informants<sup>10</sup>, 1985 marked the turning point in terms of tight company control over the compound, though as evidenced below, informant's versions of what actually occurred constitute a contested terrain.

#### Case 6.4 Managing Director's Version

The Managing Director first started working at the company in 1985. When he first arrived he found that the compound was like a "police camp" with a "heavy management presence" referring to the compound manager who had an office in the compound and the security guards who controlled access to the compound. Up until this time no women had been allowed into the compound, and none had been able to slip in owing to the strict security and control over access pursued by the company. This all changed in 1985 with the new Managing Director who, citing liberal and humane motives, removed the compound manager and security guards. According to the Managing Director it was not until 1986, however, that women arrived at the compound, primarily as a result of the Crossroads disaster in which hundreds of shacks were destroyed. The Managing Director, again acting on humanitarian grounds, allowed some of the workers' wives to seek temporary refuge at the compound.

#### Case 6.5 Workers' Version

Up until 1985 the company management had control of the compound and was responsible for the provision of meals. In 1985 when political unrest was sweeping the country the workers living at the compound became politicised and complained to the management about the general living conditions. They refused to eat the food management was providing on the grounds that it was generally of poor quality (in some instances worms had been found in the mielie-meal) and they closed the dining hall and kitchen down and chased the compound manager away.

In terms of the workers' perceptions, the company, fearing a 'revolution' was imminent, undertook to upgrade the compound. One block was upgraded (this consisted of putting up dividing walls and creating four bedrooms where there had previously been one open room, putting in ceilings, covered wall lights and a makeshift stove). After this upgrading had been completed the management told the workers it was 'too

<sup>10</sup> Included here are the Managing Director, labour officer, and workers.

expensive' to continue upgrading the compound. The common understanding of these events among the workers, however, is that the company felt the general political unrest had been defused and there was no need to continue upgrading.

#### Case 6.6 Labour Officer's Version

The labour officer has been employed by the company since 1987. According to his version of events the workers received free food until 1986 at which time women started living at the compound. The reason why the provision of meals was stopped was the cost involved for the company. According to the labour officer the company used to spend R8000 per month on food (meat and rice) and could not increase their expenses by providing food for the wives.

In analysing the various interpretations cited above it is clear that the Managing Director and labour officer have a vested interest in showing the company to outsiders in the best possible light, hence their versions are devoid of conflict and instead emphasise the humane and liberal concessions granted to the workers in terms of a relaxation of control and letting women into the compound. While both of them stressed that women had only arrived at the compound in 1986 this was contradicted by one of the wives who was interviewed. She revealed that in 1985 police had come to the compound and that she, two other women and one man had run into the bush to escape but had been caught and arrested for 'dompas' and paid R60 each in fines. Thus it seems on the one hand the company was prepared to admit to one illegal act, namely removing the compound manager and security guards prior to the 1986 repeal of the Black Labour Regulations (of 1968), but on the other hand omitted to mention that women were at the compound a year prior to the abolition of influx control legislation.

In contrast the workers' version of events focuses on their conflict with the management of the company, however their

accounts are devoid of any mention of the role their trade union played during this period. It is clear that they enjoyed a significant victory in terms of gaining a certain measure of control over their lives as seen in their ousting of management, their greater freedom within the compound and their ability to have their wives stay with them. In terms of their fight for improved living conditions within the compound, though, they met with a hollow victory in that only one block was upgraded by the company. In fact, if anything, living conditions deteriorated in the face of considerable overcrowding by dependants.

In analysing the company's upgrading efforts, both in 1985 and 1988, it seems that upgrading occurred only after considerable pressure was brought to bear on the company. In 1985 it appears to have resulted from the general political climate and more specifically from workers' actions and, as we have seen was limited to renovating one block. In 1988 the company faced considerable pressure from the WCHDA<sup>11</sup> who brought in a researcher to document living conditions. This resulted in the majority of workers and their dependants signing up for membership in the WCHDA, thus giving the WCHDA political muscle in future negotiations with the company. The ability of the WCHDA to gain access to the compound has to be viewed in a two-fold context of negotiations held with both the company and the worker's union over rights of entry.

In negotiating with the company over access to the compound the WCHDA pressured the company to agree to the survey by

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<sup>11</sup> See Thomas (1987) for a discussion of the creation and structure of this union.

stressing that their workforce were signed up members of the WCHDA and wanted the survey done. As we have seen, however, most of the workers and dependants only signed up once the survey was under way. In contrast to the relative ease with which access was granted by the company, lengthy and delicate negotiations occurred with the union over the politics of representation. According to one of the WCHDA's executive members, and as already evidenced above, the union did not have a good track record in responding to workers' grievances, and in particular those concerning living conditions. Thus the WCHDA executive interpreted the difficulties in gaining access to the compound in terms of the union feeling threatened by their intended involvement and proposed survey.

Thus far I have examined the workers in the world of work primarily in terms of their relations with the company management. In the following chapter the world of work mates in the compound will be analysed.

CHAPTER SEVEN  
THE WORLD OF WORK MATES

*I moved because I saw many people related to me  
staying in this block and my home people were here*  
(interview with 32 year old man from Busila  
location, Willowvale District)

Introduction

In this chapter I wish to move beyond the homogeneous category of 'worker' encountered thus far by focussing on the men in terms of their interrelationships and residential organisation within the compound, and importantly, their home origins. This analysis, in addition, includes an understanding of their relationships with their dependants and the social organisation of space in the compound.

The World of Work Mates

As indicated earlier the men are all migrant workers who come from various districts within the Transkei. All of the men are Xhosa speakers and their ethnic identity in this instance 'fits' with the particular 'homeland' in which they and their families live<sup>1</sup>. Thus ethnicity is not an issue at the compound in terms of residential groupings and in the absence of ethnic groupings men were found to organise their

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<sup>1</sup> Numerous authors (see for instance Lye and Murray, 1980; Segar, 1989) have commented on the 'lack of fit' in terms of the diverse ethnic groupings found within and across 'homeland' borders and how tensions and conflicts among 'homeland' inhabitants tend to be played out along ethnic lines.

accommodation along district or location (administrative areas) lines where possible. An analysis of the areas of origin revealed that the men come from 11 districts in the Transkei as Map 2 indicates below.

Map 2: The Transkei

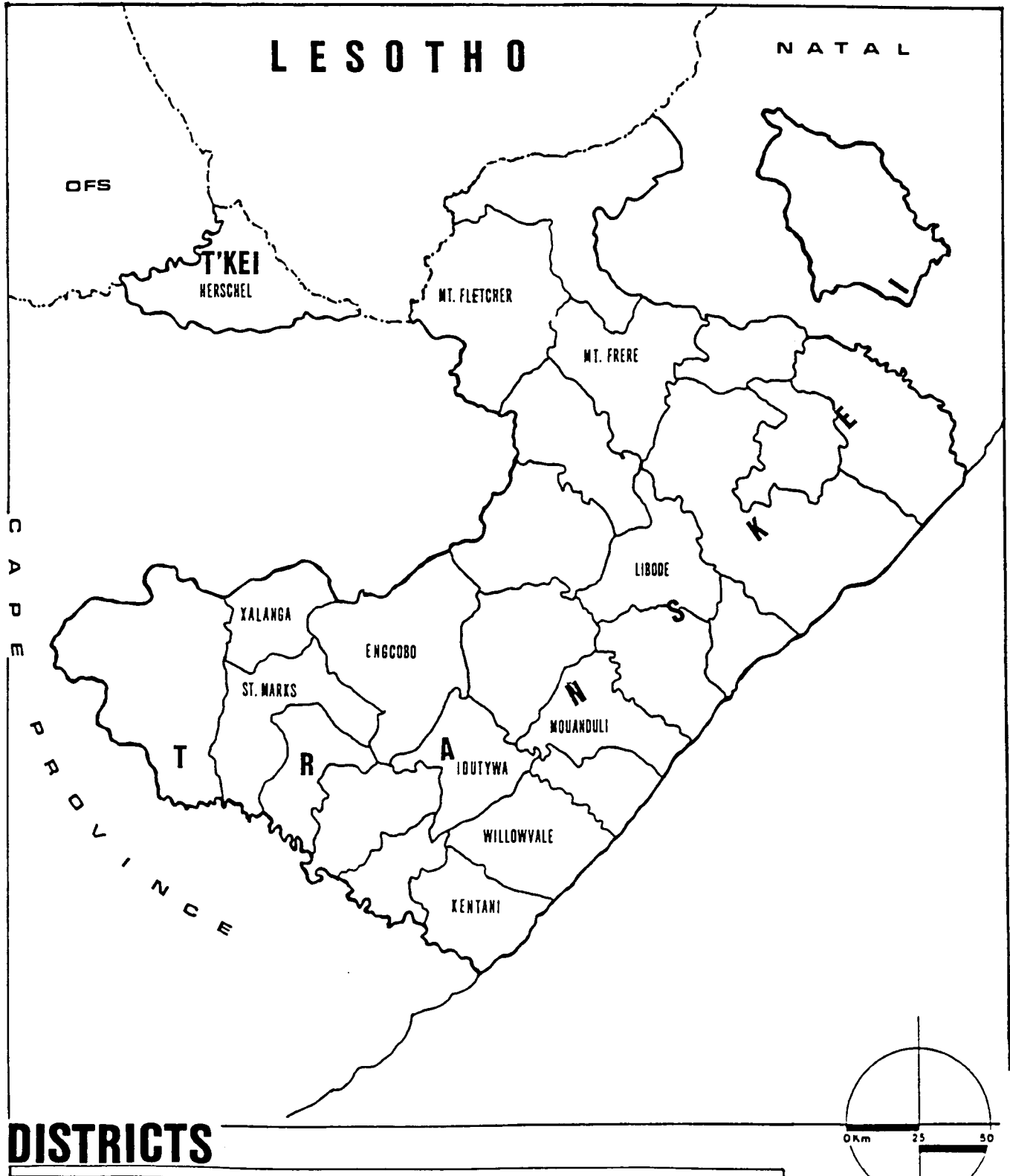


Table 11 provides further detail concerning the origin of the men in terms of districts and where possible locations.

Table 11: Origins: District and Location (n=96)

District	Location	(No) <sup>1</sup>	Number	Total
Engcobo	Mhlopekazi	( 2 )	1	3
	Gubenxa	(23)	2	
Herschel			1	1
Idutywa			2	2
Kentani			3	6
	Nqusi	(24)	1	
	Mnyameni	(34)	1	
	Ncizele	(48)	1	
Libode			1	1
Mqanduli			4	6
	Xorana	(43)	2	
Mount Fletcher			1	1
Mount Frere			1	1
Saint Marks			2	20
	Ngqwaru	( 8 )	1	
	Qumanco	(10)	3	
	Nomadamba	(13)	1	
	Nququ	(20)	7	
	Mtingwevu	(21)	5	
	Mcambalala	(25)	1	
Willowvale			1	54
	Cafutweni	( 1 )	6	
	Busila	( 2 )	39	
	Mhlahlane	( 5 )	1	
	Dadamba	( 6 )	4	
	Ntlabane	(10)	2	
	Weza	(12)	1	
Xalanga	Cala	( 6 )	1	1

1. Source: Jackson (1975) The Ethnic Composition of the Ciskei and Transkei

As Table 11 above shows, the greatest number of men (74 or 77%) come from the districts of Willowvale (54 or 56%) and Saint Marks (20 or 21%) respectively. A further break-down by locations reveals that of those coming from the Willowvale district 39 (41% of the total sample) come from Busila while 13 come from adjacent locations in the western corner of Willowvale within a 10 to 20 kilometre radius (Cafutweni, Dadamba, Ntlabane and Weza). Similarly in Saint Marks, men were found to come from contiguous locations which also cut across district lines (Ngqwara, Gxojeni, Qumanco and Nomadamba in Saint Marks and Gubenxa in the Engcobo district).

In looking at the area of origin in terms of length of employment, of the 20 men who had worked at the company for over ten years 14 (70%) were from Willowvale while the remaining 6 men are spread across five districts. Thus Willowvale appears to be the major sending area over time as Table 12 demonstrates below.

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**Table 12: Origin by Length of Employment (n=96)**

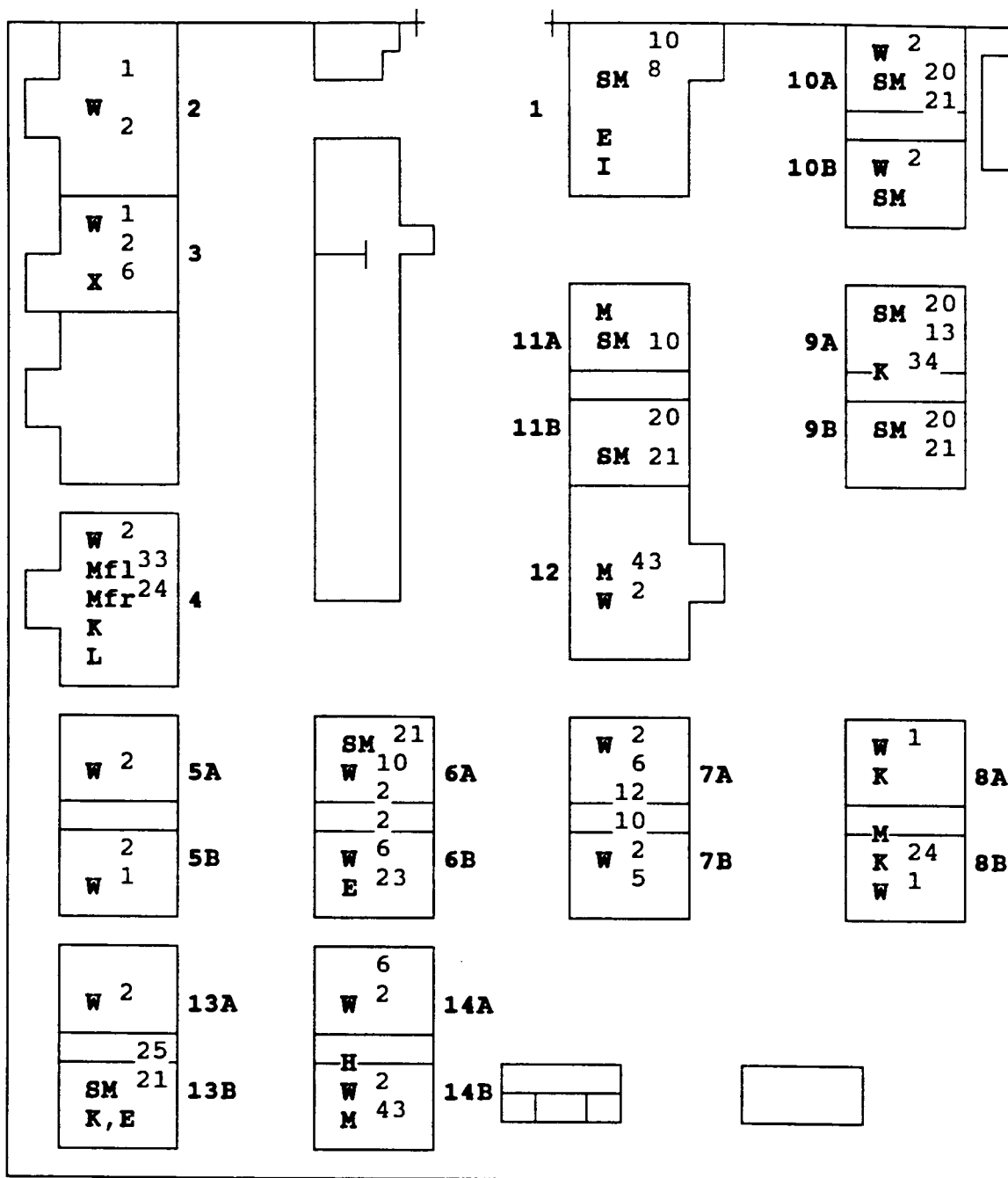
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District	0-2Yrs	3-5Yrs	6-10Yrs	10+Yrs	Total
Engcobo		2		1	3
Herschel		1			1
Idutywa	1			1	2
Kentani		4	2		6
Libode			1		1
Mqanduli	2	1	3		6
Mount Fletcher				1	1
Mount Frere				1	1
St Marks	4	6	8	2	20
Willowvale	7	13	20	14	54
Xalanga			1		1

'Home-boy' (amakhaya - people of the home) groupings have been researched extensively in urban townships (Mayer, 1971, 1980) and more specifically in compounds and hostels in mining and industry (Epstein, 1958; Alverson, 1970; Gordon, 1977; McNamara, 1980; Moodie, 1983; West, 1987). An analysis of the compound revealed that men from one's home place tended to gravitate together where possible. Prior to 1985 this had involved negotiating with the compound manager in order to change accommodation to be near relatives or people from home. However, although the men have been free since 1985 to make their own choices in terms of accommodation, between the years 1986-1988 only 16 (17%) of the men had changed rooms within the compound. This seems to suggest that the majority of the men were already where they wanted to be in terms of amakhaya groupings (see Diagram 1 below). It should however be noted that lack of movement within the compound could also be the result of overcrowding by dependants.

Diagram 1 below reveals groupings within the compound along district and location lines. While Willowvale men were spread throughout the compound due to the high number coming from this district, blocks 2, 5, and 7, and rooms 13A and 14A are obvious strongholds. Saint Marks men have for the most part tended to cluster together in a particular corner of the compound in blocks 1, 9, 10 and 11. Men from poorly represented districts have also tended to cluster together as seen in blocks 1, 4 and 8 and rooms 13B and 14B.

**Diagram 1: Amakhaya Groupings: District and Location**



**Legend**

- |             |                      |                |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|
| E = Engcobo | L = Libode           | SM = St Marks  |
| H = Hershel | M = Mqanduli         | W = Willowvale |
| I = Idutywa | Mfl = Mount Fletcher | X = Xalanga    |
| K = Kentani | Mfr = Mount Frere    |                |

Numbers inside blocks = locations (see Table 11 above)

Numbers outside blocks = block numbers

Within the Transkei the importance of the location has been commented upon by Hammond-Tooke (1975:16) who found that "although originally demarcated by the administration the location has emerged over the years as the crucial administrative unit, capable of arousing a high degree of loyalty and solidarity on the part of its members". Mayer (1971:99-100) talks of the rural location constituting a "community with a corporate feeling: the boundaries [of which] are often based on old sub-chief divisions". In fact Mayer states that 'home-people' or amakaya is the phrase used and applied to people from one's own rural location, although in town the definition could be stretched to include, if necessary, people from near-by locations which "naturally ... have ties with the locations nearest to them, both positive (such as the ties resulting from marriages) and negative (such as the practice of stick-fights between their respective gangs of boys)" (1971: 99-100).

Although the groupings discussed above constitute the major form of residential organisation within the compound, age groupings were also evident. While the data does not allow for a distinction between age-sets or age-grades<sup>2</sup>, an analysis of the residential patterns in terms of age groupings revealed that men in the age 20-29 cohort make up the majority in blocks 3 and 14 and rooms 7B, 10B, 11B and 13A. Men in the age 30-40 cohort predominate in blocks 5 and 6 and room 7A, and finally, men in the cohort aged 41 and above predominate in block 1 and rooms 8A and 14A. It also seems that in the absence of district and location ties men

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<sup>2</sup> The Mayers define age-sets as a grouping according to year of initiation, and age-grades as a grouping according to stage of life (1971:113).

group together on the basis of age as was clearly the case in block 1 where men come from Idutywa, Engcobo and Saint Marks.

Gordon (1977:114), in his research on a Namibian compound, found that age played an important role in the formation of friendships in the compound in the sense that friendships were generated by convergent interests. And since old and young do not have similar non-work interests this often led to friends being of the same age range.

This appeared to be the case at the compound where the younger men after work would play soccer together or sit in their rooms listening to loud music on their stereos. In contrast rooms inhabited by older men were quiet and entertainment took the form of drinking and socialising together. One elderly informant mentioned that he had sought out older people and changed blocks to get away from the "youngsters" and "their noise".

In terms of social organisation within the compound an age hierarchy was found to operate especially in the older blocks (1, 2, 3, and 4) which were controlled by older men who had been employed the longest at the company. In these blocks, in the absence of female dependants, the younger men were in charge of the cooking and cleaning. This control was the most evident in block 2, a Willowvale (Busila location) stronghold, where despite the majority being in the age 20-29 cohort, a strong patriarchal attitude was evidenced. Two of the men interviewed were father and son and stayed in adjacent beds. The son, a twenty year old who had acquired

his job in 1987 through his father, referred to still being under his father's authority. This sentiment was expressed by all the young men in the block who stated that decisions concerning their future rested with their fathers. In this context Hammond-Tookes' discussion of the kinship system as an authority structure appears valid. As he states, the homestead must submit to the authority of the homestead head since:

he enjoys patria potestas over all living within its confines ... [h]is authority ... has both a kinship and a 'governmental' component. As head of the family qua family he has undisputed control over his wives and their children and over younger brothers and their families who may be living in the same homestead, and who are thus under his authority because they stand in a specific kin relation towards him. But his authority includes non-kin living with him and thus has a territorial aspect characteristic of all governmental authority (Hammond-Tooke, 1975:117-119).

As shall be discussed later this patriarchal authority was also manifest in many of the mens' relations towards their wives.

In looking more closely at the mens' backgrounds it was found that the majority are married (79 or 82%) and have families living in the Transkei. Of the married men 74 (94%) stated they had been married traditionally and 64 (68%) claimed no religious affiliation, while 13 (14%) who claimed Christian affiliation belonged to Separatist Churches. Lack of religious affiliation has been used as an indicator of the 'red' way of life and Mayer, writing about the way of life practised in the Transkei in the late 1970's states that:

Reds have remained in the majority in many areas of the Transkei. According to the 1970 census, just over one third of the people of the Transkei as a whole (including towns and almost totally Christianized districts such as Fingoland) claimed no connection with the Church, compared with 48 per cent ten years earlier. About 15 per cent of those who claimed Christian affiliation belonged to Separatist Churches (1980:49-50).

The data discussed above concerning lack of religious affiliation, traditional marriages and a low level of education (see Table 3 above) may be indicative of a particular way of life. In this context it is important to draw further on studies which investigate this phenomenon.

In their book *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, the Mayers distinguished between two categories of Xhosa speakers: 'red' traditionalists and 'school' (progressive) people. And, as McAllister (1991:130) notes, these became the standard categories used by anthropologists working among Xhosa speakers. Mayer used the concept of incapsulation to describe what he saw as a cultural and inherently conservative 'tribal' response to town life by 'red' Xhosa migrants living in East London (1971:293). In this context the amakhaya (home people) were seen as the major mechanism in sustaining the migrants' moral links and responsibility to their rural homes. The other major mechanism was frequent contact with the home by means of regular visiting. These two practices interconnected in that the amakhaya in town served to reinforce the migrant's resolve to keep visiting home.

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3 As Mayer (1980:47-48) states education was at the heart of the Red-School division and Reds felt it threatened the viability of their way of life. In terms of meeting the demands of the capitalist system, however, by the late 1950's "Reds had developed definite ideas about how much schooling was compatible with continuing the Red way of life".

The phenomenon of target migration can be understood in this light in that 'reds' prefer jobs where incapsulation is possible, such as employment at the mines, municipalities or construction companies where the labour force live together in compounds or hostels. Mayer (1980:59) states that, ideally, 'reds' prefer work where they are likely to be with amakhaya so that their social network is only stretched geographically rather than widened by working with new individuals.

Mayer's theory concerning the red/school dichotomy and incapsulation has been severely critiqued in terms of its ahistorical position which fails either to locate African experiences of urbanisation within the wider context of political and economic domination, or to look at processes such as how legislation which restricts urbanisation effects the behaviour of Africans (see Magubane, 1973). Southall (1975) also suggests that Mayer exaggerated the 'red' and 'school' dichotomy in terms of the emphasis placed on the persistent discontinuity between the two categories through focussing on a narrow aspect of their lives and omitting many occasions (for example work and labour disputes and common experiences such as police raids, clan funerals and assistance in sending money home) which bring both groups together.

Mayer's later work (1980) was sensitive to these criticisms and both 'red' and 'school' were characterised more explicitly as rural resistance ideologies and located within a political economy framework. As McAllister notes, the  
Mayers

came to regard Red and School as two sub-cultures, each associated with specific ideologies of resistance. Both ideologies, although strongly contrasting, were viewed as responses to the same problem, that of white domination. Both provided a sense of identity and expressed a 'denial of the legitimacy of the dependency structures as well as their passive or active opposition to the status quo' (emphasis added, 1991:131).

Taking this further, McAllister (1980, 1985, 1991) has explored the forms 'red' resistance has taken in terms of the ritualisation of labour migration among the Gcaleka of Willowvale and states that

'conservatism' then, is an ideology, a response to domination and subordination; an ideology which persists because of the conditions regulating the participation of migrants in the dominant economy, and which has 'tradition' or 'custom' as its point of reference, but which is not itself wholly 'traditional' (1980:250).

Mayer (1980:49) noted the general decline of the 'red' and 'school' ideologies in the Ciskei and Transkei by the late 1970's and attributed it to the influence of urban secularism and consumerism. However, of the two he stressed that the 'red' ideology was surviving more successfully in many areas of the Transkei. McAllister (1991), who has done extensive research in the Willowvale district<sup>4</sup>, has emphasised that there are 'pockets' in the Transkei where people are able to maintain a 'conservative rural consciousness'. He states that although "[t]his dichotomy between Red and School (based largely on the division between Christians and ancestor worshippers) has now become difficult to sustain. Both have given way to a secular,

<sup>4</sup> McAllister conducted fieldwork in the Administrative area of Shixini (location) in 1976-1977, and intermittently from then onwards. Shixini is located on the coast approximately 30 kilometres from Busila location.

urban influence, and the old School folk-culture has more or less disappeared. However, communities of what are essentially Red people still (in 1989) survive in the Transkei" (1991:131). This is dependent on three factors: a low degree of landlessness; absence of 'Betterment' schemes; and the ability of migrants to spend long spells at home between work periods. In the absence of these factors McAllister indicates that this way of life will become less viable and that people will be forced to seek alternative strategies in the immediate future.

With this background in mind it is now possible to elucidate the mens' responses concerning their orientation. Van Velsen (1969:134) has suggested that informants' statements should be treated as explanations or interpretations of particular actions or events on the one hand and on the other as informant's opinions as to ideal norms in response to fieldworkers' questions about hypothetical situations. Thus the statement or response itself can be seen as one type of observed behaviour or reflection of the informants' views.

In response to the question of where they would like to live in the future 46 men (48%) stated they wanted to return to the Transkei and 39 men (41%) wanted to live in South Africa, or more particularly Cape Town. Of those who wanted to live in Cape Town, 13 (33%) responses were qualified primarily in terms of access to accommodation. The remaining 11 men (11%) stated that they were undecided.

The responses given by informants to this particular question can be contextualised against a range of responses

elicited through interviews and conversations concerning various aspects of their lives. The men who saw their future as being rooted firmly in the Transkei expressed a continuity in their responses over a wide range of questions and issues such as upgrading of accommodation for themselves and their families, visits to Cape Town by family members, restoration of South African citizenship for family members and attitudes towards being in Cape Town.

*I don't want anyone to live in Cape Town, even myself. I'm not interested in living in Cape Town or for my family to get South African citizenship. I only come here to work. I don't know Cape Town I only come straight from the Transkei to the company [interview with 49 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district]*

*We belong to Transkei. I wouldn't like my wife to have the [South African] ID. I won't let her come to Cape Town [interview with 23 year old man from Qumanco, Saint Marks district].*

*I'm not interested to live in Cape Town or move into a better house where I'll have to pay rent. I'm only here to work for my family. And besides I'm thinking of that large field - what would happen to it? Here [Cape Town] I've got to buy everything - I don't have fields, but there [Transkei] I will be left with large areas of land - I can plow and plant mealies. My father said I must never be permanent in South Africa. [interview with 26 year old man from Cafutweni, Willowvale district].*

*They [family] do not come to Cape Town to visit. If they come there will be no one to look after the house in the Transkei. My family is not interested in leading a town life [interview with 25 year old man from Kentani district].*

*The only place to stay is with the family in the Transkei. I want to stay in the Transkei ... I've never thought of living anywhere else [interview with 54 year old man from Ncizele, Kentani district].*

*My family have never come to Cape Town and I don't want them to. They are Transkeian citizens and I'm not interested in getting them [South African] ID's. I'm working here in Cape Town but I belong there [Transkei]. I want to go back to Transkei because this is where my home is and my parents*

graves - even if they are no longer there their graves are there [interview with 58 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].

My wife and child come and visit once a year. I would like for them to stay in the Transkei and only come and visit. If we were all here we wouldn't have a chance to do our traditional practices here in the urban areas [interview with 23 year old man from Saint Marks district].

Even if I get better accommodation I'd like her [wife] to come as a visitor because my whole household will fall. I am in Cape Town only for work [interview with 41 year old man from Saint Marks district].

My family only visit when there's a problem. I've got a house there [Transkei] so I wouldn't like them to come and stay here ... I don't like the very idea of her coming here I'll lose my house [interview with 38 year old man from Nququ, Saint Marks district].

My family don't come to visit [in Cape Town]. I'm going to inherit my father's land - those livestock have got to be cared for [interview with 25 year old man from Mtingwevu, Saint Marks district].

No I don't want my family down here permanently. No, I want to organise money and send it home to build more houses - my interest is in the Transkei [interview with 25 year old man from Xorana, Mqanduli district].

I've already built a home there [interview with 25 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].

In contrast, the majority of the men who wanted to live in Cape Town expressed a desire for upgraded accommodation, both for themselves and their families, and wanted family members to apply for restoration of South African citizenship.

I would like my family to move down. I would like to move from Transkei to come and settle in Cape Town even though I am inheriting my mother's land. ... My family is Transkeian and I would very much like for them to apply [for restoration of South African citizenship] in future [interview with 25 year old man from Mcambalala, Saint Marks].

I would like to be living in Cape Town with my family here at the compound if it is upgraded or in the township - if my wife could get a job. I would like my wife, two children and sister to move down [interview with 30 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].

Yes I would like to be here in the Cape. I'm paying taxes in the Transkei but not here, I would like to take the most lenient side of the two [interview with 27 year old man from Mqanduli district].

My wife came for the first time this year. I want her to stay with me down here in Cape Town. I have applied for my [South African] ID but I haven't received it yet. When I do I will ask my wife to come down to apply for the ID so she can also have it [interview with 26 year old from Busila, Willowvale district].

I would love to have them [family] with me permanently but if upgrading occurs my wife only would stay - the children would just visit [interview with 30 year old from Mqanduli district].

One third of the men who wanted to live in Cape Town, however, qualified their responses in terms of access to family accommodation and jobs.

I will stay where there is accommodation. If family accommodation is available in Cape Town we will stay here [interview with 31 year old from Busila, Willowvale district].

I would want my wife and two children to live in Cape Town if we could get better accommodation here at [the company] the township is too far. If I had permanent accommodation I would just go home [Transkei] for visits even though I'm going to inherit my father's land [interview with 31 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].

My family visit me once a year. I would like them to live in Cape Town if there could be better accommodation. ... My family do not have ID's [South African] they would like to have them [interview with man from Nququ, Saint Marks district].

My wife came [to visit] this year and stayed in Khayelitsha. She comes every year. She will apply in future for the [South African] ID but I want her at home to plow the crops because there are no jobs here. If she could get a job she

could stay with me here in Cape Town [interview with 52 year old man from Mnyameni, Kentani district].

*I would like to have a better job. If I could get the right kind of job with a better salary I would want to settle with my family in Cape Town though for the moment they will stay in Transkei [interview with 27 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].*

Finally some men were ambivalent about where they would live in the future and stated they were still undecided.

*At the moment I'm still young. I have both a South African ID and a Transkeian Passport - I'm still young I don't know where I want to be [interview with 31 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].*

*I haven't come to such a decision yet [interview with 36 year old man from Busila, Willowvale district].*

*I will stay here until I get pension then I don't know [I] will see when I get my pension [interview with 63 year old man from Gubenxa, Engcobo district].*

It is apparent from the above quotes that the two groups have very different attitudes towards work, urban life and the rural areas. If one compares the two groups in terms of a range of variables such as age, marital status and rural resources, however, there appear to be very few overwhelming differences as Tables 13, 14, 15 and 16 below demonstrate.

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**Table 13: Future Orientation by Age (n=96)**


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Age	Transkei		Cape Town		Undecided		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
20-29	20	(50)	16	(40)	4	(10)	40	(100)
30-40	10	(38)	13	(50)	3	(12)	26	(100)
41-50	5	(39)	6	(46)	2	(15)	13	(100)
51+	11	(74)	2	(13)	2	(13)	15	(100)
Don't Know	-		2	(100)	-		2	(100)
-----								
Total	46	(48)	39	(41)	11	(11)	96	(100)

One might expect that the younger men in the 20-29 age cohort would be more inclined to leave the rural areas and urbanise, however this age group was divided almost equally between those who wanted to stay in the Transkei and those who wanted to settle in Cape Town. Likewise the 30-40 and 41-50 age cohorts were equally divided. Thus age does not appear to be a significant factor in influencing decisions with the exception of the last age cohort. One would expect that the older men would be the most committed to their rural homes and this appears to be the case in that the majority of men (74%) in the age cohort 51 and above want to return to the Transkei.

In the same way that one might expect age to be a factor in the decision to move, so too one might expect that whether a person is married or single might also be a factor. However as Table 14 below shows marital status does not appear to be a major determinant in influencing the decision to return to

the Transkei or stay in Cape Town. As can be seen, the distributions of status and future orientation appear to be even without significant differences between the two groups.

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**Table 14: Future Orientation by Marital Status (n=96)**

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Status	Transkei		Cape Town		Undecided		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Married (T)	34	(46)	32	(43)	8	(11)	74	(100)
Married (C)	2	(40)	2	(40)	1	(20)	5	(100)
Single	9	(56)	5	(31)	2	(13)	16	(100)
Widowed	1	(100)	-		-		1	(100)
-----								
Total	46	(48)	39	(41)	11	(11)	96	(100)

If one looks at rural resources such as land (see Table 15 below) it is evident that there are no major differences between the two groups in terms of ownership of land. Rather the significant difference appears to be whether or not 'Betterment' schemes have been implemented.

The impact of Betterment schemes or 'the Trust', as it has come to be known by the recipients, has been researched extensively (see De Wet and McAllister, 1983, 1985). Some of the major consequences of 'Betterment' include changing social relationships and land use patterns, a reduction in livestock as well as a greater degree of poverty for the recipients (De Wet and McAllister, 1985).

In the agricultural sphere De Wet and McAllister (1985:557) note that people are considerably better off without

'Betterment' as was found in those areas of the Willowvale district where it had not yet been implemented. In these areas every homestead has the right to establish a garden. These are usually large (up to 2.5 hecatares), relatively fertile and people rely heavily on them for a variety of crops and tobacco. Although they are fenced the gardens are not fixed in size or location and they usually adjoin homesteads. De Wet and McAllister (1985:557) note, by contrast, that fields are larger than gardens but limited in number and far from homesteads as well as being fixed in size and relatively infertile, thus producing smaller yields than gardens. As a result many people have abandoned their fields while others were found to use them infrequently.

It appears that when areas experience 'Betterment' new gardens are substantially reduced in size, boundaries are demarcated and fixed, and new fields on average are likely to be further away than present ones (De Wet and McAllister, 1985:557) In addition, landholders experience greater financial cost inputs on new gardens and fields which generally, initially, produce lower yields. Finally, 'Betterment' seems likely to accelerate the deterioration of the environment because old gardens and fields do not revert to grazing once abandoned which has the effect of increasing pressure on available grazing. Experiences of this nature would it is anticipated affect future location decisions.

As evidenced in Table 15 below, it is apparent that more of the men (62%) who have been the recipients of 'Betterment' schemes want to settle in Cape Town as compared with the men

(67%) who have not experienced 'Betterment' and who want to return to the Transkei.

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**Table 15: Future Orientation by Rural Resources (Land)**

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		Transkei		Cape Town	
		n	%	n	%
Those who have					
experienced 'Betterment'	(n=29)	11	(38)	18	(62)
no experience of 'Betterment'	(n=52)	35	(67)	17	(33)
<b>Ownership of Land</b>					
Bed-holder owns	(n=40)	22	(55)	18	(45)
Family owns	(n=45)	24	(53)	21	(47)
Has Field	(n=51)	34	(67)	17	(33)
Has Garden	(n=68)	35	(51)	33	(49)

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Ownership of land does not appear to be an issue, but the effects of 'Betterment' can clearly be seen in terms of the reduction of access to land. Hence, the majority of those who have access to fields want to return to Transkei (67%). Importantly, further analysis revealed that of those who have experienced 'Betterment' and want to live in Cape Town only 44% had fields as compared with those who have not experienced 'Betterment' and want to remain in the Transkei where 74% were found to have fields. It should also be noted that while similar numbers were found to have gardens, as De Wet and McAllister (1985) show, those who have experienced 'Betterment' have had their gardens substantially reduced.

In terms of owning livestock the two groups were quite evenly matched as Table 16 demonstrates below.

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**Table 16: Future Orientation by Rural Resources (Livestock)**

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		Numbers of Stock				
		NR <sup>1</sup>	None	1-5	6-10	10+
<b>Cattle</b>						
Transkei	n=46	1	14	20	7	4
Cape Town	n=39		16	12	6	5
<b>Goats</b>						
Transkei	n=46	1	16	8	13	8
Cape Town	n=39		16	8	9	6
<b>Sheep</b>						
Transkei	n=46	1	18	9	3	15
Cape Town	n=39		18	6	4	11

-----  
 1. Not recorded

As Table 16 reveals, in terms of the two groups an equal number of men did not own any cattle, goats or sheep. The only marginal difference found is in terms of owning cattle and goats. Those who want to live in the Transkei were found to have slightly more of these livestock than those who want to live in Cape Town. The major difference, however, is in terms of those who have no livestock at all. Of those who wish to return to the Transkei 6 (13%) have no livestock while of those who wish to live in Cape Town 10 (26%) have no livestock. Again, this difference seems marginal.

In summary, then, neither age, marital status, nor livestock holdings appear to have influenced the decision to stay in Cape Town or return to the Transkei. The most significant factors appear to be whether or not respondents have

experienced 'Betterment', and personal orientation as expressed in the quotations above. The next section illustrates how these personal orientations are reinforced by the ways in which people organise their living arrangements within the compound.

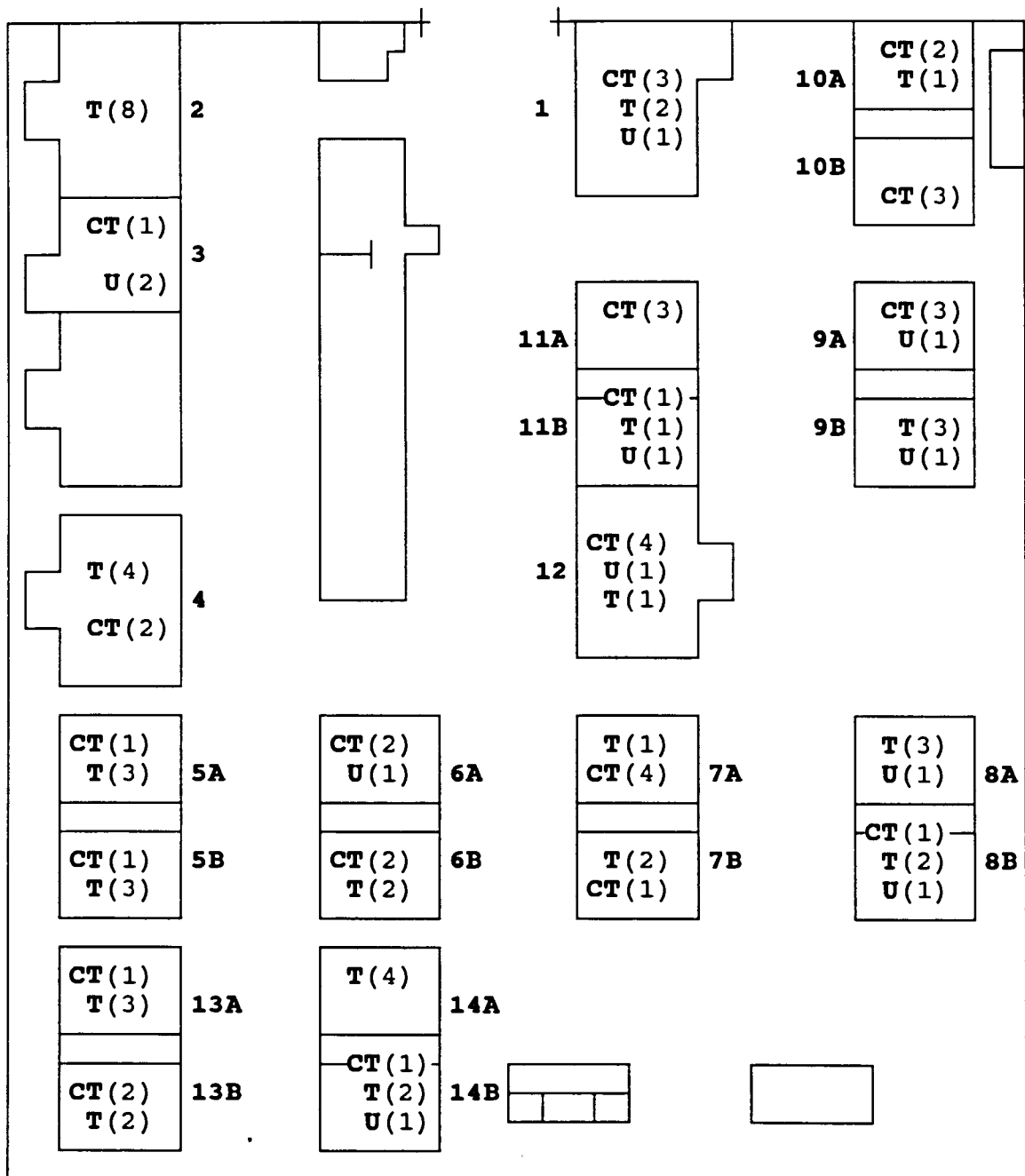
Many writers have commented upon the fact that people who share a similar world view or orientation tend to group together in terms of compound and hostel accommodation (Mayer, 1971, 1980; Gordon, 1977 and Moodie, 1983). Gordon (1977:114) found that the most important factor governing friendship in the compound was the major ideological distinction between migrants who are hashano or noro hepo, migrants who stay at the work place as long as possible and migrants who want to return home as soon as possible. Moodie, writing about miners' identity, indicates that individuals are able to maintain the paramount reality of home through a close-knit network of support:

[i]t is important to emphasize that those who associate exclusively with others from home seem to be able to retain the paramount reality of home even in the world of the mine ... but the ability to keep home paramount depends less on individual purpose, it seems to me, than on the support of a close-knit network of fellows for whom the world of home retains the particularity necessary to ensure that they remain 'encapsulated' in its reality. Thus, those men who live in the mine without becoming of the mine succeed in doing so not simply because of some preconceived project but because that project is shared by others in whose company they are able to sustain its reality (1983:194).

To a certain extent this appears to be the case at the compound where it is evident that men of similar orientation do tend to stay together in the same rooms or blocks.

As Diagram 2 illustrates below, block 2 and room 14A are inhabited by those who want to return to the Transkei (Willowvale men) and if the undecided are excluded, rooms 8A (Willowvale men) and 9B (Saint Marks men) can also be considered Transkei strongholds. Those living in rooms 10B (Willowvale and Saint Marks men) and 11A (Saint Marks and Mqanduli men) want to remain in Cape Town and if the undecided are excluded, rooms 6A (Willowvale and Saint Marks men) and 9A (Saint Marks and Kentani men) also become Cape Town strongholds.

**Diagram 2: Future Orientation by Compound Blocks and Rooms**



**Legend**

T(n) = Live in Transkei in the Future (number)  
 CT(n) = Live in Cape Town in the Future (number)  
 U(n) = Undecided (number)

Numbers outside blocks = block numbers

Thus in terms of social organisation within the compound it is clear that men tend to group themselves not only along district, and where possible location lines, but also within this by age group and future orientation. This would seem to affirm the notion of incapsulation discussed above.

While a range of factors have been examined which may account for personal orientation, as McAllister suggests, one cannot overlook the importance of the macro dimension; the ways in which people have been incorporated and excluded from the wider political economy:

[t]he maintenance of a conservative ideology, must of course, be understood in terms of the nature of this incorporation. Black workers from areas such as the Transkei have for long been unable to escape the status of migrants, due to the legal and social institutionalisation of the migrant labour system. Linked to this have been poor wages and working conditions, lack of bargaining rights, poor housing in cities, and other factors making urban areas most unattractive places in which to be. Being unable to identify with life in town, and legally prevented from doing so (for example, prevented from domicile in town with wife and children), it is understandable that migrants with rural assets and ties should have clung to alternative sources of security and fulfilment (1991:134).

In the context of the macro domain the abolition of influx control legislation means that people are no longer restricted from entering and living in 'white' South Africa. However, as has been pointed out, for citizens of 'independent homelands' this freedom is contingent upon their continued exemption under the Aliens Act (see Chapter Five, pages 82-85). In real terms, though, people now have a choice as to where they would like to live and are exercising their options. In this light the following section introduces the dependants: the men, women and

children who are living at the compound under the auspices of the bed-holders.

### The Dependants

Given the historical restrictions on urbanisation, it is not surprising to find that the majority of the migrants have families who are living in the Transkei. The type of domestic arrangements found within the rural household unit are varied and fluid in terms of kin members although the most common arrangement appears to be one in which three generations cohabit, with women and children predominating. This pattern has been well documented throughout the 'homelands' where demographics are skewed in the direction of the young and the elderly, with adult male labour comprising the primary export. In this regard the Transkei is no different. The Wiehan Report (1990:18) working from a population baseline of 2.623 million in 1980 estimated the Transkeian population in 1989 at 3.750 million, a growth rate of 4% per annum, 90% of whom live in the rural areas. The Report further noted that the demographics between the rural and urban areas of the Transkei were increasingly unbalanced with unemployed females, children and the aged concentrated in the rural areas (1990:92-93) in a situation of general poverty and underdevelopment which has been described as numbingly inescapable (Bundy, 1988:230, see also Wilson and Ramphele, 1989:33-51).

Under apartheid and the grand design of separate development the historico-legal constraints of influx control and the migrant labour system have created two overwhelming realities: a profound lack of housing in urban areas and, simultaneously, poverty in the 'homelands'. In this regard the removal of legal constraints such as the abolition of influx control legislation does not address these crucial issues, and against these realities kinship consequently becomes a vital resource, particularly in times of need or emergency. In this regard, the migrant's kin members domiciled in the Transkei are in the fortunate position of having access to supplementary income sources, namely remittances from the urban areas<sup>5</sup>. As Spiegel and Sharp (1985) have pointed out, access to a wage income and/or pensions often marks the crucial difference between survival and death within the 'homelands'. Apart from this direct monetary relief, kinship is also an important resource in terms of providing an entree into urban areas such as Cape Town.

Although it was found that many of the migrants' families have never visited the urban areas in which their husbands/fathers/sons work, the majority of men (71%) stated that family members had visited them at least once. With the abolition of influx control legislation one might have expected to find a greater number of people visiting or moving to Cape Town. This appears to be the case, as an

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5 Within a range of R50 to R300 per month the compound men remitted an average R103 per month. The preferred method of remitting was through friends travelling home by bus rather than through the post. In addition many took clothes, groceries and building materials home on their annual visits. For a detailed look at the nature of remittances in the Matatiele district see Spiegel (1990:113-119).

analysis of the available data in terms of the years in which adult dependants arrived in Cape Town for the first time reveals. As Table 17 below shows, there is a marked increase in the number of people visiting since 1986 when influx control legislation was abolished.

Table 17: Year of Arrival<sup>1</sup>: Adult Dependants (n=38)

Year	64	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
No.	1	--	2	3	--	1	3	2	9	17

- Note: two dependants (wives of bed-holders) were born in the Western Cape and had lived their whole lives there.

As can be seen, 68% of the dependants (26) arrived after 1986 in the post-abolition period, and at the time of fieldwork almost half the men were found to have dependants staying in Cape Town. The majority (38 out of 43, or 88%) these men with dependants had them staying with them in the compound, while 6 (14%) had dependants staying both in the compound and in Cape Town townships and 5 (12%) had dependants staying only in the townships. Most of the township dependants were living in the site and service areas in Khayelitsha. Although information on these township dependants is limited they will be included in the study where possible.

## Categories of Dependants

If one divides the dependants into adult and child<sup>6</sup> categories it was found that 32 (84%) of the bed-holders had adult dependants and 18 (47%) had child dependants staying with them in the compound. Of these 12 (32%) were found to have both categories of dependants staying with them. Thus a total of 76 dependants were connected to these 38 bed-holders. Of these, 44 (58%) were adults and 32 (42%) children. In the case of the township dependants approximately 10 adults and 13 children were found to be either living or visiting in Cape Town. This means that a total of 99 people were dependant upon 43 men; an average of 2.3 dependants per man.

Table 18 below analyses the compound dependants in terms of age and sex and reveals that the majority of adults are female and a high proportion of the children are under the age of five.

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<sup>6</sup> Burman (1988:171) discusses how the state has defined childhood differentially for different population categories. Thus African children are defined as adults from the age of 16 onwards and those classified as White or Coloured from the age of 18 onwards. In terms of my analysis, however, I include the one 16 year old dependant in the child category and those dependants aged 18 and above in the adult category.

Table 18: Dependants by Age and Sex (n=76)

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
5<	14	18	12	16	26	34
6 -10	2	3	2	3	4	6
10-17	3	4	1	1	4	5
18-19	4	5	2	3	6	8
20-29	4	5	21	28	25	33
30-40	3	4	6	8	9	12
41-50	-	-	1	1	1	1
50>	1	1	-	-	1	1
-----						
Total	31	40	45	60	76	100

Similar distributions of dependants in terms of age and sex have been found in research conducted in municipal hostels in the Western Cape (Ramphela and Boonzaier, 1988; Segar, 1988; Thomas, 1987). Segar (1988:19) found that a significant proportion of dependants were females aged 20-29, and that children under 6 years of age were spread evenly throughout municipal hostels. This corresponds well with the above data in that females between the age 20-29 are the largest category of adult dependants (28%) and children under 5 (34%) the largest category of child dependants. In this regard, and as Thomas has suggested, there appears to be "... a correlation between the abolition of the influx control legislations and the increase in the influx of family members to the hostel[s]" (1987:40). This is confirmed by my own research findings. As already noted (see Table 17 above) the majority of dependants arrived in the post-abolition period, and as will be discussed below,

the majority of dependants are family members of the bed-holders (see Table 19 below).

Ramphela and Boonzaier (1988:157-158) found that the average age of female dependants was significantly higher than that of dependant males and ascribed this to the fact that women have even more limited opportunities to transcend their dependant status than males. As they note, it is virtually impossible for females to acquire beds in their own right and chances of regular employment are extremely limited. Segar (1988) makes a similar point in stressing that adult female dependants are dependant upon male bed-holders for their accommodation and thus have less mobility than their male counterparts, which accounts for their higher demographic proportion in the hostels. As she states "[w]omen cannot officially become bedholders and the insignificant number of female bedholders recorded shows that 'unofficial' routes to becoming a bedholder are hardly open to women at all" (1988:16). Women, then, are dependant on men for accommodation, and in a situation where there are few housing alternatives, as Ramphela and Boonzaier suggest, women who find themselves in this position are "particularly powerless to challenge their stereotypical roles [and] [i]t is in this sense that the hostels serve to reinforce the system of male dominance" (1988:156).

An analysis of both compound and township dependants in terms of their relation to the men revealed that the majority (77 or 78%) were immediate family members or primary kin; 15 (20%) were secondary kin, and 7 (10%) were

not related. Table 19 below provides further detail as to the categories of dependants.

**Table 19: Dependants (n=99) by Relation to Bed-Holders**

	Compound		Township		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Primary Kin</b>						
Wives	18	18	9	9	27	27
Children	31	31	13	13	44	44
Siblings	4	4	-	-	4	4
Parents	1	1	1	1	2	2
<b>Secondary Kin</b>						
Nieces	2	2	-	-	2	2
Nephews	3	3	-	-	3	3
Cousins	7	7	-	-	7	7
In-laws	2	2	-	-	2	2
Clan	1	1	-	-	1	1
<b>Non-relatives</b>						
Girlfriends	5	5	-	-	5	5
Home people	2	2	-	-	2	2
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Total	76	76	23	23	99	99

As suggested above, the dependants use their relationships to the bed-holders for different reasons. As will be discussed in detail below, these primarily relate to personal and familial requirements and to using bed-holders as a means of gaining access to a range of benefits, chief among these being accommodation.

### Wives, Girlfriends and Children

Wives have been found to comprise the majority of female residents in Western Cape hostels (Ramphele and Boonzaier, 1988; Segar, 1988), and, while their motivations for moving to Cape Town were found to vary, preeminent among these was an attempt to maintain a personal relationship with their husbands whilst seeking to retain a rural base in the 'homeland' (Ramphele and Boonzaier, 1988:158). Trying to maintain both successfully can be seen as a necessary strategy in that "[w]ith the lack of adequate housing and the history of African insecurity in urban areas, retaining a rural home is still seen by many as an essential strategy, and thus makes necessary the pattern of male and female oscillation from countryside to town and vice versa" (Ramphele and Boonzaier, 1988:158).

This was found to be the case among half of the wives (9 or 50%) staying at the compound who cited a variety of reasons which had brought them to Cape Town. Although four of these women had brought all their children<sup>7</sup> with them, they were all adamant that they were visiting temporarily<sup>8</sup> rather than living permanently at the compound and rationalised this in terms of the need to sustain a rural home. The reasons cited by all the wives in terms of explaining their presence in the compound were as follows:

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7 One wife had no children and the remaining three had left some, or in one case all, of their children in the Transkei.

8 Temporary visits by family members were found to last anywhere from a few weeks or months to a few years.

### Reasons Cited

Be with husband	6
Give birth	4
Produce a family (conceive)	2
Illness (themselves)	3
Illness (children)	3

As is evident the reasons given were personal and related to familial issues, or health related. While serious deficiencies in health-care services in the Transkei<sup>9</sup> justify the move to Cape Town, Ramphele and Boonzaier view the pretext of illness as a strategy which is often resorted to by women within the system of male dominance imposed by the hostel situation:

wives often adopt pretexts for leaving their rural homes and coming to the hostels. The most frequent is to plead illness, either of the woman herself or one of her children. Informants express the view that there is no way in which a man can escape his responsibility of caring for sick members of his family. One's wife and children are an obligatory responsibility, and there are rituals and healing ceremonies that simply cannot proceed without the man of the house (1988:161-162).

The following case-study illustrates how one wife's 'temporary' visit due to her children's illness has lasted for two years.

#### Case 7.1 Nolast's 'Temporary' Visit

In 1974 Sonwabi, then nineteen, arrived in the Cape for the first time and found employment as a labourer working in Stellenbosch. In 1980 he gained employment with the company where he has been working and living ever since. His wife, Nolast, first arrived in Cape Town to visit him in 1982 and stayed at Crossroads for a three month period. Sonwabi, however, does not like his wife to visit him and wants her to stay in the rural areas where his home is (Busila, Willowvale district). Their first two children were born in

<sup>9</sup> Within the Transkei the latest statistics concerning health-care services indicate the following ratios: population per hospital bed 481:1; per Doctor 10 185:1; per Nurse 372:1; per health centre and clinic 13 306:1 (Republic of Transkei Statistical Bulletin, 1990:9).

1985 and 1986 and in December 1986 Nolast brought the children down to Cape Town because they were sick. Sonwabi made arrangements for their accommodation in Crossroads where they stayed until mid-1988, at which time Nolast, about to give birth, moved into the compound with their two children aged three and two. Shortly after the move Nolast had her baby at the Bishop Lavis clinic and returned to the compound with her one day old baby. While Nolast was not interested in staying in Cape Town permanently, stating she came only 'through problems', and was worried about her rural household, she had no immediate plans to return to the Transkei.

In the case cited above the wife initially came to Cape Town on the grounds that her children were ill. However she managed to extend this visit by two years in part no doubt due to her third pregnancy. Her husband, although unhappy with her presence in Cape Town, had arranged accommodation for them in Crossroads but had only allowed his wife to move into the compound immediately before the birth of their third child and was eager that they return to the Transkei.

While illness can be used as a strategy to gain a foothold in Cape Town many of the wives come down to give birth, and having done so stay on at the compound. Women informants remarked that ambulances were a common sight at the compound due to the number of women having babies, and in fact nine women staying at the compound had children who were only a year old or younger. As Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988:161-162) have pointed out, the husband is responsible for his wife and child and in this context six of the wives had invoked this responsibility by returning to the Transkei and leaving their sick children in their husbands' care. This is illustrated by the following case.

### Case 7.2 Yekelela Looks After His Son

Yekelela has been working in Cape Town since 1967 and has been employed by the company since 1982. He is married and has four children, three daughters and a son. His wife lives at his natal homestead in Dadamba (Willowvale district) with his mother and sister, and Yekelela remits money home every month sending R100 to his wife and R50 to his mother. While it is not known how often his wife has come to Cape Town to visit him she had acquired a South African identity document on one of her previous visits to the compound. Yekelela had visited his home on leave in September 1988 and in October his wife arrived at the compound with their four year old son who was ill. His wife stayed for one week and then returned to the Transkei, leaving their son in Yekelela's care. At the time of the interview Yekelela stated that his son had been with him for three weeks.

As mentioned earlier, the rural areas of the Transkei have limited health-care facilities compared with Cape Town. Thus it is not surprising that people come to Cape Town when faced with illness. In this context the compound also offered the benefit of a fortnightly visit by the WCHDA's mobile clinic<sup>10</sup>. Although these were factors which may have influenced the wives' decisions in leaving their children with their husbands, the absence of a creche or any child care facilities at the compound placed the burden of responsibility not on the husbands who had full time jobs but on women who were staying in the rooms.

The fact that women give one another mutual support in times of distress, such as the illness of a relative, has been commented upon by Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988:161) who mention that despite the competition in hostels between women in terms of bed-holders and accommodation, women do cooperate with one another in periods of distress and illness. Unlike the hostel setting described by Ramphele and

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<sup>10</sup> The mobile clinic could not however reach the compound in rainy weather due to the condition of the track. and by 1989 was no longer visiting the company compound (personal communication, 1989, WCHDA executive member).

Boonzaier, womens' relationships in the compound tended to run along friendship rather than competitive lines, as evidenced in their caring for other women's children for extended periods as well as in the mutual assistance with daily chores.

Lack of competition between women was also due, no doubt, to the fact that only five of the married men had girlfriends living with them at the compound. Ramphele and Boonzaier commenting on the position of unmarried women who come to Cape Town hostels state that

[m]ost of the unmarried women - widowed, divorced or never married - have children, and come to Cape Town in search of a source of income to support their families. Relationships with men are motivated primarily by the need for accomodation, although other considerations, such as financial support and occasionally affection also play a part (1988:158).

In accordance with these findings, economic motivations appeared to be the primary reason why the girlfriends were in Cape Town. Four of the five did not want to stay in Cape Town permanently and stated they did not like town life and wanted to return to the Transkei. All the girlfriends were single and had families living in the Transkei, although it is not known whether they had left children behind. Three had been in Cape Town since 1985 while the other two had arrived in 1986 and 1988. Three of the five girlfriends had managed to obtain jobs and thus were not totally financially dependant upon the bed-holders (two worked as casuals packing bricks at the company and one had found work as a domestic in a nearby residential area). Of the remaining two girlfriends, one was desperately seeking employment while

the other had recently had a baby (the bed-holder's child, see case 7.3 below) and was not interested in working.

Despite these extra-marital relationships, the bed-holders, with one exception, were all still sending monthly remittances to their wives and all but one had visited home during 1988. One of the wives, however, faced a severe threat to her marriage from her husband's extra-marital relationship.

### Case 7.3 A Threatened Marriage

Mthobeli is twenty-five years old and has worked at the company as a brick checker since 1983. He is married and his wife lives at home in Saint Marks. His [fifteen year old] girlfriend first arrived in Cape Town in 1985 and has been living with Mthobeli at the compound. In 1988 she gave birth to a daughter. Mthobeli's wife has never been to Cape Town as he will not let her visit, and although he had last visited her at home in May 1986 he was still sending her irregular remittances. Because Mthobeli's location had undergone 'betterment' before he was born he had only a small garden, and no livestock, thus leaving his wife with minimal resources. Mthobeli wanted to remain in Cape Town with his girlfriend and their daughter and seemed unconcerned about his wife's future.

The case above demonstrates a marriage in which the husband has all but severed his ties with his wife. In general, unstable marriage relationships are marked by a failure on the part of the husband to send home regular cash remittances and reasons for this lack of support range from unemployment and alcohol abuse through to extra-marital relationships such as in the case cited above. Although this was the only such case found at the compound, Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988:158) point to the frequency of unstable marriage relationships and to how many wives "come to the hostels as a desperate measure to save their families from disintegration, starvation or both" (1988:158).

The wives who stated they were living permanently as opposed to temporarily with their husbands at the compound had, for the most part, arrived from 1986 onwards. As in Case 7.1 above, four of the nine wives had first found accommodation in either Crossroads or Site B in Khayelitsha before moving into the compound. Of these nine wives three had come on their own, five had brought all of their children with them and one had left one of her children at home in the Transkei under her parent's care<sup>11</sup>.

In a recent study Jones (1990) has traced the trajectories of children's movements both within and between rural and urban areas and explored the different forms these have taken. In examining how these experiences have impacted on the children under study, Jones explores the dynamics of domestic and spatial mobility through time. While this type of qualitative micro-data was not possible in terms of the compound study, an examination of the relatives with whom mothers had left their children revealed that both paternal and maternal grandmothers living in the rural areas featured prominently.

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<sup>11</sup> Jones (1990:139) found in his study that mothers often choose between their children in terms of who will accompany them to urban areas and who will be dispersed to other relatives or fostered by non-kin (see also Spiegel, 1987 and Niehaus, 1987).

#### Case 7.4 Rural Children

William, aged thirty-one, has worked as a labourer at the company for eleven years having acquired his job through the labour bureau in 1977. His wife, Nosithandile, is twenty-nine years old and they have two children. Nosithandile first came to Cape Town in 1981 when she was twenty-two having left their two children with William's mother in Busila. She has been living in Cape Town since then. Both she and William lived together in Crossroads until 1986 when both moved to the compound. Although never formally employed Nosithandile has been self-employed selling drinks for the seven years she has been in Cape Town and currently earns R20 a week. They remit R100 per month to William's mother and visit home annually. Their two children come to Cape Town once a year to visit during the school holidays. Both William and Nosithandile would like to settle in Cape Town but want their children to remain in Busila with William's mother.

This perhaps represents an extreme case, but an additional twenty-four children were found to have been left behind by mothers in the rural areas while they themselves were either visiting or had moved to Cape Town. Jones (1990) found that mothers often have to make a choice between siblings in terms of who they bring to urban areas or leave behind.

[I]t is not unusual for one or a number of siblings in a family to experience little separation from their parents whilst others in the same family are isolated for long periods of time. Parents, particularly mothers since it is they who oscillate most frequently, are forced to make choices as to which children should accompany and live with them, and which children should not. As a result, the nuclear relationships of some children remain relatively intact at the expense of other siblings (1990:142).

Jones (1990:142) cites possible explanations for mothers choosing between their children and mentions that it may be a case of favouritism of a particular sibling over others or it may relate to mothers' perceptions that particular children would be more vulnerable to separation from them. He also mentions James' (1985) findings that grandparents often negotiate with parents to leave certain grandchildren,

possibly their favourites, with them. In terms of the compound data, age seems to be a definite factor in terms of mothers' choosing children. The largest number of children (34%) living in the compound were under five years of age as compared with 6% aged 6-10 years and 5% aged 10-17 years (refer to Table 19 above). It should be remembered, however, that a proportion of the children under the age of five had been born in Cape Town as illustrated in Case 7.5 below.

#### Case 7.5 Separated Siblings

Nowathile first moved down to Cape Town in 1986 leaving her daughter behind in her parents care. She has been living with her husband, Tatakhe at the compound since then and has not seen her daughter for two years. In 1987 she gave birth to their second child, a son. Tatakhe and Nowathile do not send any money to Nowathile's parents who are looking after their first child. Tatakhe, however, remits money home to his parents in Busila, but only every other month since they both receive pensions. Although Tatakhe is going to inherit land from his father, he is eager to settle in Cape Town with his wife and two children provided he can get decent accommodation. Nowathile on the other hand does not like Cape Town and wants to return to the Transkei with her son and be reunited with her daughter.

As this case demonstrates, the wife chose to visit her husband alone and left her daughter with her maternal grandparents. She has not seen her daughter in two years and in the meantime has had another child who was one year old at the time of the interview. In this context, as Jones has noted, in addition to choosing children or leaving them behind "[m]others are also faced with another dilemma: to spend time with their husbands or to devote their attention to their children. And the two desires are by no means always compatible. Mothers therefore attempt to divide their attention between their husbands on the one hand, and their children on the other" (1990:142).

While most of the men (87 or 91%) return to the Transkei yearly, on their annual leave, as evidenced above many wives are down on 'temporary' visits or are living at the compound or in Khayelitsha with some if not all of their children. Although many of the men are happy to have their wives and children with them some did not, however, want their wives in Cape Town as Case 7.1 above demonstrates. In a few cases men wanted their families to move down to Cape Town on a permanent basis but their wives wanted to remain in the Transkei as seen in Case 7.5 above.

It has already been mentioned that women are in a vulnerable position in terms of their reliance upon men for accommodation in hostels and that this places men in a powerful position over women. One of the results of such a power imbalance as Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988:156) have suggested is that women are relatively powerless to challenge stereotypical gender roles and tend to become submissive. This appeared to be the case among many of the wives who were interviewed, and was often confirmed by the husbands' attitudes towards their wives. The following case illustrates this type of relationship.

#### Case 7.6 **Sigxuduva in Control**

Sigxuduva is thirty-five and has worked on and off for the company since 1973 when he acquired his job via the labour bureau. His wife Nonzinzile, aged thirty-two first came to Cape Town on a visit in 1982 when her first son was born. She has visited her husband intermittently over the years and has stayed both in Crossroads and Nyanga East. In 1986 she and her husband both lived together in Nyanga East and she gave birth to her second child during this time. At the time of the interview she and their two children, aged 6 and 2 were living at the compound and had been there since 1987. According to Sigxuduva, however, his wife just comes to visit when there are problems and he does not want his family living with him in Cape Town. Nonzinzile stated that

she had come to visit in order to produce a family and that her husband wanted her to be a housewife and would not allow her to find work while she was in Cape Town. As she stated her husband was the boss and it was up to him to make decisions about the family.

Husbands, as evidenced in the case above, seemed most opposed to their wives gaining employment. This is borne out by the fact that of the eighteen wives staying at the compound fourteen (78%) were neither employed nor seeking work because their husbands did not want them to. Only one of the wives was employed at the company as a brick packer via a sub-contractor while the other three wives were self-employed (two sold cool drinks and one knitted). Husbands also exercised control over their wives in other spheres such as not letting wives get South African identity documents or even allowing them to come to visit them in Cape Town. As one husband said "*I am not going to let my wife get a South African identity document. Besides if my wife came here she would not like to go back to the rural areas*".

Wives, on the other hand, can and do manipulate the system of male dominance by resorting to various strategies such as illness. However, as Ramphele and Boonzaier (1988:161) stress, these strategies are themselves located firmly within the system of male dominance since wives and children are seen as an obligatory responsibility of and by their husbands. Not all women, however, accept their subservient role passively. But, as Ramphele and Boonzaier comment "[m]ost women recognise that they are more likely to get what they want out of marriage if they are seen to possess the 'traditional' female qualities of modesty and deference"

(1988:162). It is clear that many of the wives are successful in these terms since once in Cape Town they are often able to extend their visits for considerable periods despite their husbands' wishes that they return to their rural homes. This was illustrated clearly in Case 7.1 above.

While the wives, girlfriends and children have been discussed primarily in terms of their personal and familial dependancy on husbands and bed-holders, the other dependants, the majority of whom are extended family members, are analysed in respect of the ways in which their relationships are utilised to gain access to accommodation and employment in Cape Town.

#### **Extended Family and Home People**

Although extended family members (15%) and home people, amakhaya (2%), make up a relatively small number of dependants staying in the compound, an analysis of particular cases reveals the fluid nature of accommodation arrangements and demonstrates kinship as a crucial resource in terms of access to both accommodation and employment.

### Case 7.7 Kinship as a Resource: Access to a Bed

Mlandeli is twenty-five years old and has worked as a brick packer at the company for four years. He is married and his wife lives in Busila although she comes to Cape Town to visit him. In June of 1987 Mlandeli's cousin, Jackson (fathers' brothers' son) came to Cape Town for the first time in the hopes of gaining employment. Prior to this he had worked in Johannesburg in casual employment. Jackson arrived in Cape Town and visited his cousin, Mlandeli at the compound and asked where he could find accommodation in Cape Town. Mlandeli told him there were many people staying at the compound who were not working for the company and offered him a place to stay and thus Jackson took up residence sleeping on the floor next to Mlandeli's bed.

In 1987 Jackson managed to gain formal employment as a dock worker in the Cape Town harbour. However this was short lived. He also applied for a South African identity document when officials visited the company in 1987, but he was still waiting to receive this document. At the time of the interview he had just acquired a job working as a casual labourer for a building contractor and was earning R65 per week.

In September 1988 Mlandeli's wife came down to visit and Mlandeli was able through friends to arrange accommodation for them both in Crossroads. During this time Jackson was able to use Mlandeli's bed. However by November Mlandeli's wife had returned to the Transkei and he to the compound, and Jackson went back to sleeping on the floor.

Jackson stated he was desperate to get a better job with a higher salary. His wife and child lived with his mother in Busila and he had been unable to remit regularly due to lack of employment. He had thus been relying on financial help from his cousin and friends and prior to gaining employment had managed to send R50 home to his family in May of 1988. Jackson had last visited home in June 1987, prior to coming to Cape Town, and he had not seen his family since then. He summed up his situation by saying that if he could get the right job with a better salary he would want to settle with his family in Cape Town, but that for the time being they would remain in the Transkei.

Jackson's struggle to gain a job was a familiar plight among many of the dependants who had come to Cape Town seeking employment. In the next case presented, family members came to Cape Town to look for work and were staying with a bedholder who already had his wife and two of their children living with him.

### Case 7.8 Kinship as a Resource: Access to Jobs

Bendiba, aged thirty-three, gained employment at the company in 1981 via the labour bureau. He has lived in the same block during this time and currently works as a brick packer earning R520 per month. His wife, Nophumele, came to Cape Town in the same year and lived in Crossroads until 1986 when she moved to the compound where she has been living with Bendiba since 1986. The couple have four children, the youngest, aged five and one live with them at the compound while the two older children live with Bendiba's parents in Dadamba. Nophumele is in her late twenties and has had no formal education. She is self-employed and earns R60 per week selling liquor. They remit money home to Bendiba's parents on a monthly basis and Nophumele and the children return to the Transkei annually for a two to three month visit. Bendiba stated that he was satisfied working at the company and would like to settle with his wife and children in Cape Town

In May 1988 three of their relatives arrived in Cape Town for the first time: Nophumele's brother, aged eighteen, and two twenty year old female cousins, from Bendiba's paternal and maternal side respectively. All three were living at the compound with Bendiba, his wife and children.

Nophumele's brother found employment after three months of searching and has now been employed for four months as a casual labourer in the construction industry, earning R80 per month. The paternal cousin had no formal education and had never worked before. She is married and her husband works in Stellenbosch. She finally gained a job in September at the company as a casual brick packer earning R100 a month. She was interested in staying in Cape Town but worried about accommodation and employment - as she pointed out there was no accommodation in Cape Town and that was why she was staying in a men's hostel. She was also concerned to find a job more suitable for a woman. By November, having failed to secure either, she returned to the Transkei accompanying Bendiba's wife and children who were going home for their annual visit. The maternal cousin who had gained a Standard 3 education had also been employed by the company for three months as a casual brick packer earning the same pay. Like her cousin she was also concerned to find a better job more suitable for women and was interested in staying in Cape Town if she could get better accommodation.

The two cases above serve to demonstrate the difficulty these dependants face in gaining employment, and how often when jobs are finally secured these are usually of a casual and lowly paid nature. Clearly also, in the period between arriving and securing a job, a heavy financial strain is placed on the bed-holders. The bed-holder in Case 7.8

managed to get his two cousins jobs at the company, but as we have seen neither of them liked the nature of the work or living at a mens' compound, and finally, after seven months the married cousin gave up and returned to the Transkei.

Kinship is a crucial resource in terms of access to formal and informal jobs at the compound. In this regard 21 (22%) of the bed-holders interviewed had one or more male relatives (either agnatic or cognatic or from both sides) who were formally employed at the company<sup>12</sup>, many of whom shared rooms together. In terms of the dependants, as Case 7.8 above reveals, bed-holders provide a major means of gaining employment at the company. Thus out of a total of 26 dependants seeking work, 13 (50%) gained jobs as casuals and sub-contracted workers at the company. This includes the two girlfriends and one wife discussed in the previous section. Of the remaining dependants 7 (27%) had casual jobs in the construction industry (this includes the 2 home people), 1 (4%) worked as a farm labourer, 1 (4%) as a domestic and 4 (15%) were still seeking work.

It is clear then that both accommodation and jobs at the compound are at a premium. Despite this, the majority (80%) of these dependants want to remain in Cape Town, a clear indication of the difficulties facing them in the Transkei.

There are in addition to these categories of dependants and the 'legal' bed-holders, a number of 'anomolous' bed-holders

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<sup>12</sup> Gordon (1977:110-111) found that ties with both cognatic and agnatic relatives were stressed and used in terms of job patronage at the mine. In terms of his sample (n=105) only 24% of migrants had no relatives at the mine although many had had relatives there at an earlier period.

who, although not employed permanently at the company have through various means managed to secure beds. These 4 people, two males and two females, are discussed briefly below.

In two of the cases 'legal' bed-holders had given up their beds permanently in order to move to the townships and live there with their wives and children. This was the case with one of the female bed-holders who inherited her bed from her brother in 1986 when he moved to Site B in Khayelitsha to be with his family. One of the two men had been given his bed by a home person who had invested in accommodation in Khayelitsha for his family and who had decided to live permanently there with them. The other man was working at the company through a sub-contractor and had inherited his bed in 1986 when the bed-holder he was staying with had retired. The remaining female bed-holder has been living at the compound since 1986 and working at the company as a brick sorter since 1987. Although it was unclear how she had acquired her present status as a bed-holder it appears she had first moved in as a girlfriend to one of the bed-holders.

While these cases are anomolous and few in number, they illustrate some of the alternative processes by which people can obtain beds in their own right.

Thus far I have examined the workers' relationships in terms of origin and home boy groupings and examined the various categories of dependants living at the compound in terms of their relation to the bed-holders and the variety of reasons

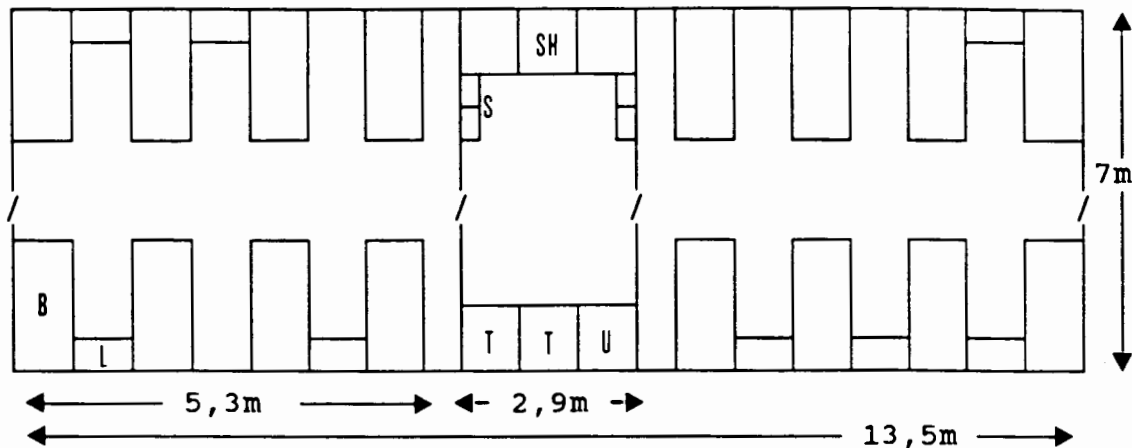
which have brought them to Cape Town. The following section looks at how people have organised the physical space they inhabit.

### The Social Organisation of Space

One of the most striking features of the compound is the fluid nature of the informal accommodation arrangements. Given the fact that there is such a severe shortage of accommodation in the Western Cape, the compound, as we have seen, represents a haven to a variety of people, such as wives, children, girlfriends and relatives or friends seeking work. As discussed above, the networks and links between people staying in the compound provide an insight into how relationships are utilised. The following section attempts to explore how physical space is utilised, particularly in a situation of overcrowding and lack of privacy.

I begin this process by comparing one of the new blocks in terms of what the company provides (as seen in Diagram 3 below), with the way in which the residents have transformed this space (as seen in Diagram 4 below).

**Diagram 3: New Block - As provided by company**



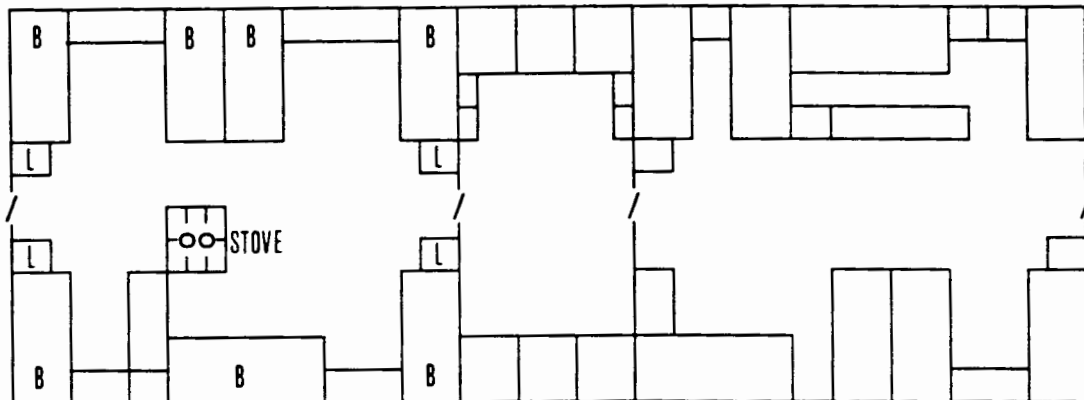
**Legend**

- B = Beds: 73cm width x 188cm length x 32cm height  
foam mattress 5cm thick
- L = Lockers: 45cm depth
- S = Sinks
- SH = Showers
- T = Toilets
- U = Urinal

In examining Diagram 3 it is clear that the company provided the bare essentials for its migrant workforce in terms of single beds, each with a foam mattress, and a limited number of lockers (four per room) in which to store personal belongings. Given the dimensions of the rooms the average space between beds is less than a meter leaving very little space for any activities other than using the rooms for sleeping. If the beds are occupied by one person only, the average space per person is  $4,6\text{m}^2$ . With the introduction of dependants, space is even more circumscribed, and the average space falls to  $2,6\text{m}^2$ . For the old blocks when dependants are present, the average drops from  $4,6\text{m}^2$  to  $1,5\text{m}^2$  per person. However, as seen in

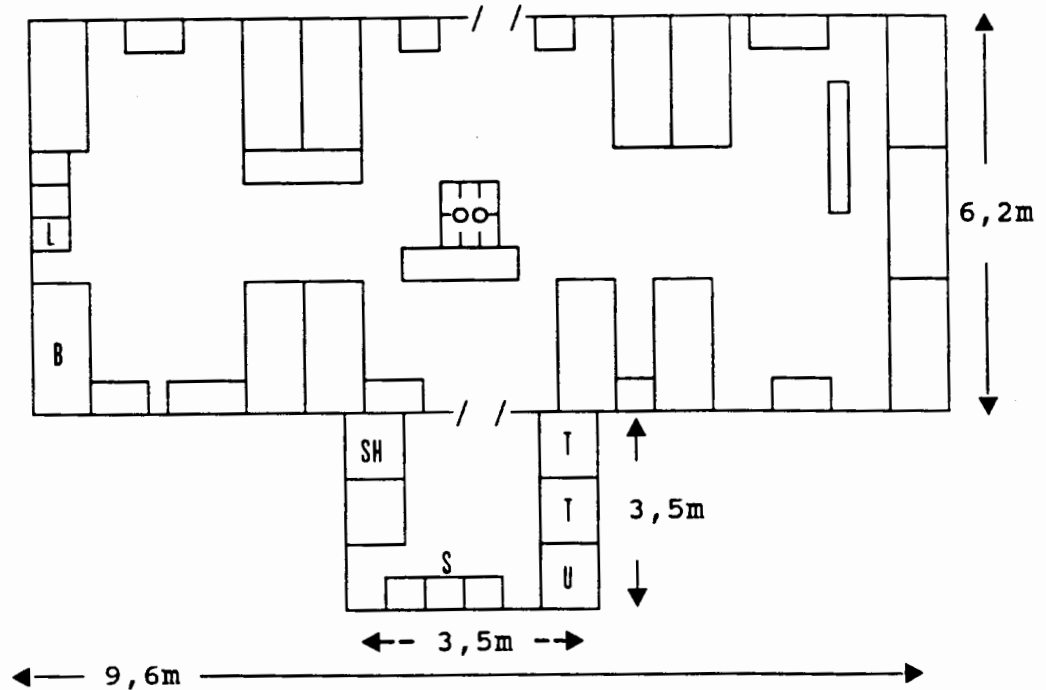
Diagrams 4 and 5 below, the rooms have been adapted in an attempt to create more space.

**Diagram 4: New Block - As improved by residents**



In looking at Diagram 4 (and Diagram 5 below) it is clear that the people living in these blocks have arranged the beds and furniture in such a way as to create their own personal space and privacy. Thus some beds have been turned sideways or put together resulting in an increase in floor space which is utilised for other activities, chief among these preparing food and cooking. Home-made furniture such as cupboards and lockers have been arranged in some cases to act as partitions between beds shielding them from view and creating a modicum of privacy. To this end wires are also strung up between beds to curtain them off one from the other.

Diagram 5: Old Block - As improved by residents



Lack of space for personal belongings is a major problem that residents have to face and thus one finds every available nook and cranny utilised. One of the most obvious ways of creating space is to raise the height of the beds to increase storage space, this is done by using bricks and old paint cans. In addition clothes bags hang from the walls and suitcases are stacked on top of lockers and the space underneath tables is also used to store kitchen utensils. In some instances wooden planks have been laid over ablution room cubicles creating storage space and some of the ablution facilities which are not functioning quickly become repositories for goods ranging from a bicycle to plastic drums.

As mentioned above the addition of home-made furniture such as cuboards, tables and benches are a much needed supplement to the beds and lockers provided by the company. In addition

to this some of the rooms have chairs, car seats, stereoes, refrigerators and in one instance a deep freeze. The latter electrical equipment had been wired into the existing power supply as none of the rooms were equipped with power points. All of these additions help to improve the quality of life for residents and to this end attempts have been made to decorate some of the rooms with magazine pictures and posters. The rooms nevertheless remain congested, especially at night when the floor space is taken over for sleeping.

### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Wives and very young children tend to sleep in the beds with their husbands, although, some husbands let their wives and children use the bed space while they sleep on the floor. Apart from girlfriends the rest of the dependants all utilise the floor space for sleeping, using foam mattresses which are rolled up and stored under beds during the day. At night some of the more crowded blocks literally turn into a sea of bodies. One informant, who lived in one of the old blocks (refer to Diagram 5 above) talked about the overcrowding in this way:

*newcomers and visitors come and stay here in the hostel [block] while looking for a place to stay. They mostly come from the Transkei and sometimes stay for up to two months - sometimes there have been as many as forty people staying in this room - sometimes as many as two or three people [per bed-holder]. They are given one foam mattress each, sometimes from the [bed-holder's] bed and they sleep on the floor between beds. They don't sleep in the aisle from the entrance to the stove and they don't sleep in the aisle leading to the toilets due to mobility. People have to be able to move around. The overcrowding is particularly bad between August and November. People have nothing to do in the Transkei and it's not raining here in Cape Town so they come and visit until December, when the fields need caring*

*for, and circumcision and the traditional gathering time takes place. Me, I stay alone here. My wife and children come down to Cape Town to visit twice a year but I would never have them stay here! We go to my uncle's house in Guguletu and I give my bed to someone I know and trust during that time [interview with Lakeni, aged 33 from Busila, Willowvale district].*

Some of the sleeping arrangements are not straight forward as the case below demonstrates.

### Case 7.9 Alternating Rooms

One of the dependants stayed in a particular block during the day but slept in another at night. This occurred in one of the smallest of the old blocks which measured 30m<sup>2</sup> and contained six beds. This was due, no doubt, to lack of space and the fact she was the only female dependant. The dependant, in this case a sister of one of the bed-holders, spent her time in his block during the day which she kept spotless but slept in another block at night. At the time of the interview Nothulezima had just finished cleaning the room and mentioned that she cleaned the room even though she didn't sleep there because *"it's my two brothers and brother-in-law who stay here and men couldn't do without a woman to help - they depend on us"*. She had been staying at the compound for a little over a month and prior to this had been oscillating between her home in Busila and Crossroads where she had lived for most of 1987. She stated that she used to visit the compound when her husband had worked for the company and that she was sleeping in the block where he used to live because she knew people from home there.

In the early evening the compound is alive with activity with a number of cars and kombis arriving to drop people off and take people to the townships for the night. Some of the men whose families live in the townships are part of this general nightly exodus. These men come off shift, shower and change and are on their way to their families within half an hour of getting off work. The atmosphere at night is in marked contrast to the slow pace during the day when women and children predominate at the compound.

## Daily Activities

The daily activities start in the early morning, and as at night, traffic is brisk with those going off to work elsewhere as well as men returning from the townships to start the work day. With the strain on the facilities caused by increased usage many people complained that running water was not available in the early morning and only came on by 8:00-8:30am by which time men had to go to work without washing, and some people felt that this was deliberate harassment from the company management. With the men at work most women spend their day cleaning and sweeping the endless dust which blows in from the brickworks. Preparing food, washing clothes and looking after young children take up much of the day. In some of the rooms women get together and do these activities jointly and a sense of camaraderie is evident. Some of the rooms are much cleaner than others and one informant, Nolast (introduced in Case 7.1), commented on the difference between rooms: *"some of the women staying here are very messy. If they cut bread they just leave the crumbs to fall on the floor and don't bother to sweep them away. That is why some of the rooms are so dirty"*.

Although the company employs someone to sweep the rooms and clean the toilets regularly, the overcrowding makes this a difficult task. Thus unless the residents organise themselves or female dependants take on these duties the rooms, and especially the ablution facilities, quickly become dirty and unhygienic as was found to be the case in particular blocks.

In a situation of makeshift facilities food preparation takes up a large amount of time and in this regard apart from gathering utyuthu (wild spinach) food has to be purchased. Shops are at least five kilometres away, apart from a cafe situated at the bottom of the road. This means that some women rely on others who have access to transport and who buy vegetables and goods in bulk. One woman did quite a brisk business with other women sending their children to buy vegetables from her. Likewise offal is cleaned and sold by some women as are sheep's heads, although these latter are cooked in a big drum some distance from the compound. Some women sell cool drinks and liquor and during the day a brisk business is conducted selling cool drinks, especially to children. Beer is also brewed outside the compound beside the track. During fieldwork, however, this entire area was bulldozed by the company and the women had to relocate their operation further away in the bushes.

In addition to these means of obtaining goods informal sector operators from the townships visit the compound and conduct a roaring trade selling a variety of goods from meat and produce to second-hand clothes. When they arrive everyone stops whatever task they are doing and rushes out to look for bargains. On one particular occasion I was left interviewing thin air until the woman returned some twenty minutes later well satisfied with her purchases. A local farmer has also included the compound on his rounds arriving late in the afternoon at least twice a week to sell amasi (sour milk).

A few of the workers also earn extra money after work hours through selling liquor. On a smaller scale one man earned R10 per month sewing and another enterprising man earned money with his kitting machine as well as selling vetkoek which he made himself and which were very popular.

During the day children spend their time playing together. Football is very popular with the older children while the younger ones play with small toys they construct themselves, and until the compound was paved, enjoyed playing in the mud. Unlike the municipal hostels which are located near schools and creches<sup>13</sup>, there are no such facilities located near the compound, and thus these children are left to their own devices for the length of time they live at the compound.

The older male teenagers who were dependants in the sample were all employed. Some of the teenagers who live at the compound have not been able to find employment or are just visiting. Thus some spend their time looking for employment while others spend their time playing football or 'hanging around the compound together'. In this regard the old kitchen had clearly been taken over as a teenagers' domain, and on many occasions during fieldwork teenagers were found gathered there often smoking cigarettes and dagga.

In terms of recreation most companies have made some provision for the leisure time of their migrant workforce<sup>14</sup>

13 Segar (1988:19) notes that of the children surveyed in Cape Town hostels who had access to education or daycare facilities, 42% of those aged 6-15 were attending school and 15% under 6 years of age were attending creches.

14 In his survey of two Port Nolloth compounds West (1987:57) found that organized leisure activities included soccer clubs and choral singing. Besides sports teams McNamara's study of hostel life in the gold mining industry notes the importance of hostel

and in this regard the company has a company soccer team which plays against other company teams in the vicinity. The soccer 'field' is a pitch devoid of grass. The younger men employed by the company are enthusiastic and spend a great deal of time practising after work. The only other form of recreational entertainment provided by the company is a large black and white television set which is mounted on the wall in the now defunct dining hall.

Due to the limited recreational activities it is not surprising to find that drinking is one of the main forms of recreation. As mentioned above, a few of those interviewed sold liquor, and one room in particular appeared to be the 'shebeen'. This room was filled with crates of cool drinks, beer, wine and spirits in addition to having a fridge and stereo and appeared to have a large clientele with noise and loud music issuing forth every evening. On one occasion while interviewing residents in this room, a very inebriated woman entered and wanted to buy some alcohol. She mentioned that she 'lived in the forest' but came to the compound to drink. One of the men who was on his way to the township where he lived pointed to her and said *"My bed is in the block next door but I prefer to live in the township. I don't want to stay in the compound with people like her"*. Although a few other rooms in the compound were filled with crates of beer for sale they did not appear to be 'shebeens' on the same scale as the room described above. Apart from the socialising and drinking which takes place in the rooms

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beer-halls or bars which are provided by the mines and which are "the most accessible recreational outlet for residents who claim that they have 'nothing to do but drink'" (1980:311).

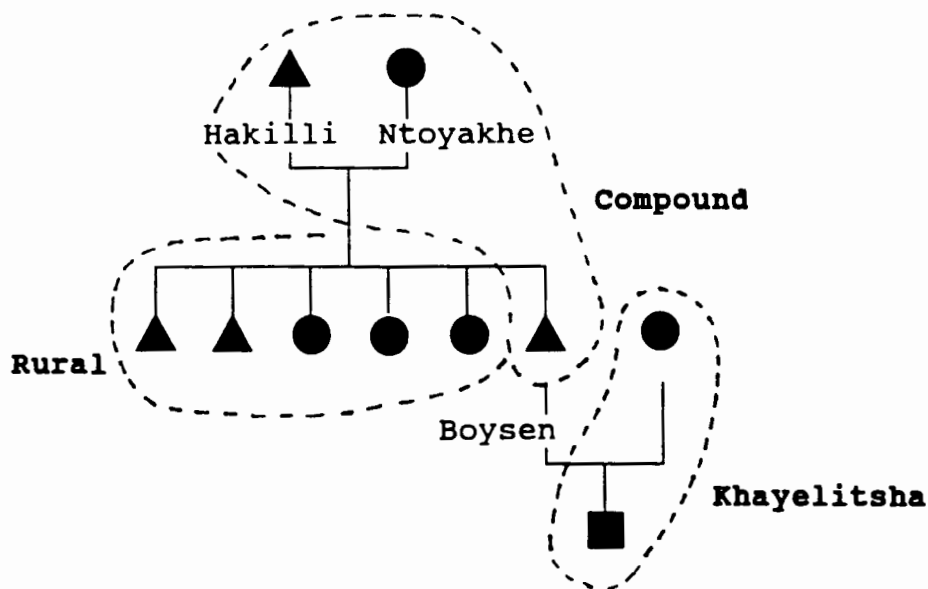
the younger residents organise a disco every fortnight. This is held in the old dining hall which makes a perfect venue as it is a large room in which the existing trestle tables and benches can be rearranged and stacked for dancing. Upcoming discos are advertised by way of a hand-written notice which is posted at the entrance on the compound gate. Although I did not attend any of these discos evidence of a party taking place took the form of broken beer bottles and a strong smell of liquor in the dining hall the next day. The kitchen adjoining the dining hall, which still houses the four cooking vats, has also been put to use as a 'gym' with the introduction of a makeshift punching bag.

This chapter has tried to present a glimpse of the people living at the compound and what life is like for them in a place which was built as single sex accommodation for male migrant workers. In this context I have tried to show the fluidity of accommodation arrangements at the compound in terms of relationships between bed-holders and dependants. As is evident these arrangements are not static but constitute an overall dynamic in which a variety of people exercise mobility and choice under the constraints of a severe shortage of accommodation and high levels of unemployment, and in this context, as noted in the beginning of this section, kinship is a crucial resource.

For purposes of analysis the categories of dependants staying at the compound were divided into two groups, however in many cases both groups of dependants were living with bed-holders as already illustrated in Case 7.8 above. Likewise in terms of spatial organisation a variety of

spatial groupings were observed which embrace the compound, Cape Town townships as well as the Transkei. The three examples detailed below serve to illustrate the complexities of dependency relations and social organisation.

**Figure 1** Dependency Relations and Social Organisation

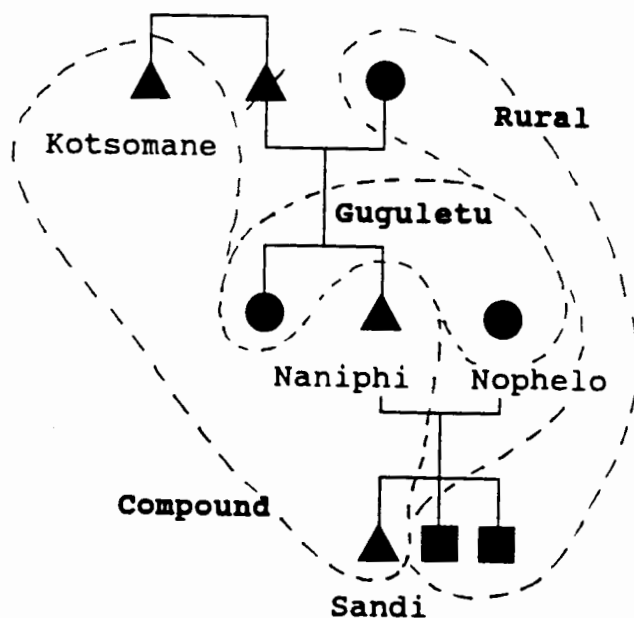


Hakilli first came to Cape Town in the 1960's and has worked for the company for over twenty years. He has a wife, Ntoyakhe, and six children. His wife is currently living with him at the compound having arrived in 1988 to take up residence, she has visited him often though over the years and in 1987 was able to get a South African identity document via the company. His eldest son, Boysen, is thirty years old and had worked in Johannesburg on contract for a number of years before coming to Cape Town for the first time in 1984. Although Boysen got his job at the company formally via the labour bureau his father recommended him for the job and he worked for one year before being retrenched in 1985. It is not clear what he did up to 1987 when he was rehired by the company. In this period he lived in Site C in Khayelitsha and returned to the compound to live when he was rehired. For the last year he has worked as a labourer earning the same amount as his father (R115 per week). Boysen lives in a different block from his parents.

Boysen's wife and child came to Cape Town to visit for the first time in 1988. Boysen arranged accommodation for them in Site C in Khayelitsha where they were staying at the time of the interview. Boysen did not like the idea of his wife being down in Cape Town stating he was afraid she would not want to go back to the rural areas, and refused to allow her or his child to come and stay at the compound.

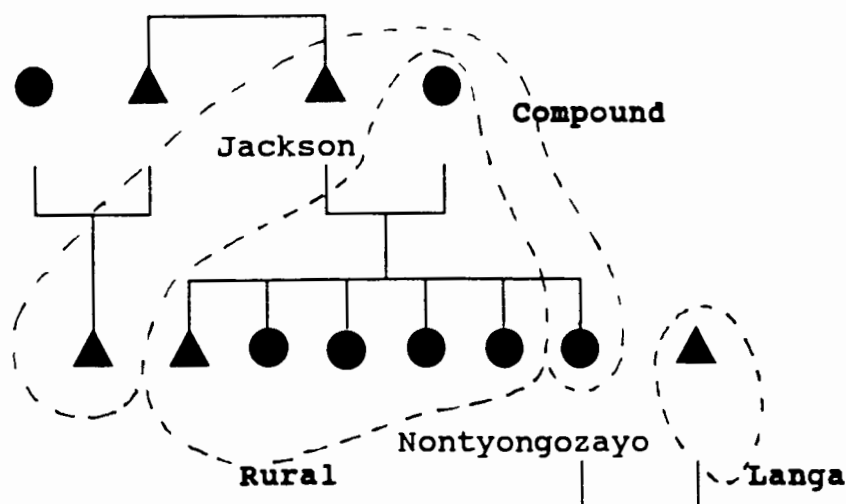
Boysen's siblings (three sisters and two brothers) live at their natal homestead in Qumanco, Saint Marks. Boysen's father has a small amount of land since the Trust came in 1978 and Boysen himself has very few livestock. Boysen and his father remit home R100 each month and Boysen is eventually going to inherit his father's land.

Figure 2 Dependency Relations and Social Organisation



Naniphi is thirty-two years old and has been working at the company since 1987. His father's brother who is employed by the company recommended him for the job. Both live in the same room together. Naniphi's sister lives in Guguletu township in Cape Town. In September 1988 Naniphi's wife, Nophelo and his ten year old son, Sandi, came to Cape Town due to his wife being ill. Nophelo is staying with Naniphi's sister in Guguletu while Sandi is staying with his father at the compound. The only adult at Naniphi's natal home in Busila is his mother who is looking after his two children while his wife is getting treatment in Cape Town. Naniphi is the only person remitting money home.

Figure 3 Dependency Relations and Social Organisation



Jackson, aged fifty-nine has been working for the company since 1954. Prior to this he worked in Johannesburg on the mines. He is married and has five daughters and one son. Jackson's brother's son is employed at the company and Jackson stated he had been responsible for his nephew acquiring his job. His nephew lives in another block. The only family member to visit Cape Town has been one of his daughters, Nontyongozayo, aged twenty-eight, who arrived in Cape Town for the first time in 1987. Her husband is working in Cape Town and living in Langa, however she stays with her father because she is employed as a casual working at the company. Nontyongozayo's father was also responsible for getting her a job at the company. Nontyongozayo was able to acquire a South African identity document through the company and wants to settle in Cape Town and continue to work for the company. Jackson was unsure about where he would settle in the future stating he would decide when he went on pension. He was the only person remitting money home to his wife in Qumanco, Saint Marks and thus sent most of his salary home.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the world of the compound is a complex, fluid and dynamic one. There appears to be a constant movement of people between the compound, the rural areas and the townships as the men, their families, relatives and friends attempt to construct a life under circumstances that have been severely constrained.

The migrant labour system, the legacies of influx control, rural poverty, and urban underdevelopment have all

contributed to situations to which individuals have had to adapt. Simultaneously however, as the micro-data reveals, they have been able to modify and manipulate circumstances where possible to ameliorate their conditions.

The final chapter attempts to link these micro-level situations to broader external determinants and theoretical understandings.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE COMPOUND EXPERIENCE: EXTERNAL DETERMINANTS AND MULTIPLE DISCOURSES

#### Introduction

This chapter attempts to link the micro study of the compound with the broader external determinants which affect, and which are on occasion affected by, life in the compound. In so doing, the compound experience will be linked to the macro-data discussed in Chapter Five which examined policy and practice among government agencies, employers and trade unions. In this sense I will be focussing on the multiple discourses of these actors, as well as on the workers and their families living in the compound. These multiple discourses will be contextualised with various macro-theoretical perspectives which will be examined in an attempt to understand the social processes set in motion with the abolition of influx control legislation.

#### The Compound Experience: Historical Understandings

The broad history of the compound system in South Africa presents a picture that is stark in its harshness. Compounds were first introduced in the latter half of the nineteenth century having started in Kimberley in response to the introduction of underground mining. These early compounds were 'open' (in the sense of having freedom of entry and

exit), overcrowded and unhealthy and were characterised by high mortality rates due to exposure and diseases such as pneumonia and smallpox which were endemic (Turrell, 1982:64). The conditions prevailing in these open compounds resulted in a high labour turnover and mineowners responded by petitioning the government for convict labour. The outcome of this was the development of convict compounds. The barracks erected to accommodate this convict labour were covered with wire mesh and included entrance and exit tunnels to and from the mine. In addition, they had detention cells where convict-workers could be forced to flush out stolen diamonds. Later, mining corporations intent on preventing theft transformed the open compounds into accommodation which was structurally identical to these convict stations (Turrell, 1982:65).

These closed compounds, as Turrell (1982) points out, can be seen as the end product of a changing strategy of "social control" in that the system was conceived to maintain and discipline a migrant labour force. Thus although the ideological discourse and justification for the introduction of closed compounds was grounded in the growth of IDB (Illicit Diamond Buying), the real reasons were found in the structural conditions of capital accumulation in the mining industry itself (Turrell, 1982:68)<sup>1</sup>.

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1 The costs of underground mining necessitated a reconstruction of the labour process since increased amounts of capital were required for the extraction of diamonds. This dictated a need for a constant supply of labourers (Turrell, 1982:67). In order to minimize mining costs, however, the industry sought to control costs by, on the one hand, restructuring the extent of white employment, and on the other by developing a production process which exploited cheap, unskilled African labour (Richardson and van Helten, 1982).

For Africans, working and living conditions on the Kimberley mines tended to be circumscribed by the compound. And as Richardson and van Helten state "[t]his system of housing ... combined cost effectiveness in social provision with widespread means of social control" (1982:91). Although the closed compound system was extended to the Witwatersrand it was not adopted wholesale. It did, however, provide:

[a] very effective means of management control over the labour force, and provided the environment within which resistance to work conditions, changes in the methods of production, changes in rates of pay, and general proletarianisation took place at the mines (Richardson and van Helten, 1982:91).

The coercive aspect of the compound system has continued for much of the twentieth century, and Gordon's (1977) study of a Namibian mining compound, for example, reflects compound conditions similar to those found at the turn of the century. West (1987), also writes about the restrictive regulations governing every aspect of life of compound residents in Port Nolloth in the late 1960's<sup>2</sup>. In terms of the Black Labour Regulations he noted that:

Compounds must be built within official specifications, subject to the approval of the Director of Labour, and must have basic facilities and services. They must also be enclosed "to the satisfaction of the Director", who then designates the placement of entrances, and ensures that these are properly controlled. It is an offense for anyone to enter or leave a compound except through a designated entrance. In large compounds these entrances are normally under 24-hour guard. Every compound housing fifty or more people has to have a licensed compound manager. This is always a white person, although it is not stated specifically in the regulations. The compound manager is responsible for the administration and control of the compound, and is

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<sup>2</sup> In particular he examined the Black Labour Regulations which not only specified how migrant workers were to be accommodated and controlled but, additionally, the obligations of the inmates and restrictions on their behaviour infringements of which were punishable by fines or imprisonment (West, 1987:49-50).

specifically required to supervise the inmates, investigate complaints, and maintain law and order [and] [i]n carrying out these duties, the compound manager has wide ranging powers (West, 1987: 49).

In attempting to analyse these experiences and in examining compounds as institutions, many writers (Alverson, 1978; Gordon, 1977; Moodie, 1980, 1983), have relied analytically upon the work of Erving Goffman, and in particular his concept of 'total institutions':

[a] total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time together lead an enclosed and formally administered round of life (Goffman, 1961:13,17).

The primary feature of a total institution is the removal of the barriers normally separating the three major spheres of life: work, sleep and play (Goffman, 1961:17), and in this context Goffman identified a range of institutions which conform to this. These include psychiatric hospitals, work camps and prisons. In examining Southern African compounds with all their myriad mechanisms of control and coercion, writers who have used this concept have reached a general consensus that compounds do indeed constitute total institutions in which all activities, including work and after-hours 'free time', are subject to severe scrutiny and policing by supervisors.

With this background in mind, it would be relatively easy to understand the company compound under study as one which conforms to this conventional description of a 'total institution' (at least up until 1985 when the company removed both the compound manager and security guards).

However, to do so would be to deny the realities of its history, and also the complexities and variations in understandings and actions wrought on the micro-level. Some of these are explored below.

### The Compound Experience: External Determinants and Multiple Discourses

The history of the compound reveals that, in its earlier years, it was not a 'total institution' in the sense described by West (1982:49) above, for it was only in the mid-1960's that it was enclosed by a brick wall, and a compound manager and guards installed. On a macro-level, this transformation from an 'open' to a 'closed' compound could be understood by reference to the intensification of the CLPP in the Western Cape, and in particular, to the amendment to the 1965 Black Labour Regulations which stipulated the procedures for employment of African migrant workers as well as specifying the type of accommodation deemed suitable.

However, if one looks beyond this obvious link, a more specific story is revealed which places the workers at the centre of this transformation, and which illustrates the significance of micro-level research. According to two elderly informants who had both started working for the company in the 1950's, it was the workers themselves who requested that the compound be walled and a guard installed. As one informant recalled in detail:

*I first came to work at the company in the mid-1950's - I don't remember the exact year. At that time the company was much smaller and used to produce pipes. In the early days there were no toilets, sinks or showers and we used to wash outside. There was no wall around the hostels they were the only buildings here. There were only about 10 men living here then - and most of them came from Nyasaland because the old owners came from Rhodesia and brought their own workers with them. After that the company used to send a recruiter to the Transkei from town to town recruiting workers. During my second time working for the company, it was around 1965, we were suffering from theft. People from the local coloured township would steal our clothes hanging on the wash lines and our radios while we were at work. There was also a problem with people arriving at night from the Transkei. We negotiated with the company about having a wall put around the hostels and a guard at the gate for our own protection - yes a yard for our own protection and a waiting room. The security guard and wall was from our own suggestion.*

Thus, while the compound undoubtedly did go through a 'total institution'-type phase which severely circumscribed the workers' freedom, it is clear from the above that it did not start out as such and that the workers actually negotiated to have the more repressive elements (wall and guard) added.

This example sheds light on the workers' interactions with their employer and illustrates their position, not as passive subjects and recipients of external forces, such as the compound system, but as actors who actively manipulate the system in their own self-interest. Thus, as we have seen in Chapter Six, they were able, decades later in 1985, to reverse their earlier position and force the company to remove the compound manager and guards.

The complex nature of these discourses which construct views about the compound experience is further illustrated through responses to the current issue of overcrowding. As we have seen, the compound is overcrowded by various categories of dependants, and, as was demonstrated in the previous two Chapters, this has placed a considerable strain both on

facilities, and on employer-worker relations. Two sets of contrasting views emerged here in understanding the situation. For example, the sporadic water supply (caused by over-usage) is interpreted by workers and the people living in the compound as a deliberate form of harassment by the company management. Management have formed different perceptions:

*Overcrowding at the compound is a real problem. Many of the people staying at the compound are not the workers' wives or people who work for the company. In the morning I see a stream of people leaving the compound. I've got 250 employees but I know them, I know their faces. The water supply to the compound is also taking strain with this overcrowding. It's used constantly now, whereas before the workers really only used it in the evenings after work. The police know about the overcrowding, they have raided the compound twice - once without them forewarning me. In the last raid one man was apprehended for dagga and taken away. There is dagga, liquor and women there! The police are pressuring me. I know the head of the police [in the municipal area] - I can keep them away but not indefinitely. There are also lots of people squatting on our land in the bush, it's a big problem [interview with the Managing Director].*

*These people hold a disco here in the compound dining hall every fortnight and they get drunk and stabbings occur. It's disgusting they make a mess of the place [interview with Labour Officer].*

It is clear that both the company's management and the workers have negative perceptions about one another in terms of the present situation at the compound. These differences in perceptions and interpretations are similar in this instance to those discussed in Chapter Six in which conflicting interpretations of the 1985 events were examined.

This micro-level situation is further complicated by the operation of outside forces, and in terms of externalities,

it is clear that the company feels pressured by the police. The fact that the compound has never been licensed by the company, nor did it have a permit to operate<sup>3</sup>, added to the pressure facing the company in 1988, and in this regard tension has been increased by the police raids. Police have raided the compound twice, once in 1985 when people were arrested for 'dompas' offenses, and more recently in May 1988 when one man was arrested for possessing dagga. One of the informants provided details of the second raid:

*It was 10:00am on a Saturday morning. Many police came, both white and coloured. They came into the room and asked you to open your locker and if you didn't they would just grab anything. They took a television, money and clothes from one of the blocks and also arrested someone for dagga. But this is the only thing that has happened since the dompas was abolished. Before that we used to be harassed and woken up rudely here in the compound by police for passes.*

With the demise of influx control legislation, police have used other reasons to raid the compound. In the case cited above, the police raided the compound looking for drugs. In other areas, however, raids have occurred in which people staying in hostels were arrested under the Trespass Act. This occurred at Lwandle near Somerset West where women were arrested and charged with trespassing, and on a number of occasions police have raided hostels in Mfuleni near Kuilsrivier<sup>4</sup>. One employer whose workforce had been affected by the raids on Mfuleni hostels in 1986 recounted what the situation had been like:

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<sup>3</sup> Prior to the abolition of influx control legislation employers had to apply to the Administration Board for a licence. In the post-abolition period, in terms of the Group Areas Act permits were required for the continuation of operating a hostel. This Act was repealed in 1991.

<sup>4</sup> See Cape Times reports: 25/1/86 for raid on Langa hostel, 22/4/87 for Lwandle raids and 17/9/86 and 15/10/86 for Mfuleni raids. No known incidents of Trespass raids have occurred since 1987. Apart from the Langa raid the others occurred outside Cape Town in smaller more conservative magisterial districts.

At Mfuleni, just after the abolition of influx control, police swept in and picked up anybody who didn't have a yellow rent card. If they're in the wrong quarters and can't show their cards they get put in little vans and taken to the Kuilsrivier police station. They appear at the Kuilsrivier magistrate's court - I think on a trespass charge. At one time there were 200 people there. I used to go every Thursday like clockwork and go and sort things out with the magistrate. I told the magistrate we deduct rent. The magistrate told us to give our guys a letter stating that. Now our guys carry a letter around. Whenever there's a problem like that [raids] they move out to Crossroads or Khayelitsha. Then when there are problems there they come back to Mfuleni. They always keep a 'safe base' - out will come the mattress again.

As this example and the above quotation illustrate, employers, particularly if their labour supplies are affected and if they face financial penalties, are in some instances sympathetic to workers difficulties with the system. However, in others they display some ambiguity. The issue of what to do about the hostels is a case in point.

All of the eight employers interviewed housed their workers in hostels with all but one of these being company-owned. The abolition of influx control legislation has meant that employers are no longer required, in the absence of suitable municipal accommodation, to house their workforce in employer-built accommodation, and, as evidenced in Chapter Five, one major employer made a policy decision to cut costs by getting rid of their hostels and by hiring labour locally, thus by-passing the issue of accommodation.

This instance notwithstanding, at the rhetorical level at least, the majority of employers stated that the major problem facing them was the issue of accommodation for their African workforce. However, none of the employers were interested in upgrading their hostels to family

accommodation and, some two years after the abolition of influx control legislation, only three of the eight employers interviewed were offering any type of housing scheme to their workers. The ambiguity inherent in many of the employer's positions is illustrated by the following quote:

*We want to get involved in anything to help our people get houses. It's absolutely critical ... let's cut the crap ... we're in it for the money as well since we're in the construction business. The hostel is an expensive operation for the company. We've got one hostel which accommodates 500 workers. It's got its advantages and disadvantages ... got to take the people into account living in the hostels ... they've contributed to the growth of the Western Cape ... I can't just bulldoze them down [interview with major employer in the construction industry].*

The employer quoted above had one of the more modern hostels and one of the workers interviewed at the compound stated he had worked for this particular employer and lived in the hostel which he described as "*beautiful, neat and advanced although not that new*".

This type of response has been verified by Segar, who, commenting on the differences between municipal hostels and private employer-built hostels, notes that "[n]owadays the latter are fairly well equipped and generally offer living conditions of a much higher standard than is found in government hostels" (1988:3). While this obviously holds true for hostels such as the one described above, in many other cases however, conditions are still as bad as those found by Selvan in the mid-1970's<sup>5</sup>. He likened employer's

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<sup>5</sup> See for example South 4/6/87 for conditions in the SATS compound in Bellville and 3/9/87 for details concerning living conditions in Khayamandi hostels in Stellenbosch where for example, overcrowding has been exacerbated by women and children moving in in the post-abolition period.

dormitories to a "... temporary relief disaster area [rather than] a permanent home for anyone"(1976:24). This was echoed by one Labour Officer in describing the present condition of his company's hostels:

*We have a hostel in Fisantekraal outside Durbanville which we took over from another company. Although officially we have 180 workers recorded as living there in reality we have at least 200 workers at the hostel. It's like the "hot bed system in the submarine service". But I think many of the workers sleep out at night with their families in Khayelitsha and commute to Stellenbosch. We also have about 80 workers living in Lwandle in Somerset West.*

*Lwandle experienced an influx of blacks after the old Administration Boards were disbanded. In fact the CPA has approached us and we have given up two of the four blocks of ours there. The government wants to develop Lwandle as single sex accommodation. Lwandle is 'shared' by Gordon's Bay, Somerset West and the Strand. The Strand opposed family accommodation - we're going back a 100 years rather than forward - we would like to improve things for our people. [In the meantime] we're subsidising the rent anyway at Lwandle. Until the government make up their minds we're 'piggy in the middle'. At Khayamandi we had to wait seven years for land and then only when we pressured them [government]. [And] we [had] to give up a piece of our land to create a buffer zone. ... we [have] had untold strife from unions for proper housing. Our single sex hostels are appalling. I wouldn't keep my dog in there.*

The views expressed above neatly capture the ambiguities of employers. They recognise the physical and human inadequacies of the accommodation they provide and are able, when pressured by employees and unions, to ignore the laws and to 'open' compounds to dependants and others. Simultaneously though, they have been constrained by the state and other external factors that hinder change. Consequently, they have, by and large, maintained the status quo and have not invested in compound improvements. Rather, they have sought other solutions.

One of these solutions has been to get rid of the problem and close the hostels; the case of the employer whose attitude was less ambivalent than those described above. This employer, introduced in Chapter Five (see also Case 5.3), who had shut down the hostels due to the high costs involved, discussed what had happened and what the workers' reactions had been to these changes.

*The hostels are now being renovated. One is being turned into a police station, the other is being taken over by SANTA. It's a big relief not to have the hostels any longer. There were a percentage of black workers who preferred to live in the hostels - they didn't want their wives to join them. Apparently the workers made a deal with the Development Board to lease a hostel in Langa - they still live there quite happily. Apart from this it seems everyone is living in the townships.*

What this same employer neglected to mention was the fact that their workers refused to vacate the hostels and that 165 workers were charged with trespass. Workers responded by going on strike which resulted in the company dropping the trespass charges<sup>6</sup>. Despite worker dissatisfaction, however, the company went ahead with selling the hostels.

Their alternative was a company housing scheme, and the industrial relations officer reported that the company provided interest free loans for deposits to employees of 'some standing' and also provided loans for materials for self-help housing. As he stated "*it's taking off - some of the guys have well built homes in Cape Town and the Transkei*".

This 'solution' to the problem, the relocation of labour away from company property, has not however been well

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<sup>6</sup> See Cape Times, 14/2/86.

received at other compounds, and employers stated that many workers were not enthusiastic about housing schemes. As one employer reported:

*[A]t this stage we've had an official survey done at the hostel. 80% of the workers want to stay at the hostel. They [workers] are asking questions about home ownership policies such as 'If I buy a house now what if the CP comes into power next year?' - they are scared to invest. ... In my experience workers say 'look ol' pal I've got X amount of money I want to invest it where it's going to work for me - in the Transkei rather than here [in the urban areas]'.*

*In the case of the 20% who do want urban housing, we are prepared to help them with loans on deposits, sorting out documents etc. We had sales guys looking at site and service schemes. Workers through all salary levels are looking for housing, but there are problems trying to find affordable housing in the lower income group.*

*The workers are scared at the moment - they don't know which way the cookie will crumble. They've got their retirement homes 'insurance policies' in the Transkei and don't necessarily want their families here. It's almost traditional, migrant labourers go to work in the Western Cape.*

The workers in the compound study exhibited similar attitudes to those described above. Slightly over half of the workers (50 or 52%) wanted to remain at the compound and did not want families to move in with them. This finding confirms what many employers found in terms of their own workforces, namely that workers wanted to retain the hostel system and were not interested in having their families living with them. Herein lies one of the paradoxes of the compound system: the legal demise of an apparently abhorrent institution is not supported by the supposed victims of it! This viewpoint is further reflected in the details of the workers' reactions and understandings which are explored below.

The workers' attitudes towards upgrading of accommodation can be divided into two major responses: those who were against upgrading and those who were in favour of it. Seventy-two (75%) wanted upgrading, while twenty-four (25%) were against it. It is clear that a significant proportion of the workers were not interested in any changes being made to their present accommodation. The main reason given for this was their heavy investment in their homes in the Transkei. The most frequent response was "we are *only here to work - not for comfort*".

It should be remembered that the company was not charging workers for rent, electricity, water or coal and with minimal living expenses in the urban area workers were able to send regular cash remittances to their families and homes in the Transkei. Thus in terms of upgrading, workers were worried that they would have to contribute financially or pay rental for accommodation and that this would have serious implications for the size of their remittances with a consequently negative impact on the quality of life for their families in the Transkei.

The 72 workers who wanted upgrading can again be divided into two groups: those who wanted family accommodation (46 or 64%) and those who wanted single sex accommodation (26 or 36%). Of those who want family accommodation, the average number of bedrooms specified was two. Of those who wanted single sex accommodation half the workers stated they would prefer private bedrooms while the other half stated they would be prepared to share a bedroom with between one to four people. Overall, in terms of additional rooms, the

majority of these workers stated they would like a kitchen and ablution room. In addition some of the workers specifically stated they would like such things as dining rooms, electricity and running water.

The above illustrates the variation in response to the question of what type of accommodation workers wanted. A few of the workers had very clear ideas of what they wanted while many were quite unsure. One of the major points of concern for workers was whether the cost of upgrading accommodation would be carried by the company or whether the individual worker would be made to contribute financially in the form of rent. Given this uncertainty, responses varied considerably as to how much rent per month people were willing to pay for upgraded accommodation. Answers ranged from less than R5 per month (8%), to 'whatever it costs' (10%). The average amount for those who specified figures was in the region of R23 per month.

The company, however, has its own ideas concerning the problem of overcrowding and illegal occupation of their compound and of the form upgrading of the compound would take. As the Managing Director explained, the company wants the compound upgraded as single sex accommodation for male workers. It is envisaged that those workers who have wives and families staying at the compound must get involved in the housing policy loan scheme the company is offering. This, however, means they would have to move to the townships in order to take advantage of the scheme. It would also mean incurring rental and other costs well in excess of what they are apparently willing to pay. There are clearly

hard economic realities which affect both workers and employers responses.

This mismatch between management's ideas and workers' expectations concerning housing and the upgrading of compound accommodation is seen in another area of contention. Although 50 of the workers (52%) did not want any changes to the compound or family accommodation, many nevertheless have grown used to having their families come and visit them at the compound and want their families to be able to continue doing so, a situation which would contradict company policy.

If employers on the local level have expressed their difficulties with the hostel system, so too, on a national level, have major employers in the private sector articulated their views of the system of migrant labour and influx control (Oppenheimer, 1985; Relly, 1985; Godsell, 1985). Their similar, if broader, attitudes are demonstrated in the following quotation:

The shift that has taken place in the sixties and seventies, which has seen the black part of South Africa's labour force moving towards a status of permanent, semi-skilled or skilled, union-represented employees, has created a conflict with the 'temporary sojourner' status of so-called migrant or contract workers.

Influx control must be a concern for the business community as it affects directly the relationship between employer and employee. Influx control is a problem for business for a number of important reasons: ... it is a highly inefficient system of allocating labour. The present influx control system works on the principle that the employer must find the aspirant employee through a black rural recruitment process. The history of industrialisation around the world shows in practice that the prospective worker goes off in search of employment - the worker seeks work; the employer does not seek a prospective worker ... permanent

oscillating migration obstructs the development of a mature employment relationship, and frustrates career-type aspirations on the part of management and workers. It also divides the labour force along arbitrary and unnecessary lines ... (Godsell, 1985:305-306).

On the national level, views such as these from the private sector were a major force in pressuring the government to abolish influx control legislation, and as such illustrate "the power of business to shape reality" (Godsell, 1985:304). Despite these sentiments however, private enterprises' responses as explored in the Western Cape among major employers can, as said, be characterised for the most part as a continuation of the existing status quo with little involvement in the key area of employee housing. This is perhaps not surprising given that, in terms of the 'orderly urbanisation' policy, the costs of urbanisation have not been borne by the state and have, rather, devolved upon private enterprise, local government, and those individuals who can least afford it (see Chapter Four). Further, as Chapter Five indicates, such private sector development that has taken place has, for the most part, not been aimed at the area of greatest need, low-cost sub-economic housing. It is not surprising in this light then, that employers are reluctant to provide accommodation for the families of migrant workers, and equally, it is possible to understand why migrants are reluctant to leave the compounds.

It is clear then, that despite national changes in legislation, just as previous legal and other constraints were manipulated on a local level, so too will the next round of changes be mediated by the inter-action between

employers and workers. Clearly, too, where there are wide differences of interpretation of events, as indicated above, policy changes on company levels will reflect the consequent ambivalencies, ambiguities and uncertainties of the actors concerned. The section below is concerned with examining in more detail the responses of the workers to this compound experience.

### The Compound Experience: Being a Migrant

As indicated above, in contrast to the common view of migrants as an homogenous category, compound life demonstrates how workers have been active in attempting to construct meanings in their divided lives. This section further illustrates this on two levels. Firstly, worker responses to employment and related practices are examined. And, secondly, on a personal level, the ways in which migrants deal with the rural-urban divide are analysed.

As was discussed in Chapter Three, many authors (Hindson, 1987b; Savage, 1984; Zille, 1984) have argued that state policies, particularly in the 1970's, were aimed at dividing the labour force and at exacerbating the insider/outsider division. Thus, as Hindson (1987b:84) has argued, a natural consequence of this policy was a protection of urban Africans from rural competition through intensified influx control. The attempt by the state to create an insider/outsider division appears to have been successful to a certain extent in the Western Cape. An executive of the

Cape Chamber of Industries commented on his perceptions of this division in industry.

*Within the building/civil engineering industry black long-term residents are afraid of the new influx of blacks. There is definitely an 'ingroup' and 'outgroup'. The section 10 resident blacks [tend] to be employed in the service industry. Those without section 10 rights are itinerant and tend to be employed in construction. They see themselves as a particular group - hostel dwellers. They want to maintain the group so they tend to replace themselves with relatives by word of mouth.*

In terms of employment, major representatives of the private sector noted that "[r]estricting the supply of unskilled people enhances the demand for, and the price of skilled labour. We therefore have to reckon that organised labour, which increasingly will include black unions, could have a vested interest in supporting influx control" (Relly, 1985:299).

This apparently anomolous position was seen in Chapter Five, where it was noted that the initial response of some trade unions to the abolition of influx control legislation and the new measures was either hostility or indifference, with little careful analysis of the implications of the new system, nor even a monitoring of its implementation. One union official actually reminisced about the 'good old days' of influx control in terms of housing and the ability to organise workers:

*[h]ousing is the major problem. We've got a number of people who are coming to us for help. Employers are no longer - you know, like the good old days when there were hostels. Now the workers have to build a shack and have their home in Transkei. Also under influx control when workers lived in hostels it was much easier to organise. Now it's a problem. Now they're in Crossroads, Site B and C in Khayelitsha - all over the place. The abolition has made people worse off in terms of housing.*

There were two occasions in '85 with a lot of tension going on. People came from the Ciskei and Transkei into Cape Town. They were occupying the hostels. The employers got mad. Where there used to be 5 people staying there were now 20. The employers said 'we get the penalties' and cut it off.

One company wanted no women allowed through the gates - even women [union] organisers. After the KTC [1986 Crossroads] blow-up the workers moved their families in. We reached an agreement to have the families there while they were looking for alternative accommodation. The company did a survey there and found three-quarters of the workers wanted to stay in hostels. The employers are pushing for home ownership while refusing to keep up or upgrade their hostels.

This tends to confirm the findings among employers in terms of their accommodation policies. In considering the issues of union action and worker organisation one employer commented that unions were practising selective membership protection.

After the abolition of influx control we retrenched a number of workers while they were still in the Transkei. This was done in full co-operation with the union. Now we have a permanent urban workforce. The unions are most probably protecting their members here. In terms of union membership the hostel at Fisantekraal is 90% unionised as compared with here at Khayamandi where workers are scattered and unionisation is much weaker - around 50%.

While this may be one response on the part of some unions, employers have also utilised the abolition for their own purposes. In one instance as we have seen (Case 5.3, Chapter Five), a major employer broke strike action by gaining an informal legal exemption one year prior to the abolition of influx control legislation. The employer was able to fire some 2 900 striking workers with impunity, and to rehire locally without following the laid-down procedures. One union official, referring to this incident, commented that the union now had a very small membership at the company since the strike. The consequences of strike action did not

however stop workers there from going on strike in 1986 over the issue of trespass charges which were laid by the company when workers refused to leave the hostels which the company wanted to close (see page 237 above).

To return to the compound study, as Chapter Six showed, dissatisfaction with living conditions also prompted a revolt by workers, the consequence of which was that the company, to a large extent, lost control of the compound. As a result it appears that, between 1985 and 1988, there was no effort made to control access to compound accommodation.

From the examples cited above it is clear that migrant workers are involved in various forms of action at the workplace, albeit some far more successful than others. In recognising these as important instances of political action, some of the fallacies surrounding migrant workers need to be examined. Southall (1986) has argued against the myth of "the migrant" as a reluctant unionist as well as the current analytical confusions which exist because of the way in which migrant workers have been stereotyped and conceptualised as an homogeneous category. In discussing the views concerning migrant workers, Southall observes that:

[m]igrancy is so widely viewed as forming a major obstacle to progressive trade unionism primarily because migrant workers are seen as subject to extreme coercion and control. This system revolves around the operation of influx control (which keeps surplus Africans out of white areas) via the compounds and hostels, wherein migrants are entombed for months of end. Such a system, writes John Rex, ensures that the migrant "can be effectively sealed off from subversive forces which might lead to his trying to join a union to bargain over the price of his labour" (1974, 8). In essence migrants are often portrayed as a sub-proletarian species with little prospect of ascending labour's evolutionary ladder.

Accordingly, migrants are viewed as predisposed to quiescence in that, as contract workers, their access to the labour market is governed by the state on an essentially conditional basis. Not only are they compelled to return from their place of employment to a labour reserve at regularly defined intervals, but also they are "restricted in their choice of jobs through the labour bureau (allocation) system and in their bargaining power by fears of being endorsed out" (Webster 1979, 66). In other words migrants are only one step away from enrolment in the reserve army of labour that is located in the Bantustans. Similarly, whilst urban workers, too, are subject to the deprivations of the cheap labour economy, migrant workers are more poorly paid and do not have the alternative of participation in the informal sector which provides a meagre livelihood for numbers of the unemployed in towns (Southall, 1986:162).

It is important to take issue with a number of points raised in the above quote concerning migrant workers. Firstly, as we have seen, influx control was not successful in keeping Africans out of prescribed urban areas and in this regard the concept of influx control as a smoothly running monolithic system is not supported by the reality of thousands of squatters living around the metropolitan areas of 'white' South Africa. Secondly, as evidenced by the compound study, not all compounds and hostels can be considered as 'total institutions' of coercion and control, and in this regard as we have seen, some trade unions officials have acknowledged that hostels provided ideal sites in which to organise workers. Finally, the compound study and others (see Gilmour, 1987), show that access to the labour market is not governed exclusively by the state via labour bureaus. Thus, even in the period in which the Western Cape experienced an intensification of influx control measures in terms of the CLPP, migrant workers were still able to acquire jobs through informal networks and familial connections.

On the level of their personal lives, in terms of influx control legislation, migrant workers and their families have however had no choice concerning urbanisation and families have been divided and fragmented for generations. Reynolds records as follows the anguish and plight of many migrant workers separated from their families by the migrant labour system and influx control:

Zinzani spoke for many men when he explained what he desires most in life. He said, "I would like to have a house of my own in the city where I would live with my family knowing that it is mine. If the Government makes me return to the Transkei to renew my contract or re-locate my home, I can return to the city without fear because I know that I would be returning to my own house and family" (1984:30).

But, for all those who want their families to live with them, many have not had visits from relatives, nor do they want their families visiting them in Cape Town. These workers see themselves as oriented towards the Transkei, and as Chapter Seven has demonstrated, many of these men and their wives view Cape Town only in terms of a place of work.

The explanations for this can be seen to derive from the twin legacies of migrant labour and influx control. Given the fact that TBVC citizens are at present exempted from the Aliens Act only by ministerial decree, and given that migrant labour has occurred in Southern Africa for well over a century, it is not surprising to find that people see the rural areas as a secure haven. and one can speak, in this sense, of migrant labour as being institutionalised. Thus, generations of families have been a part of the system and have developed a variety of mechanisms to cope with it.

One of these strategies is the ritualisation of migrancy. In this regard, McAllister (1991) illustrates how migrant labour has been ritualised among certain people as a way of resisting total incorporation into the dominant political economy. This has been through the ideology of 'building the homestead', where migrants are exhorted by their families and communities to go to work in order to build up the rural base. Thus through ritual expression, the anomaly of being central to and yet distant from the homestead is resolved.

As indicated in Chapter Seven, the attitudes of many of the men working at the company are similar in outlook to those in McAllister's field area. Indeed, in the Transkei they live in physical proximity to the locations he studied in the Willowvale District. Clearly, this ritualisation of migrant life provides meaning and motivation for people, but as McAllister notes, this resistance ideology has a material basis which is vital in order to sustain it. But, as my work confirms, he details how, in the late 1980's and early 1990's, this material base has been steadily eroded both through job scarcity and high levels of unemployment in 'white' South Africa (see Crush, 1987), and through Betterment Planning within the Transkei.

Another strategy which has been used to sustain the rural-urban division is oscillation (see Chapter Seven). This has been used particularly by women in an attempt to keep both personal relationships with their husbands and a rural base in the 'homeland'. Thus, rather than there being an influx of people who wish to urbanise permanently, as is the case in many developed and developing countries (see Safa, 1975),

the phenomenon of oscillation or circulatory migration appears to have increased since the abolition of influx control legislation as freedom of movement is no longer circumscribed. The consequences of this for housing and urbanisation policies are immense and as Dewar et al (1991:33) note, considerably more needs to be known about the dimensions of the phenomenon, and likewise, planning approaches need to be more flexible.

The sections above confirm the necessity to 'unpack' the category of migrant worker. As Southall points out, migrant workers "... can only be understood as workers subject to different pressures (of family, the workplace, the hostel, the compound, and so on) which evoke varying responses in different socio-historical situations" (1986:162). The compound study has tried to do this through focussing on various aspects such as the relations between workers and company management, the relationships and interaction between workers living in the compound and the interaction between workers and family members living in the compound.

In addition, the consequences of my insertion into the compound as a researcher had effects which further illustrate the often unpredictable ways in which outside agencies and agents may provide a catalyst for change.

The Compound Experience: The Researcher as an External Determinant

Research involvement with community based organisations often means that the researcher is inserted into an ongoing, complex situation. As indicated in Chapter One, my access to the compound was negotiated via the WCHDA who were engaged in broadening their support base among hostel dwellers in the Western Cape. Their interest in the employer compound has to be viewed against this background, and as such, the compound represented contested terrain, with the existing union being unhappy at the inroads the WCHDA was making in terms of its constituency. Thus delicate negotiations between the two organisations occurred over a lengthy period before research could begin.

One of the central tenets concerning participatory research involves the idea of empowerment (Lund, 1982; Reason and Rowan, 1987; Van Willigen, 1986). The research undertaken for the WCHDA was meant to 'empower' them with information about the employer compound which they could use in their negotiations with the company. To this end their involvement in the research design was actively sought. For example, the size of the sample was an area where negotiation occurred and it was decided here that a complete documentation of living conditions and a 50% sample of workers would be satisfactory for both parties. Involvement in the design of the interview schedule was also actively sought, even though this participation did not eventuate. Finally, although the survey report on the company compound was submitted to the

WCHDA for comment and feedback, it had not been examined by the executive some nine months after submission (WCHDA executive, personal communication). As the above shows, the research experience fell short of "[t]he ideal model of participatory research [which] posits that 'the community' must be involved at every level from planning through to reporting and acting on results" (Ramphela, 1988b:9).

The idea that the WCHDA represents 'the community' is also something which needs to be examined. For example, Ramphela (1988b) found the WCHDA to be very unpopular in many areas and this in turn had a negative impact on her research. My own experience showed that while people were enthusiastic about joining the WCHDA, once they saw a researcher in their midst, many workers interviewed were neither interested in upgrading of accommodation nor wanted their families living with them. This raises questions about their knowledge of and membership in an organisation whose primary campaign is one of 'Uniting Families' and upgrading hostel accommodation.

This is similar to Ramphela's fieldwork experience in which she found that a large number of those interviewed pleaded ignorance of the WCHDA and its operations. This included card-carrying members who appeared to have little contact with or knowledge of the organisation. As she comments, these findings raise questions about the effectiveness of the WCHDA's recruiting campaign and the level of its representativeness (1988b:7).

I now turn to one final aspect of research at the company compound, namely the impact of the researcher's presence.

Notably lacking in many of the standard ethnographies that dominate the anthropological scene is a concise picture of the actual researcher's presence while undertaking research and the possible effects this may have on the subjects under investigation. What follows is an attempt to address this issue in relation to the fieldwork undertaken at the company compound.

Firstly, an important issue that needs to be addressed is that my presence immediately raised expectations among many of the compound's inhabitants: "something was seen to be happening", and as already discussed this had the effect of galvanising the majority of people to quickly sign up for membership of the WCHDA since they were seen to be delivering the goods in the form of a university researcher conducting a survey. Although the WCHDA had informed the workforce about the aims of the survey, namely that it was a tool with which to negotiate with the company concerning upgrading, many people were under the impression that the survey heralded immediate benefits. This was forcefully brought home to me during the course of fieldwork when on two separate occasions workers approached me asking if their houses were ready yet! These incidents underline the fact that research has to be seen in a twofold context; both researcher and actor simultaneously try and make sense of the experience they are involved in, thus the presence of a White researcher at the compound was interpreted by the

residents in a number of different ways: from marked indifference through to enthusiasm and great expectations.

Secondly, during the course of fieldwork it became clear that residents had, for a considerable time, been lobbying the company management for a variety of improvements in living conditions, to no avail. Some of the improvements which had been requested were the paving of the complex, and the installation of electrical outlets. In this regard it is interesting to note that all of the above were carried out by the company while fieldwork was underway.

During September the compound was completely paved by the company over a two day period. When questioned about the new paving, informants said they had not been notified in advance - "it just happened". Some informants mentioned they had previously sent a delegation of workers to the company requesting this improvement. These requests had been ignored for over a year<sup>7</sup>. During November the company started painting the interiors of the hostels. By the end of November almost half of the hostel blocks had been painted with a bright green enamel gloss paint. However, once again, the residents were neither informed beforehand nor given a choice in the colour paint used. In addition, rooms were being equipped with electrical outlets.

In summary, it is clear from the above discussion that upgrading, albeit minimal given existent living conditions, occurred during the period of fieldwork. The fact that past requests for these improvements had been ignored by the

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<sup>7</sup> Towards the end of November however, only two months after the brick paving had been completed, it was already showing marked signs of physical deterioration

company suggests that it felt pressured into action by the WCHDA and the presence of a researcher investigating living conditions at their compound. Keeping in mind the fact that the WCHDA has been slow to respond to the survey report, this upgrading may in fact represent the sum total of positive change for the compound's residents in the foreseeable future.

### Conclusions

As this chapter has suggested, the company compound on the micro-level has provided an ideal entry point for understanding how institutions are affected by macro policy changes. By focussing on the company compound and tracing the external determinants which affect it, wider linkages within society have been revealed. The value of the micro study is demonstrated in its ability to illuminate various processes which may remain hidden or obscured at the more general level of investigation. In addition, the research findings at this micro-level have informed the more general interview data as well as the larger macro-level theoretical analyses.

Although the micro-level situation is mediated by complex sets of interactions, it is apparent that the long awaited abolition of influx control has been replaced on a macro-level with far more complex and subtle forms of control. Despite the repeal of key legislation expressly formulated to control and direct the lives of Africans, this has been substituted with, on the one hand, ostensibly racially

neutral measures such as the new South African Identity Document and Squatting and Slums Acts, and on the other, through simple recourse to a wide variety of laws existing on South Africa's statute books which continue to circumscribe African rights. Thus while influx control in its narrow form has been abolished, it is imperative to recognise that the 'orderly urbanisation' policy which has been erected in its place constitutes a continuation with rather than a radical departure from the past.

## APPENDIX

The interview schedule consisted of three major sections discussed below. This schedule was utilised in order to obtain basic information over a variety of areas in order to collect quantitative data. However, many of these questions led to in-depth conversations on a variety of topics and in this regard the interview schedule served as a spring board for more qualitative data.

Section 1: questions included basic demographic data; age, sex, marital status, employment details, level of education, details of dependants, both adults and children staying with the bed-holder, and membership of the WCHDA.

Section 2: questions focussed on the worker's origin, rural resources including access to land and livestock, place of domicile of family, a profile on remittances, frequency of contact with family, and issues concerning upgrading of accommodation.

Section 3: questions focussed on people's knowledge of changes in legislation concerning pass laws, the number of people who have or have applied for South African identity documents, information about citizenship, mobility in terms

of employment and accommodation, information about prosecutions under a variety of Acts, and more generally, details on harassment with mobility, as well as future employment plans and domicile.

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