

Competition for the Urban Poor

**Urban Community Development (Crossroads)
The Complexities of Giving and Receiving**

Thesis submitted for M.Phil. Degree to the Department of
Social Anthropology, University of Cape Town

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Part One

Setting the Scene

Chapter One

Introduction

The history of development aid in South Africa has been quite different from that experienced by most other 'developing' countries. From the 1950s to the mid-1980s South Africa remained largely as a spectator to the global aid-giving process. There were two major reasons for this.

First, in a bid to persuade the Pretoria Government to initiate reforms, the international community imposed a series of aid-sanctions against South Africa. And second, South Africa by virtue of its per capita income (not its wealth distribution) is, by 'developing' countries standards, considered to be a wealthy country with ample resources to improve the lot of its people, (in a post-apartheid situation, however, it is likely that development agencies will be more concerned with wealth distribution).

During this period of effective isolation in which South Africa remained on the margins of the "global development industry" its population was not, however, immune from development intervention. Far from it. In the space that was created by the non-participation of international development agencies other forms of development intervention took root.

Black people in South Africa have been the targets - or victims - of massive development intervention by successive South African governments. And in more recent years urbanised Africans in particular have been the targets of increasing levels of development intervention, much of which has been funded and directed through bilateral aid programmes initiated by western governments.

It is with those kinds of development intervention that this thesis is concerned. Research, conducted during 1989 and 1990, examined a slice of development activity occurring in an African urban area during what is becoming a period of transition from South Africa's effective isolation to the beginning of its reincorporation into the world "development system".

It is likely that the 1990s will be South Africa's "development decade". Its role as both a donor (in the southern African region) and recipient of development aid is set to grow. But in this transition from one era to the next many important issues need to be addressed. Any future South African government, and indeed all the protagonists in the development process, will be obliged - as the Namibians were - to devise policies to manage the increasing flow of development aid and the powerful presence of development agencies.

Some of the problems that face future planners will be rooted in the country's previous experience of development

intervention. This thesis makes a small contribution to any future debate about the transition by highlighting and discussing some of the problems associated with the past funding and administration of one area of development intervention. An intervention that was dominant in previous decades and is likely to remain an important part of any future national plan.

Though my focus, which centres on two community-based, manufacturing projects (defined here as community development initiatives), is fairly narrow, my analysis draws in many of the protagonists involved in the development process: donors, recipients and facilitators that assist in the provision of aid. Furthermore by selecting such projects (and their members) as the core of the study I have been able to place a specific development intervention in its historical, regional and material context.

The kind of development activity discussed falls under the rubric of urban community development (a term discussed more fully below) which, in this context, has two aspects. The first relates to community development initiatives funded and implemented by the South African state. These initiatives must be seen in terms of the state's use of the rhetoric and practice of conventional development to see through its programmes of segregation and later apartheid. These programmes which were justified by the notion of an internal First and Third World, characterised by large-scale relocations of people and moulded by a racial ideology, invariably created conflict between state and people.

The second aspect concerns community development intervention pursued by external (i.e. non-South African government) donors (mainly foreign governments and foreign and domestic non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) without any involvement of the South African state and with the stated intention of combatting apartheid and assisting its 'victims'. The amount of aid entering South Africa for this purpose has, as I show in Chapter Ten, substantially increased during the previous decade, and its administration has often been a cause of tension in South Africa's international relations.

I have two major objectives in this thesis. The first is to examine the **consequences** of the sort of community development interventions I have described. The second is to examine the **motivations and administrative procedures** of agencies involved in such interventions. In so doing I aim to show the complexities in which urban community development aid is given and received.

In this analysis, however, I also attempt not to lose sight of the people, the township residents, who are the targets of such aid. I am confident in arguing that to a large extent the subjects of such intervention have been caught in a maelstrom of activity which substantially limits their scope for autonomous action. But one must be careful to avoid replicating the past mistake of casting people as "victims", so repressed by their "culture of poverty" that they are unable to navigate their way out this maelstrom.

Structure

In discussing the consequences of intervention there are two related sets of effects. These are tied to the geographical area of my research, the African informal settlements around Old Crossroads, and to a particular period in history which covers the years before and after the violent events of 1985 and 1986, which Josette Cole (1987) has called 'the Crossroads crisis'.

The first set of consequences concerns the effects of central government and security forces attempts, between 1975 and 1985, to control the Crossroads informal settlement (and its satellite camps) and to restructure the local political terrain partly through community development intervention. The direct effects are related to the continuing material deprivation in the settlements, political fragmentation, and forms of political leadership and organisation which dominated the lives of the settlements' residents.

In Part Two of the thesis I discuss these issues in relation to a general discussion about the historical processes which led to the creation and shaping of informal settlements around South Africa's major cities. The work of Simkins (1983), Hindson (1987), Graaff (1987), and West and Oliver-Evans (1990) has been useful in understanding the broad processes, in particular state practices, which have contributed to the shaping of urban settlements in South Africa. Lipton (1986), Greenberg (1987) and Mabin's (1989) work has provided a very useful framework for analysis through which one can understand

those processes in terms of their likely impact on people who live in urban settlements.

The second set of consequences concerns the effects of community development intervention as pursued by donors other than the South African government during the immediate post-Crossroads crisis years. In my discussion of state activities I examine the creation and co-option of leaders in informal settlements as a means of assisting the state in its bid to control the urbanward movement and settlement of Africans. The theme of leadership continues in Part Three of the thesis where I examine the strategies adopted by two former residents of Old Crossroads who were seen by 'progressive' organisations and donors of community development assistance to be in opposition to the government-supported leadership and therefore appropriate recipients of assistance.

Confronted with the many problems which beset the townships in the post-crisis era, Sam Nkonyeni and Nomathemba Matiwana pursued a course of action which was applauded in 'progressive' circles and promoted by the donor community as the most suitable way to tackle those problems. Nkonyeni, Matiwana and many others put time, effort and what little resources they had into establishing 'democratically-organised', community-based, productive 'projects' operating with the principles of self-help.

With the assistance of friends and contacts in 'liberal' organisations Nkonyeni and Matiwana secured properties, invited members to join, and applied for funding. In Part

Three of the thesis I describe the progress of Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Development Centre in terms of their activities and income, the relationship between the projects and outside agencies, and the attitudes of their members towards the projects.

Many of the problems associated with small-scale ventures of this nature - a lack of understanding of basic business principles; ideological confusion; poor accountability; corruption; lack of resources and training; poor choice of product or type of activity undertaken; shoddy workmanship; inappropriate funding; undue dependence on funding; unreasonably high expectations (Manuel, 1989:68, Wilson and Ramphele, 1989:289-299, Roberts, 1989:9-10) - were writ large in Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Development Centre.

Through my involvement with these two projects I was able to pursue the second of my objectives: to examine the motivations and administrative procedures of agencies involved in community development. This task - at least as far as the involvement of foreign governments was concerned - was made easier by virtue of the fact that during my research I was, through marital association, granted full access to embassy and consular staff responsible for the administration of their governments' community development schemes. I was also assisted by the fact that the Spiritual Churches and Philippi projects attracted support from a wide range of donors, many of whom I was able to watch at work and later interview their representatives.

This access was important because as Whiteside (1991) and Ramphela (forthcoming) have noted very little has been written about this sort of development intervention in South Africa. The reasons for this paucity of information can be found in South Africa's peculiar history with regard to aid-giving. It is appropriate in the introduction to this thesis to explain that background which describes an era of development intervention that is coming to a close.

South Africa's effective isolation from the global aid-giving process has created something of a space in which unorthodox development has taken root. This has had a number of direct and indirect consequences, some of which are intangible and difficult to quantify and have more to do with the creation of an environment in which certain kinds of development have proceeded more or less unchecked. In a sense, then, what I am concerned with are the unintended consequences of aid-sanctions, the most important of which are as follows:

- (1) South Africa lacks a thoroughgoing debate about development issues;
- (2) It lacks a body of development expertise;
- (3) There is a legacy of distrust between the protagonists in the development process;
- (4) There does not exist a structure in which serious development aid can be effectively disbursed, monitored and assessed;
- (5) Certain donors will have to reconsider their development objectives and motivations which previously treated recipients of aid only as "victims" and which has led to a form of "welfarism";
- (6) The recipients of aid have been excluded from the development process and urgently need to be educated, and community structures strengthened to allow them greater control over that process.

How has this situation evolved? An important consequence of South Africa's exclusion from the international development system has been its non-participation in certain multilateral agencies. In line with foreign governments' aid-sanctions against South Africa, bilateral donors would not give assistance to the South African central government, local government, the 'homelands' or any institution connected with these bodies.

As most international aid is given on a government-to-government basis this arrangement severely restricted the flow of aid to South Africa. Most NGOs, like international charities, followed the lead of multilateral agencies and individual governments in agreeing not to work with the South African government. Some charity and church organisations (e.g. Save the Children Fund, Oxfam and World Vision), however, have maintained a presence in South Africa - albeit a minimal one - disbursing aid only through non-government channels.

Despite these restrictions, aid-flow to South Africa (from external sources) rapidly increased during the mid- to late-1980s. Accompanying this increase in external funding has been a series of announcements by the South African government committing it to a previously unseen programme of social upliftment, (in particular the creation of the Independent Development Trust (IDT)).

As I explain in Chapter Ten, external funding entering South Africa emanates from a number of sources. Firstly there is

bilateral aid which is given by governments to organisations and individuals within South Africa. Most of this aid is administered through diplomatic offices of foreign countries scattered throughout South Africa or through representatives of official aid departments (e.g. the USAID office in Pretoria).

Secondly there is multilateral aid currently dominated by the European Community (EC) which channels a large portion of its aid through the troubled Kagiso Trust (see Dangor in 'South', March 1991). Thirdly there is aid administered by NGOs and charities which have received institutional (i.e. Foundation Funds) and individual money from western countries. Lastly there is aid which has its source in corporate social responsibility programmes.

For a number of reasons estimating the amount of aid entering South Africa is extremely difficult. Firstly, the South African state has been hostile to overseas aid, particularly that which was seen to support autonomous community structures which it regarded as a potential threat. Secondly, the sort of donors which have been involved in development work have shown considerable reluctance to disclose the extent of their financial commitment. Thirdly, there has never been a central registry to record aid received. And lastly because of the kind of development intervention pursued and the nature of its administration some donors are genuinely unaware of the amount spent on particular projects.

In Part Four of this thesis I discuss these issues more fully and attempt to quantify the amount of official aid entering South Africa.

One of the conclusions of this thesis is that a great deal of aid which has entered South Africa has been used largely for political purposes rather than for conventional development objectives. The nature of development assistance given in South Africa is quite different from that given in other 'developing' countries. Elsewhere the lion's share of aid is consumed by large and expensive "project aid" schemes which aim to strengthen countries' economic and social infrastructure (Whiteside, 1991, cf. Ferguson, 1990) through capital projects; or structural adjustment programmes which aim to "stabilise" host economies (UK Parliamentary Report, 1991:24).

Such "project aid" which is normally administered through the recipient government, in line with its national priorities, has not been a feature of aid-giving in South Africa. Instead what has taken its place is a form of aid which has been described as "unorthodox" (UK Parliamentary Report, 1991:44), "unconventional" (Sinclair, 1986:75) and "often clandestine" (information from Professor Bill Davies, 20 April 1991).

As I see them the main features of such "unorthodox" aid which has replaced conventional programmes, and which provides the context within which my analysis of the Spiritual Churches Development Centre and Philippi Enterprises projects is set, are as follows. First, as Whiteside (1991) has said, 'much aid

has been given despite rather than because of the government' (1991:9). Second, the government and most public organisations have been excluded from the identification of projects and the allocation and expenditure of funds. And third, aid is often administered by non-aid trained personnel working outside of a development environment.

As a result of this South Africans, in a number of ways, have experienced inferior development. First, the sort of administrative arrangements demanded by government aid agencies (like the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) or USAID) whereby aid is disbursed and its effectiveness assessed have not been applied in the South African instance. Development excellence would appear to have been overlooked in favour of political expediency.

Second, donor agencies in South Africa do not co-operate with one another, preferring instead to pursue and protect autonomous strategies. As a result the wheel is continually being reinvented and work and errors unnecessarily duplicated.

Third, agencies operating in South Africa have tended to administer their aid in the following ways: relatively small amounts of money have been spread thinly for the maximum effect (which makes any assessment notoriously difficult); any discernible policy is geared towards "welfarism" (Manuel, 1989:55); payments tend to be received by those who know best how to play the system (Manuel, 1991); aid has tended to support "struggle" organisations - rather than viable projects - with little accountability (see Dangor on the Kagiso Trust

in 'South', March 1991); aid has tended to perpetuate and legitimate incompetent and corrupt behaviour by tolerating it as the 'people's approach' (Ramphela, forthcoming).

These then are the issues with which I am concerned in this thesis. My findings are presented in a way that reflects my attempts at understanding a particular form of development intervention at a particular time and the consequences of that intervention.

In Chapter Two I describe my initial contacts with both funders and recipients of community development assistance. My witnessing of both the reactions of official observers to a foreign government's involvement in "township diplomacy", and the relationship between donor and recipient spurred the initial interest to pursue research in this field. Chapter Three describes the fieldwork methods used to collect information about the activities of both donors and two community-based projects which were recipients of donors' aid.

Chapters Four and Five introduce an historical dimension in exploring urbanisation in South Africa but more specifically in the western Cape in order to understand more fully the context within which urban community development programmes are pursued. These chapters examine national and local forces which have helped to shape urban informal settlements. They consider actions by the state and other agencies in a situation of material deprivation which creates political struggles.

Out of those political struggles emerged new forms of organisation and new leaders such as Sam Nkonyeni and Nomathemba Matiwana who are discussed in Chapters Six to Nine. Nkonyeni and Matiwana are pseudonyms adopted to protect the identity of the real project leaders both of whom are still involved in community politics. Chapter Six traces the emergence of Nkonyeni and Matiwana during the immediate post-Crossroads crisis era and records their founding community development projects. Chapters Seven and Eight map the progress of these projects in terms of performance and internal and external relationships. Chapter Nine describes the events which marked an important stage in the history of the Spiritual Churches project: a stage at which members of the project came to understand their dependency as a result of which new strategies were devised to widen their options for action.

Chapters Ten and Eleven examine the role of major donors in urban community development. Chapter Ten assesses the extent and nature of foreign governments' involvement in "community diplomacy". In this chapter, there is for the first time, an attempt at estimating the amount of official development aid entering South Africa. Chapter Eleven looks at the role of business in recent South African history to assess why corporate social responsibility, of which community development support has been a part, is becoming increasingly important. Chapter 12 is my conclusion.

Chapter Two

1. The Researcher's Introduction to Community Development Projects

My first excursion into the African townships around Cape Town occurred in November 1988 when I was invited to join a "township tour" conducted by a representative of the British Consulate in Cape Town. My fellow passengers were all from Britain and held positions in government departments. Such tours I later learned were frequent and timed to coincide with official overseas visits to South Africa which tended to take place during Europe's harshest winter months. During the week of my tour the consulate official repeated the journey four times.

The diplomat-guide knew the route well and skillfully led our party into the heart of the Cape Flats African townships. One sensed a certain nervousness on the part of first-time visitors as the combi turned off the main road and headed for the Guguletu hostels. Conversation centred on recent news footage of township violence and those passengers closest to the windows discreetly checked the door locks. Obviously used to such unease the diplomat assured us that the townships were calm and that it was quite safe for us to wind the windows down and that we should make an effort to look relaxed.

To the obvious relief of the passengers the single-sex hostels soon gave way to an attractive private estate of white-walled houses dominated by elaborate burglar bars. Clearly more confident in these surroundings, which one passenger commented were not too dissimilar to an English newtown, the tension inside the vehicle eased. Windows were wound down, ties loosened and one or two even waved at rather bemused-looking school children. Questions were asked and answered: "What tribe do these people belong to?", "Who controls this area, the ANC, PAC?", "Are those Casspirs?"

Once out of the estate our guide announced that we were approaching the cemetery and would soon arrive at the first of the squatter camps. The mention of Crossroads and KTC increased the tempo of the group's conversation as passengers spoke of the violence of 1985 and 1986 which received extensive overseas media coverage. The sight of crowded graves, some marked by simple twig crosses others by ornate stone angels, caused our guide to remark that apartheid planning even follows one to the cemetery: this one being for blacks alone. His observation was met with thoughtful nods.

A Foreign Office official asked the diplomat if their government had any practical involvement in either the hostels or in the provision of black housing. Our guide responded positively listing expenditure in millions of Rand on shack upgrading, the underwriting of low-cost mortgages and assistance in the provision of emergency housing. He enthused about:

"the embassy's excellent relations with the Hostel Dwellers Association which is campaigning for a comprehensive programme of improvement. Our government is discussing funding for the HDA".

As the view of the cemetery was lost behind a line of stressed-looking gum trees we gained our first glimpse of the corrugated iron shacks we had come to expect. Our vehicle skirted around the shacks of Nyanga Extension.

"To the English eye" the diplomat said "shack-settlements often conjure up the peculiarly English institution of allotments. But these tin shacks do not house rusted tools or bags of potting compost, nor are they Sunday afternoon places of refuge away from the family. In South Africa these shacks are homes to millions of people. They are often described as solutions to a housing crisis. They are illegal or informal settlements. Elsewhere they are called favelas, bidonvilles or bandas de miseria".

Our guide provided a commentary to what we were seeing.

"Squatter communities exist around the world" we were told, "some of us may have seen them elsewhere in Africa, the Middle East, India and Latin America. Shack-settlements are a symptom of poverty. Massive urbanisation has been accompanied as you can see by large-scale unemployment, suitable land for building and standard housing is scarce and out of reach of low-income families. Throughout the Third World the proportion of the population which lives in urban centres is bound to continue rising. It seems that neither the governments of those countries nor the international community have found a way of adequately managing this spectacular urban growth".

Between deft turns of the steering wheel, to avoid children and pot holes that would easily engulf a small truck, our diplomat-guide's assessment turned more specifically to South Africa.

"Whilst the characteristics of squatter settlements are common to all countries - high-density, mainly illegal occupation, seemingly disorderly construction with inadequate scrap materials on land which lacks basic services - apartheid has", he insisted, "played a crucial role in directing the course and nature of urbanisation".

"South Africa is as I am sure you've already been told experiencing a high rate of population growth coupled with an economy in decline. There have for a long time been major problems in urban management and totally inadequate rural development. Between 1950 and 1980 influx control measures did check urbanisation outside the homelands. But since 1980 with the easing of such controls the rate of urbanisation has been dramatic: I think half of all Africans now live in metropolitan areas. Most live under the sort of conditions which we are now seeing. Apartheid sought not only to separate races but to reserve the best land for white development. It's this sort of land, beside the motorway, directly under the flightpath into DF Malan international airport and circling an industrial estate, which the planners did not want".

With the other passengers I listened with concentration and appreciated his knowledge. Through the windows one could see the crisis in urban management. It was mid-morning on a blistering, dusty summer's day. Poverty I thought is difficult to describe. One could see its physical manifestations, one could see inequality simply by driving as we had done from the white suburbs to the Cape Flats, but one could not see how poverty is created and nor could one see the damage it inflicted on those who must endure it.

From the outside the squatter settlements appeared filthy, congested and depressing. We saw women foraging among carcasses rejected by the abattoir and dumped, our guide told us, each day at the township's edge. We saw men gathered at road intersections looking hopefully at passing bakkies for a days work. Children, many naked, played unattended in the dirt and dust. Rubbish and scrap was strewn between the precarious shacks. Sewage spilled into mud gulleys creating a terrible stench.

Our impression from the minibus could only be described through unpleasant adjectives. Our concern was with the aesthetic, the immediate image.

The bus negotiated the treacherous roads to KTC, named we were told after a shop on the site, along Mahobe Drive past the romantically named Cathedral and Dune sites. Our guide pointed to clumps of shacks and identified community leaders, Siphika, Hoza, Dodwana, Toise and Gweliza. The names were strange but engaging. Behind us were rows of green army tents apparently erected to be a temporary emergency measure to house refugees from the Crossroads fighting. Quite obviously the emergency remained.

To the uninitiated one squatter site seemed to merge with the next in a sprawl of shacks. KTC, however, was different. Its shacks stood back from the road, the space between them was more generous, and each was daubed with the letter "M" and a white three digit number. Our guide manoeuvred the vehicle over a makeshift kerb and parked in an area separating the shacks from the road. The "M" he informed us stood for the:

"Masincedane Committee which is attempting to administer the area and at the same time protect its occupants from hostile outsiders".

Reassuring us that a fragile ceasefire had been arranged between rival leaders and their supporters, our guide invited us to accompany him into the maze of shacks where we had an appointment to pay a courtesy call on the community's leader. We picked our way across the hardened mud track to a wide path

running between two shacks that appeared to be constructed solely of plyboard advertising hoardings. From a distance such constructions appeared precarious; close to however they were far more substantial than I had expected.

We came to a halt in a clearing surrounded by boldly numbered shacks and dominated by an overturned shipping container emblazoned with a company logo. The diplomat knocked hard on the side of the container and waited. Two middle-aged African men appeared from the cavernous box and looked unrecognisingly at our group. In English, our guide introduced himself as a representative from the embassy and his passengers as visitors from overseas.

Clumsily we exchanged a contorted handshake - which our guide later informed us was known, in his circles, as the "strugglers shake" - and the diplomat walked around the container patting it protectively as one would a cherished car. He asked if we could look inside. The men nodded and invited us in.

The container was bare save for two chairs. We looked around impressed with the space. After a lengthy and slightly uncomfortable pause one of the men began to speak in slow and cautious English:

"Our community is very pleased with this gift from your government. We are honoured by your visit. Today this place looks empty. Tomorrow when the television arrives it will be full. And the next day also when we have the church choir singing. And at the weekend many people will come for the beauty contest and the childrens' football matches. This place helps us to come together as the Masincedane. When we are together we can protect our community".

He paused. The diplomat smiled in acceptance of the thanks. Now with greater confidence in his voice he continued:

"But gentlemen you can see that we still need so much more. Our community does not have a school or a church. Our mothers must carry their children to work or else the children run around. We need more chairs and tables, toys, a stove, pots and saucepans. But more than that we need teachers for the school, for our school so our children do not have to go to the Bantu school.

We need money to pay our teachers, to pay the women to look after the creche, to pay the old man who will look after the building".

For the first time he raised his eyes from the floor and looked directly at each of us and finally at the diplomat who responded:

"You know our government is keen to help you in any way we can. We feel strongly that communities like this will only be able to develop through their own efforts but where possible we will assist in that development.

It is sad but my hands are tied. I only have a small amount of money and I can only give this money for specific items, like this container. I am sorry but I cannot pay the wages of your teachers. But let me know what equipment you need and I'll see where help can be given".

The exchange had a rehearsed air to it. At that moment I felt that both sides had gone through this ritual on more than one occasion and that the outcome was familiar. Once again we shook hands with our hosts (this time less clumsily) and filed through the container's doorway squinting at the sun.

Our guide, commenting on the excellent work the two men had done for the community, led us, not towards the waiting combi, but further into the shacks. Our presence became known and children appeared from between the houses. They ran up to us

smiling and talking in Xhosa. In no time I had two children on either arm pulling me down, encouraging me to swing them around.

With children clinging we approached another clearing. This time there was no upturned metal box but a small wicket fence enclosing an area in which boards of timber were stacked in a teepee arrangement. The air was aromatic with the smell of wood shaving. This, our guide informed us was one of their (the government's) great success stories.

We walked around stroking the finely grained timber and admired two circular saws which sat idle. Beyond the stacks of timber stood a log-cabin style building with an oval sign supported by two chains proclaiming this to be the "Coffin Cooperative". Our guide emerged from the cabin accompanied by a young, smartly dressed and permanently smiling man who was introduced as Mr Nofamele.

"Oh yes we are doing very well" he announced confidently, "there is much demand for our coffins. You see here we are painting them any colour that people ask for. We have handles and hinges, brass or metal. We even line them with silk in a colour to match the outside. In fact" he said "you have come at the wrong time. I must go out and see someone who wants a very special coffin. My assistant is out visiting as well, that is why the machines are not working. But we have so much work".

Our guide said he would not detain Mr Nofamele any longer and led us through the gap in the fence into the small crowd of children who waited patiently for our return. Mr Nofamele closed the log cabin door, waved cheerily and strode off.

Our encounter with Mr Nofamele enlivened the group's spirit. More questions were directed at the diplomat: "How many of these projects does the government sponsor?", "How much would you expect to donate to each?", "What other activities do you support?" Clearly knowledgeable and with abundant enthusiasm for his work the diplomat answered each of our questions in turn.

He referred to the children who had, by now, lost interest in us and had returned to their previous games. Small clumps of boys were sitting by the road - much as their fathers do - waving at passing cars

"It is the intention of the government", he assured us, "to work alongside township-based groups which are seeking to help children. Where possible funds will be provided for creches, parks, play-grounds, pre-schools and playgroups. The embassy already works alongside NGOs involved in education like the Early Learning Resource Unit and Grassroots Educare Trust. We provide equipment and some money".

The combi was airless and stiflingly hot as we jolted over the kerbstone and swung back the way we'd come. Our next call, we were told, was in the more established township of Nyanga where we were due to visit one of the pre-schools supported by the government. The journey to Nyanga, along the Klipfontein Road was quick. In a few minutes our driver parked the combi in front of a brick-built house in the grounds of a Catholic church.

The house was an ordinary four-room matchbox design favoured by the government in the 1950s. As we entered the room, the teacher waved her arms in the air and instructed the children

to be quiet. Almost immediately the two dozen or more children who were sitting on the carpeted floor fell silent and, staring widely, turned to us. We walked to the front of the class and greeted the teacher. The diplomat announced us as visitors from Europe and said that we had come to see the good work she was doing. The teacher smiled broadly and pointed to the children as example enough.

Our guide enquired about the stove and pots his government had bought for the project. The teacher led us, tracked by 30 pairs of eyes, to a tiny lean-to extension which she informed us had recently been added to the house. This was the steam-filled kitchen in which potato and vegetable soup was prepared each day for the children. In turn we lifted the lid from the aluminium pot and agreed that the soup smelled good. Sensing our obvious perspiring discomfort in the cramped kitchen the teacher guided us back into the main classroom.

"Before you leave the children will sing you a song" she said ushering them to their feet. A particularly small child, no more than four or five, joined the teacher in front of the class and began singing. Though sung mainly in Xhosa one could sense that this song was no nursery rhyme. Certain words and names, "Mandela", "Amandla", "Freedom" were celebrated with gusto, chanted rather than sung and accompanied by a toyi toyi and much punching of the air. The diplomat smiled throughout but shuffled uncomfortably.

The song came to an end. The children returned to their places. The diplomat looked at his watch and noted that it

was nearly lunchtime. He embraced the teacher and thanked her, on our behalf, for her time. The children waved frantically as we left.

Just one more call, our guide informed us, before we would return to Cape Town. He reversed the combi into the church grounds and headed along the Lansdowne Road past two garages, a disused cement works and a row of wholesale shops before turning right at a sign marked the Philippi Industrial Estate.

Nothing was said about the visit to the school as we bumped our way along the Industrial Estate's badly potted mud road. We approached a long warehouse type building sandwiched on one side by a garage workshop and on the other by a factory almost obscured by piles of brightly coloured drums. The diplomat parked the combi in front of the warehouse's main doors and told us that this was a project of which he was particularly proud. It was called the Spiritual Churches Development Centre and had been running he said since 1987. The woman we were to meet was the project's coordinator, Nomathemba Matiwana.

The smell that greeted us as we walked into the project was a familiar mix of boiled potatoes and wood shavings. The noise was deafening. Two men were hammering nails through planks of wood into a frame on the floor to create a new floor over the existing cement base. We nodded to the men who continued working and walked the full length of the warehouse to a small office tucked in the corner. On seeing us approach a large, middle-aged woman peered at us through her cracked glasses.

On recognising our host she cried out a long "Hello. And how are you?" There was genuine pleasure in her greeting.

Matiwana shook hands with each of us in turn. She was careful to learn our names and where we came from.

"Now you are here" she said "it is important that you meet all our members. I will get them together".

She clapped her hands loudly at which the hammering and sanding ceased. She called to the women in the sewing room which we could see through the partition window ran parallel to the main workshop. In a few minutes we were all seated in a circular arrangement on wooden benches and plastic chairs. There were twenty-five people present. The two carpenters who were preparing the floor were joined by two others in blue overalls and all four sat to our right. To my left was our guide and the four other visitors. To their left sat Nomathemba Matiwana, an elderly man in a black hat and a dark suit and thirteen women formed the rest of the circle. Two of the women had babies strapped to their backs with blankets. Two others were quite elderly.

The man in the black hat rose slowly to his feet, bowed his head and gently spoke a prayer. The women began to sing but unlike the earlier song of protest theirs was a mellifluous, harmonised hymn. As the final words drifted into the corners of the room Nomathemba Matiwana stood and addressed the meeting.

"Today we have very special visitors from Europe who have come to see the work we are doing at our project. We began this Centre in 1987 to help our people who suffered in the fighting. We wanted to help those who had no jobs, no money

and no skills. We wanted to help the children who were left homeless. Our children drink because they see no hope. We wanted to help the old people who would not be employed in the City.

We are still struggling. We could not pay our teacher so the school is not working. We do not even pay ourselves wages for the work we are doing. We make quilts, everyone says they are good, we make furniture, cheap enough for the townships, we make solid bricks, sturdy boxes: but we cannot sell these things. What we need is money to pay people to show us how to make things and how to sell them. We need transport so we can take our things to Cape Town, Claremont and Strand on Saturdays.

The Spiritual Centre can not succeed on its own. We need help. We need everyone to work together. Some people pretend they are our friends but always they want something else.

The embassy has helped us from the very beginning. We need their help now".

Matiwana's address was listened to in silence. The deep concern which she obviously felt could be heard in her voice and seen on her face. The diplomat responded:

"Mrs Matiwana you know it is always a pleasure for me to come here. We have known each other for a long time. I know how hard you and all the members of the centre have worked to make this a success and I will try and help wherever I can".

The man in the black hat cleared his throat and spoke in Xhosa. Matiwana translated:

"Old-man Sidwell says the old people come to this project because it is the only place they can come. There are hundreds more sitting alone in the townships who would also like to come but can't. Will the embassy buy us a combi so we can collect these old people and give them a home?"

One of the elderly women from the sewing room spoke: Mrs Matiwana again translated:

"Christine says she makes beautiful quilted rugs and bags. The students at the University like them and would buy them but we cannot take them there to sell. A combi would help us to do this".

The diplomat responded:

"I know about your problems. I know how important transport is but my budget will not allow me to buy you a combi. I will buy you machines and material but I cannot buy a combi".

The smell of soup drifted across the room. I thought back to the meeting in KTC. Once again this barter between donor and client was not, I guessed, taking place for the first time. There was a brief moment of silence before Nomathemba Matiwana declared it to be lunchtime. The meeting broke up. We declined the offer of lunch, shook hands with Mrs Matiwana and old-man Sidwell and picked our way to the door around hammers and planks of wood.

2. A Foundation for Research

Once back in a Cape Town restaurant discussion over lunch was bouyant with enthusiasm for the sort of diplomacy we had all just witnessed. The visitors expressed how impressed they were to see the access embassy staff enjoyed to ordinary township residents.

"Back home" one commented "it was generally perceived that British policy was deeply resented by many Africans and many would think that representatives of the country would be far from welcome visitors to the townships. In fact as I now see this couldn't be further from the truth".

"It is likely that our understanding of the situation in South Africa is that much sharper because we have some grassroots knowledge through the administration of aid schemes. And the sort of intervention we are practicing is precisely that which aid experts in England are arguing is the way forward. That is small-scale, community-based schemes which address specific needs. We do not appear", he continued,

"to be imposing our will upon the people rather we are reacting to needs".

As lunch drew to a close the visitors summed-up their impression of the British mission's involvement in South Africa. They had seen embassy staff at work in situations other than township development and believed that the mission was exercising:

"a discreet and constructive influence with all sections of South African political life. By bringing together diverse groups at receptions and dinners they had helped to promote understanding and tolerance. By bringing constitutional and other experts into the country they had helped to shape the debate".

But from their comments it was clear that they were most impressed with the

"pioneering and sympathetic manner in which embassy staff had forged close and long-lasting links with communities in the townships, squatter camps and rural areas. That a real effort was being made to keep in touch with those who suffered the day-to-day deprivations caused by apartheid, and furthermore to help them overcome their hardships".

For me the "township tour" advertising community diplomacy raised many more questions than it answered. I was asked to go on the tour because I had a close personal connection with the embassy (my wife is a British diplomat) and because we had only recently arrived in South Africa from Britain. My fellow tourists were all returning to London the following day; I was to stay behind for three years. Having recently graduated in Social Anthropology I was keen to undertake graduate research at the University of Cape Town. What I had seen and heard during the tour provided me with a basis upon which I could devise a research project. My focus would be both the

recipients of aid (small-scale, township-based projects) and major funders, such as foreign embassies.

The following day I returned to the Philippi Industrial Estate and spoke at length with the project's coordinator, Nomathemba Matiwana and other members. Mrs Matiwana in turn introduced me to Sam Nkonyeni who ran a project called Philippi Enterprises in an adjoining warehouse. I informed them that it was my intention to undertake post-graduate research into small-scale, self-help type groups which had received funding from overseas governments and other sources. We discussed how my research should be conducted. Matiwana and Nkonyeni agreed to discuss my proposal with the members of their organisations.

A few days later I again visited the projects and permission for research was granted. There were however two conditions. First that I become actively involved with the work of the projects. And second that my research must be of some benefit to them. I discuss the first of those conditions in the section below on methods; the second, and more problematic condition, is discussed in Chapter Three.

The choice of the Spiritual Churches Development Centre and Philippi projects as the immediate units of study proved to be a good one. First, the projects received financial and other support from individual funding organisations covering the whole range of donors involved in community development programmes in the African townships. Sources of assistance were as follows:

Sources of Funding

American Government
 Anglo-American and De Beers Chairman's Fund
 Australian Government
 British Government
 British Petroleum
 Canadian Government
 Catholic Welfare Bureau (CWB)
 German Government
 Get Ahead Foundation
 London Parish Churches
 Jews for Justice
 Maggie Mugabe Trust
 Masifundise
 Mobil Foundation
 PG Wood
 Shell Oil
 Simukai Rural Co-operative (Harare)
 Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC)
 Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT)
 Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU)
 Spiritual Churches Research and Theological Institute (SCRTI)
 Unemployed Workers Movement (UWM)
 Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC)

Second, through the projects I was able to gain first-hand knowledge of the procedures adopted by embassies and consulates, business social responsibility offices, church bodies, charities, service organisations and unions, in the field of assistance to small-scale, self-help initiatives which fall under the rubric of community development. Having learned the procedures and administrative arrangements I was able to approach representatives of those organisations to learn more about the motivations to become involved in such programmes and their aims in doing so.

Third, during my period of study the two projects followed quite different trajectories. At the time of writing this thesis the Spiritual Churches project continued to operate

with a similar complement of staff performing more or less the same functions at they were two years previously. A core of about a dozen members had remained at the project and donors at least in the immediate future looked set to continue their funding.

Indeed the project was adopted by the British Embassy as the **model** of a successful self-help community development project. During the past two years members of the Spiritual Churches Centre received visits from the British Foreign Secretary, two Ministers for Development, a House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee (which recently made important recommendations to the British Parliament on future foreign policy towards South Africa and other states of the region) and numerous Overseas Development Administration (ODA) and Foreign Office officials. The project has featured in two newspaper articles ('Argus', 21 December and 'Cape Times', 22 December 1990) and the donation of a combi to the project in 1990 by the Foreign Secretary was included by the SABC in their evening news programme.

The history of Philippi Enterprises has been less glamorous. Riven by internal dissension, accusations of corruption, a rapid turn-over of staff, the withdrawal of donor support, and by the burden of debt the project was forced, in February 1990, to vacate its premises on the industrial estate and at the time of writing this thesis existed only in name.

Broadly-speaking, the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises provided ideal types of community development

projects which were useful for comparison. Whilst the characteristics shown below are generalisations - and require far closer analysis before any general hypotheses can be advanced to explain success or failure - they help to build-up a composite picture of projects which emerged out of similar circumstances but which evolved quite differently:

Spiritual	Philippi
Churches Development Centre	Enterprises
unitary small-scale women-dominated open to outsiders fluid organisation good communications control by members continued donor support	fragmented expanding men-dominated fairly closed rigid organisation poor communications management hierarchy reluctant donor support

Clear differences in internal structure were apparent early in my fieldwork. Alone, however, such structural differences can not account for the success or failure of development projects. Riddell (1987) has shown the development process to be immensely complex and unpredictable. Moore (1990) has advised that successful research into development must be rigorous with disciplinary emphasis on context and contextualisation through which one will be able to assess the development process holistically. Elsewhere, Ferguson (1990) has cautioned us to take into account the unintended consequences of development intervention. And in so doing one must heed Colson (1982) and Sandbrook's (1982) advice to look closely at the motives of the development community.

And lastly, the history of the projects, their members and coordinators, were deeply rooted in the events that took place in Crossroads and surrounding areas during the 1980s. My analysis of the projects would, therefore, need to be undertaken in a broad framework which takes full account of the processes of urbanisation and the struggles which take place for access to resources in informal settlements.

Small-scale projects such as Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Centre provided therefore a point of entry into research about a specific aspect of urban development intervention in a rapidly changing society.

2. Community Development in South Africa

My concern in this thesis is not so much with what community development is, but rather the ways in which community development provides opportunities for players, active in informal settlements, to pursue particular objectives. I refer specifically to the actions of the state, township leaders, and donor organisations that give assistance to community development projects and organisations, including foreign governments.

I discuss two levels of community development. The first is government-directed community development programmes which must be seen in the context of successive South African government development strategies since the 1950s (for a discussion of this see Fischer (1988)). The second level is non-government-directed community development programmes which are formulated and/or assisted by South African and

international NGOs and service organisations, and foreign governments on a unilateral basis, without any direct mediation by the South African state. Of course these two levels cannot be completely separated. Some NGOs, most notably Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund and the Urban Foundation, have pursued community development initiatives in both the Republic and the 'homelands' in partnership with government departments. Other NGOs and funders which try to distance themselves actively from the government are often forced through circumstances to work with local and central government structures. In principle, however, the funders of the two community development projects discussed in this thesis chose to operate independently of the South African government.

In order to discuss this more fully it is useful to begin with a broad definition of community development and to contrast the ideal with the reality in South African urban areas. The following comes from a 1986 United Nations Institute Report and is representative of what is currently meant by community development:

"Community development is the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of the government to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of communities, and their integration into the framework of national development" (1986:100).

Current thinking about community development favours the idea that the poor are the best experts in their own circumstances and that the role of outside agencies should be limited to assisting the disadvantaged to develop themselves (see Salmen, 1987 and Ridell, 1987). Community development operates with

the notion that there are identifiable communities with particular conditions and that policies must be modified to suit those conditions (UN Report, 1986:100).

The ideal of empowerment, which Ramphele defines as 'a process aimed at shifting the perceptions of subordinate people, enabling them to assume greater control over their own lives' (Ramphele, forthcoming), informs much of the original thinking behind community development strategies. For this reason policies which aim to achieve the development of communities and their integration into a national framework define 'risk groups' such as women, children, youth, disabled and other discriminated and disadvantaged groups for whom specific programmes are designed to ameliorate their situation.

Community development typically involves the formulation and implementation of programmes in the areas of literacy, health and nutrition, employment and income-generation, emergency relief, resettlement and rehabilitation and physical infrastructural work at a local rather than national level. The UN Report stresses the necessity to incorporate into these strategies the idea of co-operative and self-help initiatives as a means by which communities are able to promote their own well-being (1986:100-104).

There are, however, as Sandbrook (1982) has pointed out severe limitations on community development initiatives which seek to advance local participation (1982: 240-242). Thornton and Ramphele (1989) have argued that successive South African governments have siezed the international popularity of

community development to 'justify long-standing policies of divide and rule' (1988:32). Elsewhere Reynolds (1981) has argued that a co-operative, communal or self-help focus in community development has been adopted, as a means of attempting to secure or underwrite individual and group security within the development process, thereby extending freedom, initiative and democracy (1981:1-3). Such intentions however would not appear to have greatly influenced the drafting and implementation of State-led community development programmes in South Africa.

Both 'community' and 'development' are terms which, Sharp (1988) believes, have been used to construct a conventional representation of South African society. Community in South African political discourse has been used as a euphemism for race (hence the 'Coloured Community', 'White Community', etc.) and when coupled with development is used to designate the targets - or victims - of government planned community development programmes. State-led community development has been a cornerstone of the implementation of apartheid's aim of the separate development of identifiable and bounded racial or ethnic communities.

It is not my aim in this thesis to expand on the mechanics of community development but rather I trace the ways in which community development in a South African urban African setting has been a political activity. In part Two, against the backdrop of the events before and after the Crossroads conflict, I examine the ways in which community development became a part of the rhetoric and actual practice of the

government and local security forces in their attempts to control the Old Crossroads informal settlement and to restructure the political terrain. I attempt to understand how and why Crossroads, once a symbol of resistance, in 1986 came to align itself with the South African state to assist in the destruction of its neighbouring squatter communities.

The government used the strategy of community development as a means to assist them in sanctioning the emergence of a group of leaders in Old Crossroads - headed by Johnson Ngxobongwana - which could be coopted into a pragmatic alliance with agencies of the state. Ngxobongwana was able to use the resources provided through both government-funded and privately-funded community development schemes in Old Crossroads to help secure his position in the settlement.

It is commonly argued in development literature that development intervention often serves to create a stratum of unrepresentative leaders (Sandbrook, 1982:240). Thornton and Ramphele have argued that this is precisely what occurred in Old Crossroads where intervention by outside agencies - central and local government, 'progressive organisations' and private funding agencies - assisted in the creation of township leadership structures which were usually in the hands of men and dominated by the educated and relatively wealthy (1988:31).

In **Part Three** of this thesis I show how community development as a political activity continued to be useful for the advancement of the interests of governmental and non-

governmental organisations, after the conflict peaked in 1986. I describe the way in which Sam Nkonyeni, a former ally of Ngxobongwana, was, because of his actions in Old Crossroads, styled by 'progressive organisations' and other funders of community development projects as an 'alternative' and 'popular' leader. Through this characterisation he was consequently targetted by donor agencies, as a suitable recipient of development aid.

In **Part Four**, I discuss some of the factors which motivate organisations to become funders of community development and the advantages which accrue to them from doing so. It is argued that whilst funders of community development programmes may adopt the sort of rhetoric contained in the UN definition the major motivating factors for their involvement in such programmes lay elsewhere.

Chapter Three

Research Methods

1. Fieldwork Methods

To my knowledge this fieldwork-based sociological study of community development projects in the African townships is the first of its kind. The thesis benefits from the unique opportunity I was given, through my every-day contacts with the foreign diplomatic corps in South Africa, to study both provider and recipient of aid. My fieldwork methods needed to accommodate both areas of interrelated research. Methods used for collecting data from the projects themselves, and organisations involved with those projects, were, by necessity, quite different from the methods used to collect information about the donors.

Project-based research

My involvement with the Spiritual Churches Development Centre and Philippi Enterprises extended over a period of eighteen months. During the first ten months of research my involvement with each project was more or less continuous. Every day I travelled to the projects and spent two or three hours at each.

In order to satisfy the first of Nkonyeni and Matiwana's conditions to research, which demanded that I had some practical involvement in the day-to-day work of the projects, I acted as a driver taking the carpenters to building sites in

the Mitchell's Plain area, buying and collecting equipment from town and transporting project members and their produce to markets. I arranged for the projects to sell their produce at local fetes and on university campuses.

I assisted the projects in drawing-up funding proposal letters. This occasionally extended to meeting and telephoning would-be funders: although I avoided this where possible. In addition I helped project members to organise their accounts and draw up budgets.

My fieldwork methods were both formal and informal. Formal methods to collect data included semi-structured interviews with project members, a questionnaire which I completed during those interviews, joint discussions and direct observation.

Most of my informants spoke English. For those who did not I employed a Xhosa-speaking social science undergraduate who was familiar with the area and acted as an interpreter. I conducted a series of in-depth interviews with Nomathemba Matiwana and Sam Nkonyeni who were my key informants.

Interviews were organised around a series of previously selected topics. Initial questions, which were designed to build up a profile of the project's members, remained constant. These were questions relating to age, gender, education, skills acquired, residence, size of family, income and previous experience. In order to allow some flexibility in the exchange, later questions were adapted to individuals. To some extent I allowed the informant to direct the course of

our conversation. In this way relevant and interesting, unanticipated issues were raised and an easier relationship was built up between interviewer and interviewee.

Whilst all the members of the Spiritual Churches project were willing to be interviewed individually and as a group, a few members of the Philippi project either refused outright to be interviewed or constantly put me off claiming pressure of work. I believe they were reluctant to be interviewed for two reasons. First because, as I describe in Chapter Six, the Philippi project suffered internal dissension which led to some groups (e.g. the mechanics) distancing themselves from others (e.g. the labourers). One way of achieving this was by not cooperating with me. And secondly, during my period of research at Philippi Enterprises Sam Nkonyeni became increasingly isolated and unpopular. Because my initial contact with the project was made through Nkonyeni I was, in some eyes, seen to be too closely associated with him and his style of leadership.

I do not, however, feel that my failure to interview every single member of the project invalidates my research or its findings.

Less formal questions as part of the interview related to the respondents perception of the project and its work. I enquired about their motives for joining the project, and whether they enjoyed the work, whether they thought it preferable to employment in the formal sector. I also enquired about their understanding of how the project was managed and funded, were

they involved in decision-taking to do with pricing, marketing, wages, recruitment, and so on. I tried to assess their knowledge of cooperativism as opposed to a purely profit-oriented business operation. I also asked about their future plans.

The length of the interview was affected by the time available to individual workers. For example, the women working in the brick-pressing section of Philippi Enterprises, who tended to be the least educated, were the least able to express themselves in English. The ones who undertook the most severe manual labour had very little time to talk, whilst the administrative staff often allowed our discussions to continue for an hour or more.

Most quantitative data required for this thesis was collected through interviews and discussions. Periods of direct observation, however, were also extremely valuable. Simply being in a project and watching its members at work provided many insights. I came to understand the rhythm of the day which, at the Spiritual Churches project, was punctuated by hymn singing and prayer services, by the visits of strangers and the calling of extraordinary meetings to resolve pressing problems.

Library-based research was also conducted in order to understand the wider historical context in which the projects were created and in which community development assistance is given and received.

I did, however, encounter a number of obstacles to research which arose directly out of my association with the University of Cape Town (UCT). It was my impression that, in very broad terms, there was a feeling within certain sections of the townships that UCT's research involvement there was not all together constructive. This perception was further affected by a commonly stated belief that certain areas of township activities are over-researched. This perception is particularly evident among community-based groups.

There was, as I explain throughout this thesis, a general mistrust felt towards 'outsiders' by members of community-based groups. In her assessment of the Crossroads crises, Josette Cole has argued that, during negotiations to decide the settlement's future, intervention by outside agencies and individuals - some of whom were attached to UCT - may have helped to exacerbate the divisions and tensions within the community (Cole, 1987:31-35).

Christine Glover has come to the defence of outside agencies by arguing that it was almost impossible for outsiders to get beyond the factions and interest groups which controlled access to the settlement. The state had, as I later describe, singled out and legitimised a group of leaders through whom agencies were obliged to communicate. Achieving consensus and building relationships of trust in such an environment, therefore, she argues was virtually impossible (Glover, 1987:20-22).

In the post-Crossroads era such mistrust continued to mar relations between community groups and what were often described to me as "obtrusive agencies". Members of both Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Centre expressed to me their concern that outsiders became involved in community groups either to further their own interests (university qualifications, political credence) or to impose their "will upon the people". The Spiritual Churches Development Centre's encounter with the Unemployed Workers Movement described in Chapter Eight illustrates their point.

I entered the Spiritual Churches project at a time in which the reputation of UCT had been badly tarnished by the actions of a post-graduate social science student. I was informed that in May/June 1988 the student, whom I shall call Andrew Lorimar, obtained funding in excess of R100,000 for an organisation he created to act as a liaison between funders and recipients of community development assistance.

Lorimar had secured the involvement of a number of prominent community figures including Nomathemba Matiwana, who agreed to act as the organisation's accountant. In return for her involvement Matiwana was assured by Lorimar that the members of the Spiritual Churches project would receive "substantial" financial assistance and "help with transport".

During an interview in January 1989 Matiwana told me that she was asked to attend only one meeting with Lorimar at which she and a colleague voiced concerns over the allocation of money.

"We felt" she said "that Lorimar wanted to pay his staff too much money. We told him not to pay the fieldworkers until they had found projects which wanted their help. That was the last time I saw Lorimar. Recently someone has said that they had seen him in Johannesburg with the combi. And now I hear that he has gone overseas. We thought we could trust Andrew. He said he had come from the University and understood the problems we had in talking with funders. But he didn't help. Our project didn't receive any of the money he promised us".

Lorimar's activities made it extremely difficult for me to build-up a relationship of trust with members of the project. Before embarking on post-graduate research I held rather romantic notions about the nature of the relationship between researcher and informants. In both the Spiritual Churches and Philippi Enterprises, however, I had to work extremely hard for information. Members of the Spiritual Churches project made it clear that if I wanted to talk to them I would have to give something in return. This often meant that interviews were conducted in my car on the way to markets or shops, or by the machines cutting and selecting material. My attempts to do what Stimson (1986) has called simply 'looking' were frowned upon and I was accused of getting in the way.

Throughout 1989 my problems were further compounded as other UCT departments became aware of the projects and sent groups of students to conduct mini-research exercises. And in the latter half of 1989 the UCT-based Southern African Labour Development Research Unit (SALDRU) placed a team in the Spiritual Churches project to conduct a series of seminars. Even though I was already undertaking research in the project I was not consulted about SALDRU's intentions. The first I knew of their involvement was when a SALDRU team member

appeared at the project at a time when I was conducting interviews.

After discussion I agreed to suspend my research for a six week period, but SALDRU's involvement was not, both parties have informed me, "successful". Members of the project complained that they were unsure about why SALDRU was there at all and what the Unit's fieldworkers were trying to teach them. "It's the same as ever," Matiwana said, "they come to us but they never give us anything. We are no better off when they leave". A SALDRU fieldworker told me that he felt the members of the group were not willing to learn: "Their minds are closed to new ideas. They cannot go on the way they are but they seem unable to change" (interview with SALDRU fieldworker, April 1990).

When I returned to the Spiritual Churches project any rapport I had built-up with the project's members prior to SALDRU's involvement had been lost. Understandably, members of the projects did not differentiate between departments in the university. Whether one represented Social Anthropology, Social Work or the Department of Economics, one's involvement was prejudged as being out of touch or of little use to the community. There would seem to be an urgent need for the University to coordinate research undertaken by different departments in order to assess and perhaps exert some control over the nature of research, and to prevent duplication.

Donor research

More formal fieldwork methods used to collect data on the history and day-to-day working of the Spiritual Churches and Philippi projects were not suited to research about the motives of donors and their administrative procedures.

Information from representatives of donors was collected largely through unstructured interviews and informal contact at social and semi-official engagements. My wife's position with the British Consulate and my own status as a former member of the British foreign service granted me continued access to mission staff who were responsible for administering their government's schemes in South Africa.

My dual status as a university researcher and a former member of the corps was well known. Some information was given in confidence which I have respected. On many occasions, however, I found diplomatic staff very keen to discuss their programmes openly in the context of overall foreign policy and in terms of practical usefulness.

Specific information about individual government's project involvement was more difficult to come by. Governments, with the exception of the British, have in the past been unwilling to disclose publicly the extent of their aid involvement in South Africa. Furthermore missions have shown an unwillingness to disclose any assessment of the effectiveness of their development schemes. There are two reasons for this. Either no evaluations are undertaken at all, or they are undertaken

purely for internal reasons. Evidence would suggest that the former is the most likely explanation.

Part Two

"Struggles for the City"

Chapter Four

Creating Crossroads

1. Introduction

In this chapter, in order to place in context the projects and their members, I describe some of the processes which contributed to the extent and shape of urbanisation in South Africa. Writers on urbanisation like Simkins (1983), Graaff (1987) and Mabin (1989) agree that state action has been successful in "containing" or "displacing" urbanward movement and further that political factors were central in shaping the current state of urbanisation. This chapter therefore examines state practice in relation to urbanisation and the creation of informal (that is unplanned or unauthorised) settlements on the peripheries of major labour markets.

In Chapter Five I attempt to analyse the broad patterns of change which have been described in this chapter in terms of the impact those changes have had on the lives of people in the Crossroads informal settlement, with a particular focus on political struggles. Whilst it is clear that state policy has been the dominant factor in regulating and shaping urbanisation it is also clear that such policies have only been partly effective.

Wilson (forthcoming) has argued that the recent abolition of legislation restricting access to land on the basis of race or "ethnicity" can be seen as the removal of the scaffolding of apartheid leaving a solid edifice in place. Such reforms will have little short-term effect on the material conditions which dominate the lives of people living in informal settlements and it is likely that restrictive legislation remaining on the statute books will, as Hindson (1987) and Schoomber and Davis (1986) argues that, continue to operate in the place influx control measures.

But more importantly Mabin (1989) argues that as the old urban regime (characterised by centralised application of influx control) broke down, material constraints emerged as the chief control on urbanward movement. With the increasing concentration of people in informal settlements during the 1970s and 1980s the results of such material constraints became evident. Within these constraints people, individually and collectively, are forced to struggle for access to the benefits of urban life.

The state, according to Mabin, saw the potential in material constraints as a form of effective control on urban populations. The "new urban policy" therefore, Mabin argues, sought to reinforce those constraints as controls "not only on urbanward movement, but, through their use in fragmenting populations, as political controls" (1987:21).

It is in the context of material constraints, a fragmented population, and state partisan intervention to implement a new strategy of control, that the struggle for Crossroads took place.

2. Crossroads: The Creation of an Urban Informal Settlement

The election of a National Party government to power in 1948 did not result in a radical transformation of South African society. Processes which led to the legal formation of racial categories as the basis of apartheid underpinned by informal (political and economic) and formal (state) structures had been in place for many decades. In 1858 the constitution of the then South African Republic declared that "the people desire to permit no equality between coloured people and the white inhabitants, either in church or state". Prior to and beyond 1948, successive governments have heeded this sentiment in their bid to manage the people of South Africa through a system which integrated the African majority through economic necessity, but formally excluded or disassociated them from the nation (Lipton, 1986:366; Greenberg, 1987).

Since the first "black spot" removals in Cape Town in 1901 (Matiwana and Walters, 1986) continuing attempts to control the movement of the African population have been only partly successful. Residential segregation and the principle that "natives" were only permitted into white municipal areas for labour purposes has been enshrined in a battery of legislation since the Native Urban Areas Act of 1923. Subsequent legislation, including recent acts relating to documentation,

squatting and citizenship continued to operate in a context of "orderly urbanisation" (modern day influx control) which has at its heart the issue of mobility (West and Oliver-Evans, 1990).

Then as now, bids to control the movement of labour and the protection of "white land" have required a substantial bureaucratic machine and the large-scale exercise of coercion. Ever-increasing rates of African urbanisation (see Simkins, forthcoming) and resultant squatter settlements on the edges of major cities serve to remind, however, that the often haphazard state labour control mechanisms have failed in their ultimate bid to exert absolute centralised control.

In illustrating the creation of the Crossroads settlement I shall describe some of the forces which have operated at a national-level to incorporate Africans into the South African political economy as a distinctive category of "squatters", or as Greenberg (1987) describes them, "barely employed illegals on the margins of the cities" (1987:13). The appearance of the squatter settlement at Crossroads in 1975 will, therefore, be explored in the context of broad historical processes of labour controls - which, according to Greenberg, provide the specific material context in which Africans have come to experience state and society - though not to the exclusion of more conventional push-pull factors. I shall then examine the creation of Crossroads in a more regional context since the Western Cape is, in many ways, a distinct region. I shall look for example at the effects on urbanisation and housing of the Coloured Labour Preference Area (CLPA) policy which is one of

the distinguishing features of recent western Cape society and politics.

National-Level Policy

It is commonly argued that throughout this century the nature of state labour control has been shaped by the conflicting demands of various economic interest groups (Hindson, 1986:87). Successive governments have responded to the lobbying of powerful mining, agricultural and industrial sectors with measures designed to meet the demands for labour but also to meet the demands of the white electorate within a framework of "separate development". That is not to say, however, that apartheid can simply be explained as the outcome of capitalism or racism. Its origins, as Lipton (1986) explains, 'lie in a complex interaction between class interests (of white labour as well as of section of capital) and racism/ethnicity, reinforced by psychological ideological and security factors' (1986:365).

Turn of the century legal constraints on the African majority in the shape of passes, vagrancy laws, and master and servants laws laid the rudimentary foundations of apartheid (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989:204). Proceeding decades and the growth of agriculture brought state restrictions on African landholding, squatting and sharecropping. The Native Land Act of 1913, for example, was designed to give impetus to the system of migrant labour through securing a stable supply of labour for industry and to strip land from the independent African peasantry in the countryside. At the same time attempts were made to forcibly relocate squatters in the urban areas to newly-formed townships (such as Ndabeni in Cape Town). A pattern emerged,

however, whereby a majority of the illegal African urban population remained in informal settlements beyond the immediate control of the local authority.

During the inter-war years South Africa experienced steady growth of a manufacturing and commercial economy accompanied by large-scale African urbanisation. Further state measures in the form of a system of reserves was introduced to create separate African locations and the removal of the redundant (superfluous) African population to the rural areas. The significant Urban Areas Act of 1923 marked a move to control the flow of Africans partly out of a concern to protect the "white man's land" and also to shelter white labour from black competition. Pass and influx control laws were thus refined, extended to women (in 1956) and backed by intensified police action. Further legislation witnessed the state taking a greater involvement in the labour process with the establishment of labour bureaux in the urban and "tribal" areas to direct and control contract labour and bar workers from permanent residence in white areas.

Influx control was an ongoing policy designed to "control the movement, settlement and location of black people throughout South Africa" (Bernstein, 1985:85). Evidence of rates of urbanisation would suggest that influx control measures within overall state policy have never worked effectively to control the flow of Africans to major cities in pursuit of work and improved life chances. By 1948 it was already clear to the newly-elected Nationalist government that large settlements of Africans living permanently in the urban areas meant political

and economic conflict. In response to this, throughout the 1950s the Nationalist government formulated policy to reconstruct the reserve system inherited from previous regimes.

The interest in creating bantustans was twofold. Firstly, if Africans were to be kept out of the towns as far as possible they would have to be accommodated (and reproduced) somewhere. And secondly, it was also becoming clear to the government in light of increasing opposition from home and overseas, that white domination could not be maintained by force and coercion alone (Lipton, 1986:75). Restricted African urbanisation, therefore, was a central requirement of the Nationalist's policy and much of the increasingly elaborate structures of government that were set up under the bantustan system, and many of the removals of African people, have had this as their ultimate goal.

The migrant labour system was reworked into what was intended to be a sophisticated and all-embracing method of labour allocation. A network of state labour bureaux was established to control the numbers of people allowed to enter the urban areas for job purposes and to direct labour into those geographical areas and economic sectors most in need of it. In 1964 the powers of the labour bureaux were extended beyond rural workseekers to cover the employment of all African workers in the urban areas, whether permanent residents or migrants. In 1968, with the establishment of labour bureaux in the bantustans the control over who was to leave the rural areas and go to town was thus to be exercised at the point of

supply. At the same time it became compulsory for migrant workers who had jobs, to return to their "place of origin" at least once a year to ensure that their ties to the bantustans would not be broken.

Through the bantustan system the state certainly exerted significant control at a macro-level over the broad shifts in the distribution of labour. There are, however, clear limits to state power and variation at the local-level has exposed a differential impact of state labour policies (Posel, 1986), and confusion amongst petty officials administering the regulations (see for example Humphries, 1989 on the administration of the CLPA policy). The bantustan system failed to perform its historical functions in South Africa's political economy, and yet, according to Greenberg and Giliomee, it remains necessary, "to segment the black majority, to create areas of privilege (i.e. legal settlements in urban areas) and rights, and to foster collaboration" (1985:69).

As discussed above, for more than a century a central policy of successive South African governments has been to limit the permanent movement of Africans to urban areas. Mechanisms designed to check the movement of labour, such as the hated pass law books imposed in 1952, were enforced more or less stringently in times of economic expansion or decline. At least 250,000 Africans were prosecuted annually under the pass laws, at one point rising to 650,000 or 10% of the working-age population (Greenberg, 1987a:2). The bantustan system buttressed migrant labour and provided the ideological

cornerstone for the policy of "separate development". In addition to the pass laws the state used two further mechanisms to control the movement of Africans: limitations on housing construction; and the outright destruction of black communities.

Forced removals have occurred mainly out of provisions of the Group Areas Act of 1950 which seeks to keep 'races' separate in their residential and social spheres and has led directly to the removal of well over 750,000 people (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989:217); and the years 1960-1982 saw 3.5 million Africans forcibly removed from "black spots" and resettled in designated African areas (1987a:2). The impact of Group Areas removals and deliberate freezes on the building of housing for Africans can best be described through actual experiences. The emergence of the Crossroads squatter problem was an inevitable result of attempts by successive South African governments to control the flow of Africans into the western Cape Province and to restrict those who were living there. In order to understand the events of Crossroads it is necessary to firstly locate the area within the western Cape region which has in many ways a unique history in South Africa.

Regional Policy: The Western Cape

Though the western Cape has a poor history of cohesive African political organisation - due perhaps to a historic lack of permanence - the government has struggled in this region more than anywhere else in the country to limit African influx and "protect" the position of local labour (Cole, 1987). Thousands of African people were endorsed every year out of the western

Cape in an attempt to implement the extremely strict Coloured Labour Preference Area (CLPA) policy which was specific to the region.

The CLPA policy was designed to regulate labour-market competition between African and "Coloured" people by giving preferential employment and land rights to the latter (after whites), and resettling the former in rural homelands. Ostensibly the policy claimed to protect economic interests in the Cape and aimed to ensure that industry drew heavily on an African workforce comprised primarily of contract migrant labour. The CLPA policy has had profound implications for the African population in the Cape which should be seen in conjunction with the implementation of Group Areas and influx control.

In terms of the Group Areas Act land for housing within the greater Cape Town area has been divided between the white, "Coloured" and African population groups. Distribution has resulted in an adequate surplus of land for white housing, and severe shortages for both Coloured and African housing. The crisis in African housing was further intensified firstly, by a stipulation within the Act that circling any land used for Africans, and that 'buffer strips' must be set aside as policeable spaces between 'race' groups (Glover, 1987:4).

Secondly, and more profoundly, influx control measures tied in with the CLPA policy would seek not only to restrict the numbers of Africans in the Western Cape, but also to decrease their numbers by 5% per annum.

The scheme to remove Africans from the western Cape was introduced by W.H. Eiselen whose plan involved an imaginary line running roughly north to south through the Cape Province, from the western side of which all blacks were to be removed. The western Cape was to be closed-off in order for it to remain the 'natural home' of the 'Coloured' people. Cape Town's City Council's Manager spelled out government policy, 'The policy of this government is to reduce the number of African families living in the western Cape ... the labour needs of the peninsula are to be met by migratory labour ... those who have the right to stay will be allowed to remain, the rest will go home' (quoted in Cole, 1986:25).

In the mid to late 50s work began on clearing squatter settlements. Some 5000 Africans were removed from "Black Spots" into the newly created Nyanga Emergency Camp, and 'Coloureds' were removed to the Cape Flats. Africans were subjected to rigorous screening tests to discover who were legally entitled to remain in the Cape and to work there. As Leach (1989) noted, during this period only 750 of the 2,500 families tested qualified. At least 1,200 families were ordered to separate, husbands to go to the single-sex hostels, wives and children to the homelands. By 1960 most squatter camps had been demolished and the 'legals' were resettled in the townships (1989:166-167).

A variety of controls were utilised to achieve Eiselen's plan. In 1966 the government announced an absolute freeze on the development of Black housing and a restriction on hostel

accommodation that could be built for migrant labour. Controls were imposed in the workplace whereby employers were required to obtain permits to employ Africans, and were subject to large fines if they employed 'illegals'. Pass law controls were rigidly enforced, rising from 8,434 offences in 1962 to 15,367 in 1967. As Glover (1987) has noted, the most stringent controls were placed on women 'in order to avoid Black families becoming the norm in the western Cape' (1987:4). Officials regarded families as a key index of how stable and permanent the urban African population was becoming and for this reason were anxious to limit the numbers of women in the urban areas and confine them to the rural bantustans as much as possible.

In terms of this legislation, two categories of Africans developed: 'illegals' who were not entitled to be in the area; and 'legals' who had become entitled to the right either through their birth in Cape Town, working for the same employer continuously for ten years (or several employers for fifteen years), or being on a yearly work contract. The regional Cape economy boomed during the early 1970s, and from the period 1968-1974 the number of contract workers increased by 56.3% and by the end of 1974 there were an estimated 90,000 'illegals' who would stay once the boom was over. As the city expanded more workers were drawn into it but between 1972 and 1980 not a single house for African occupation had been built. There was no shelter for the wives and children of migrant workers who crept into the city unauthorised to join their men. Squatter shacks mushroomed, not only in backyards but in

vacant lots: one of those was Crossroads (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989:215).

The CLPA policy was therefore, as Humphries (1989) recently noted, undercut by the expanding regional economy with an ensuing shortage of 'Coloured' labour. But in addition the policy as part of regulated influx control proved unworkable at the municipal and divisional council level. The policy did not achieve its aims of protecting economic interests in the area or preserving a 'racial' balance. Though as Humphries suggests, if the real value of the policy was its symbolic political significance in the white arena then the stated aims were little more than rhetoric (1989:179). For those who were forced to enter the area illegally, however, the appalling social consequences of the policy were only too real.

In theory the distinction between 'legal' and 'illegal' Africans in urban areas was supposed to be clear-cut. 'Legals' were people with jobs and formal housing, while 'illegals' had neither jobs nor housing and were therefore vagrants. Squatter communities emerged on a large scale when this clarity of definition blurred. The freeze on the development of family housing for Africans, coupled with the effects of the Group Areas Act soon meant that there were 'legals' with jobs but without housing. In 1975 the newly established Bantu Administration Board (BAAB) decided to allow these legally-resident Africans to occupy temporarily a site bounded by Lansdowne Road, Mahobe Drive, and Klipfontein Road, east of Nyanga township.

Most of the original settlers of Crossroads had lived in Cape Town for over ten years. An estimated 30% had lived in an average of two or three other squatter settlements, and a significant percentage had lived in the surrounding African townships prior to moving to Crossroads (Robb, 'The Argus' 18 August 1978). Of the male population, 50% were employed either as contract workers or permanent workers in the peninsula. Only 9.3% of the women in the community had legal rights to be in Cape Town. By the middle of April 1975 over 7000 Africans were reported to be living in the area, in an estimated 1027 shacks (Cole, 1987:12).

By 1986 it was estimated that the population of Crossroads had grown to 160,000 people of whom 22,000 were classified 'legal'. During the years 1975-1986 Crossroads became a severe embarrassment to the government as it became an international symbol of opposition to apartheid but more significantly as a powerful symbol of opposition to influx control and the classification of Africans into 'legal' and 'illegals' (insiders and outsiders). In spite of, or perhaps even because, of the fact that Crossroads fell under the glare of world publicity, the government remained adamant that the people of Crossroads could not remain on that site.

A decade of negotiations swung between 'liberal' compromises, repression, promises and blatant tactics of divide and rule. During the early 1980s with the clearance of squatters from Hout Bay, Killarney and Table View and the creation of 'KTC' it was clear that the phenomenon of squatting was here to stay. In 1982 the hastily prepared Orderly Movement and

Settlement of Black Persons Bill, which as an extension to the Riekert Proposals of 1979 attempted to decrease the mobility and access of Africans to the urban areas and white farms, was withdrawn after an international outcry. As a consequence, pass raids intensified throughout the country but with particular emphasis on the Cape. The Surplus People's Project reported that during 1982 pass raid fines resulted in the collection of R52,000 per month (1985:58).

Shocked by the aerial view of the expanding African settlements around Cape Town, State President P W Botha announced in 1983 the building of Khayelitsha. Propaganda papers were dropped over Crossroads advertising "a beautiful township on the False Bay coast!" where 'legals' would be accommodated in 'core houses' and 'illegals' offered 'site and service' provisions. By 1984 the official estimate of the 'illegal' African population in the Cape peninsula had grown to 70-100,000 people (Cole, 1987:95-97). In September of that year the National Party announced reform (the scrapping of the CLPA policy and granting 99-year leasehold to 'legal' Africans) and repression (the repatriation of 100,000 'illegals'). Country-wide violence and resistance led to the imposition of the State of Emergency in July 1985 over one third of the country and extended to the Cape Town area in October 1985.

World attention turned to Crossroads where resistance was particularly militant. The international media disclosed police brutality and reported on the atrocious living conditions within the settlement. Days of unrest resulted

mainly in the deaths of youths. The infamous 'necklace' was used as a method of killing people suspected of being sell-outs. BBC news showed a film of what appeared to be an active alliance between members of the South African Police (SAP) and South African Defence Force (SADF) and the 'witdoeke' in Crossroads against the 'comrades'.

On May 17 the destruction of the satellite camps of the Crossroads complex and nearby 'KTC' began as a prelude to the forced removal of 70,000 people. Cole sums up the significance of the May-June events as follows: in less than a month the 'witdoeke' with the uncontested support of members of the SAP and SADF, had removed not only the most consistently resistant squatters in the Cape Peninsula but also, and perhaps more crucially, the support-bases for UDF-affiliated organisations operating in the area' (1987).

Conclusion

The lives of Crossroads' residents, some of whom later became involved in the sorts of self-help projects I discuss in this thesis, were dominated by the search for a permanent home and place of work. Their experiences were characterised by attempts to formulate opposition to repressive measure which had their source largely in state action. Strategies were devised and leaders emerged to tackle immediate problems arising out of the material conditions which prevailed in the townships. In the following chapter I discuss the sorts of leadership and political organisation which arose out of the Crossroads crisis and link them to the subsequent emergence of community-based self-help projects.

Chapter Five

Leadership and Organisation

1. Introduction

The informal settlement at Crossroads was, in the eyes of the government, a human shunting yard from where formerly scattered squatter communities could be centralised before relocation to Khayelitsha. The squatters themselves had a different idea. For them, Crossroads represented a permanent solution to their housing needs. By necessity a form of community developed through a collective will to repel attempts at removal. Initially, resistance was channelled through community organisations which grew to meet the challenge of changing local conditions. These organisations in the form of committees evolved in a reasonably democratic way and set about opposing police raids and meeting the needs of the community with genuine popular support.

2. Leadership

Patterns of leadership emerged with clear distinctions between men, women and the youth. As Glover explains tasks were apportioned: women were responsible for initiating contact with outside parties (organisations such as the Black Sash, Western Province Council of Churches, and individuals); whilst men concentrated on internal issues such as the collection of funds for the payment of fines. As the months progressed and the stakes increased, these divisions proved critically

divisive. To the outside world, Crossroads presented a united face to the worst excesses of apartheid, yet internally politics was seen to shift away from community-oriented problems to a concern with the exercise of control over the settlement's political economy.

Women who, according to Cole (1987) and to a lesser extent Glover (1987), were at the forefront of resistance rapidly became marginalised by the more powerful and exclusivist Men's Committees. Accusations of power usurpation, the misappropriation of community funds, and patronage increased tensions and deepened divisions within the community. Below I explore a variety of factors which may have contributed to the organisation and structure of power relations which emerged in Crossroads and played such a crucial role in the events which culminated in the violence of May-June 1986.

First there is the issue of the perceived reinvention of 'traditional' structures of authority grafted onto and adapted to the urban setting by those who seek power, and which is accepted (and legitimated) by those who seek direction. Cole, for example, argues that 'In the struggle to adapt to a rapidly changing social environment ... people ... chose familiar structures' (1987:19) which tended to conform to what Boonzaier and Spiegel have called 'the colonial office of headman' (1988:51).

Glover pursues this argument further by saying that men, women and youth fulfill their 'traditional' roles in the urban setting in other ways. Men, for example, continue to act as

'family and community autocrats'; whilst women are contained within the non-political domestic sphere. This enables Glover to see later events as challenges to the 'traditional mode of operating'. The youth were formerly expected to take a subservient role but immersion in the urban environment gave them the 'modern' confidence to confront the elders and through an alliance with women to acquire an independent decision-making role. And furthermore the rise of the 'witdoeke', or 'fathers' is clearly interpreted as a violent, reactionary backlash by elder men in an attempt to regain lost authority through reigning-in the unruly youth and women (1987:5-8).

Glover's dualism is perhaps too rigid. Recourse to 'tradition' as an explanation for behaviour certainly has an emotional attraction but there is strong evidence to suggest that leaders in Crossroads and ordinary residents appealed to an image of the past to give legitimacy to current practices. Surveys show that the majority of the original settlers of Crossroads had been living or working in Cape Town for a number of years. Significant male leaders were 'legal' ex-township residents who were involved in business and had an eye to community political structures. They were men who interpreted the circumstances of the time, manipulated the opportunities and devised courses of action: much in the same way as all leaders do.

Second, the apparent ease with which a tight caucus of leaders emerged in Crossroads as the controlling power, may be understood in terms of the context of the control of Africans

in general. African experience of the South African state and society, but also of 'progressive organisations', has been characterised by the removal of decision-making and choice. Choices in housing, work, education, mobility and the right of expression have been tightly controlled and administered by bureaucrats in a non-consultative and non-participatory system. African experience, therefore, has been one of exclusion and control and never more so than during the 1980s.

This may, in part, explain why Crossroads residents were so willing to place their faith in the men (and women) who had the initial courage and ability to confront the situation of threatened eviction. The early stages of resistance demanded some form of organisation for achieving collective goals. Quite rightly organisations were seen to be more powerful than individuals. The scope for misuse of organisational authority was not, at that stage, contemplated.

Third, Johnson Ngxobongwana et al were able to draw upon a pool of support which was quite simply - at this stage - politically non-aligned. It is often assumed that Cape-based Africans, if not "traditional" or rural, must be Africanist or Charterist. But political labelling of this kind, particularly in squatter settlements where support for mass-based movements is often transient, ambiguous and reluctant, is notoriously difficult. In Crossroads the position was highly fluid and the interplay of groups (aligned in opposition to the government) and the squatters left plenty of room for confusion.

As Perlman (1976) discovered in the shanty-towns of Rio de Janeiro, squatters tend to adopt individualistic and opportunistic strategies in contrast to the accepted positions of established organisations. In Crossroads the stratification which arose out of the township residents' and progressive organisations' distrust of squatters lead to antagonisms and gave rise to a concentration of power. Ngxobongwana, whose hunger for power was suitably clothed in socially and UDF-approved rhetoric, exploited this situation to full effect.

Fourth, leadership within an organisational framework received external, as well as internal, legitimation. The formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, for example, signalled a move towards 'consensus' or 'participatory democracy' in which leaders were supposedly representatives responsible for relaying community decisions, rather than taking them. In reality leaders became far more than mere messengers and democracy through mass participation became increasingly elusive as decision-making shifted to caucuses of strategists rather than the community.

This process occurred in Crossroads where UDF-affiliated groups continued to embrace and give sustenance to Johnson Ngxobongwana as a 'popular leader' seemingly blind to his increasingly autocratic and corrupt style of rule (Cole, 1987:85). Similarly, white liberal helpers who acted as go-betweens and legal advisors in the negotiations also served to give legitimacy to male leaders by virtue of affording privileged access to information to certain groups. In their defence representatives of the Urban Foundation claim that the

environment was almost impossible to operate in and getting beyond the 'leadership clique' was a considerable challenge to the ingenuity of any outside agency (Glover, 1987:20-22).

Significant, of course, is the continuing involvement of the state, in particular local security forces, in actively propping-up a favourable leadership in Crossroads. As we have seen, influx control measures had failed to control African urbanisation and in the absence of imposing and maintaining any other effective means of control the state sought new ties of political clientship. An autocratic controlling power in Crossroads made the strategic task of cooption far easier since Ngxobongwana and fellow committee members became, in effect, extensions of the white regional administration moving events towards the goals of the state. Outside agencies, be they so called 'progressive' or representatives of capital, inadvertantly, or consciously assisted the state in this process.

3. Organisational Control

Cole analysed the creation of leadership structures in Crossroads as the wrenching of women's legitimate power by a corrupt alliance of reactionary forces. Christine Glover who was working in Crossroads throughout 1985 and 1986 has, in conversation, criticised Cole's romanticisation of the significance of the Women's Committee and sees this tendency arising out of the fact that her involvement in Crossroads had been to focus a study on women to the exclusion of wider processes. Certainly Cole's study presents a rather monolithic

picture of women's experiences of and reaction to the material conditions of poverty and repression.

The women of Crossroads were divided, and 'progressive' organisations representing women (such as the United Women's Organisation (UWO) and the United Women's Congress (UWCO)) did not enjoy unanimous support. There were women who saw their best chances through cooperation with the Men's Committees. But also, as we shall see later in discussing Nomathemba Matiwana, there were women, considered to be 'on the left', who rejected the Women's Committee and later the alliance with the youth, partly because of the involvement of 'progressive' organisations. It is likely that a proto-feminist consciousness may have evolved during this period; the question is to what degree was it articulated and worked into concrete action. And furthermore why did women react differentially?

Committees were established soon after the squatters arrived at Crossroads with four major tasks: to coordinate a response to the threat of removals; to collect monies to pay fines, legal costs and to fund welfare projects; to initiate contacts with outside organisations thus promoting the plight of the squatters; and to create a network of mutual-aid schemes for the families of Crossroads. Though divided into Men's and Women's Committees they cooperated on a successful counter-application to the Supreme Court in 1976 to have the settlement declared an Emergency Camp with the provision of rudimentary services. The victory was made possible because of the assistance of outside 'liberal' helpers, and from this

point on contact with outside agencies was actively sought. Contacts which, Cole argues, served the interests of reactionary forces rather than the interests of the community.

After the Court found in favour of the squatters, additional people flooded to Crossroads in the hope of finding security. At the time of the Court hearing the population was estimated at 10,000; by 1979 the figure had reached 40-45,000. In response to this, two men, Johnson Ngxobongwana and Oliver Memani, who respectively headed the Noxolo and Sizamile Committees, extended their networks of control beyond normal committee functions. Crossroads was zoned and two informal bodies were established: 'homeguards' who acted as community police concerning themselves with petty-crime; and, 'wardsmen' who had the key function of collecting funds and settling disputes.

In April 1979 an agreement was forged between the government through its new Minister of Plural Relations, Piet Koornhof and the squatters. The crucial issue at stake became the building of a new township, to be called New Crossroads, and who would be eligible to stay there. The Agreement was generally well received although it soon became clear that the extent of the building programme would barely scratch the surface of the problem and in the course of negotiations splits in the community became more pronounced. Out of this stratification Ngxobongwana siezed the opportunity to change the face of Crossroads internal politics and external contacts.

In August 1979 Ngxobongwana organised elections and was duly elected the first leader of the newly-formed Executive Committee. His first acts were to dissolve the rival Sizamile Committee, and create a 'cabinet' of loyal men who were 'elected' at large community meetings. Each 'cabinet' member had a portfolio (education, welfare, treasury etc.) and their major task was to make contact with external bodies - welfare agencies, international visitors, press and local authority figures - and thus create the external resource base which was crucial to Ngxobongwana's leadership. Members of the Executive Committee together with the 'wardsmen' - who tended to be more conservative and older - liaised with outside agencies in such a way that Ngxobongwana was able to pull the strings but remain in the background. The Executive Committee, 'wardsmen' and 'homeguards' (Ngxobongwana's private army according to Glover, 1987:13) provided Ngxobongwana with a rubber stamp backed up by comprehensive intelligence and coercive force to counter dissent.

Throughout the early 1980s Ngxobongwana fought off challenges to his position primarily from Memani to control both Old and New Crossroads. During 1983-1984 conflict between the state and squatters intensified as local security forces attempted to flush out 'illegals'. With the formation of the UDF in 1983 squatter struggles became more highly politicised and Ngxobongwana as a high-profile community-leader received the support of affiliated organisations as a genuine and popular leader.

Crossroads continued to represent the symbolic opposition to apartheid yet within the community Ngxobongwana protected by Ndimas strongmen consolidated his power in New and Old Crossroads through coercion and the imposition of extravagant 'taxes'. It was believed, Glover (1987:13) states, that Ngxobongwana had reached an agreement with the local police that they would stay out of Crossroads; and similarly with the drug squad who agreed not to interfere with Crossroads economic base, the distribution of dagga.

In April, Ngxobongwana's 'army' was seen on the streets recognisable by strips of white cloth attached to their clothes. In September the Nationalist Party announced that Crossroads "must be cleared up and there must be no doubt about that whatsoever" (quoted in Cole, 1987:86). Police raids continued and violence broke out between supporters of Memani and the ruling Executive. The Sizamile School, Memani's symbol of support, was burned to the ground. Irrespective of wide-scale criticism against the actions of the Executive Committee, Ngxobongwana continued to gain support from external organisations including the UDF, and through this he was able to ensure compliance from the community and superiority over the lesser leaders (Hoza, Tutu, Toise, Siphika and Yamile).

1985 saw the intensification of wide-scale violence throughout the country and resistance within the African townships escalated. By October the State of Emergency had been declared country-wide but prior to that several critical events occurred to change the dynamic of Crossroads. Firstly, Ngxobongwana was detained for a nine-month period with a

strong possibility that prosecution would be successful on a charge of incitement to murder. Secondly, there was a growing disenchantment towards Ngxobongwana amongst many of his external resource agencies which led to the withdrawal of the Catholic Welfare Bureau and Compassion who felt they were propping-up an unacceptable regime. Other agencies (such as the Red Cross) decided to stay on for humanitarian reasons. Thirdly, the Cape Youth Congress (CAYCO) and the UDF-affiliated groups gained increasing recognition within Crossroads and became a direct threat to Ngxobongwana.

By the time Ngxobongwana was released in June 1985 it was generally felt that the state was committed to the removal of all Crossroads residents to Khayelitsha. It was likely therefore that Ngxobongwana had been detained as a community-leader most likely to organise resistance to removal. However his change of attitude towards 'progressive' organisations within Crossroads led some commentators to believe that the security forces had bribed Ngxobongwana to agree to 'cooperate' with them in the forced removal. Opposition to Ngxobongwana and by association the Executive Committee grew during the latter half of 1985. In retaliation Ngxobongwana rebuilt the 'wardsmen' committees and strengthened his 'homeguard'; he banned CAYCO and UWCO from Crossroads, and divided the youth by declaring AZAPO the only permissible organisation to represent the youth.

In February 1986 elections were held in which Ngxobongwana was elected Chairman of Old and New Crossroads; in effect he had become the new local black authority extending his control

over neighbouring satellite camps with the assistance of the local security forces. Together they were seen threatening leaders, like Toise and Yamile, and exposing ANC terrorists. Ngxobongwana, now in conjunction with Hoza, and the security forces shared a common wish to rid the area of the militant youth and 'progressive' organisations. On 17 May 1986 the destruction of satellite squatter camps of the Crossroads complex and nearby KTC had begun.

Glover (1987) describes the tactics: 'A pattern was established. An area would be teargassed to get rid of all the people. The army and police would then keep these people at bay while fewer than a hundred 'witdoeke' looted and torched the shacks. Four thousand shacks were destroyed in Crossroads' (1987:19-20). The squatter camps, with the exception of the heart of Old Crossroads, had been destroyed. 'Law and order' had been temporarily maintained through the removal of the settlements which offered protection to the 'comrades' (or Maqabane).

The aftermath saw squatters scattered from Nkonyeni to Khayelitsha. Many people drifted with the sand to Khayelitsha; Site B and Green Town (tent town) are still filled with 'refugees'. Elsewhere, Millers Camp, Mkhonto Square and Brown's Farm have sprung up. Old Crossroads, formerly a focal point of resistance, had become, Cole argues, 'the apple in the eye of the South African state and a monument to its co-optive strategies' (1987:163). The events in Crossroads raised a number of crucial questions which could not be ignored. Why did the 'progressive' forces fail to win the hearts and mind

of squatters and squatter leaders? Why were people willing to align themselves with the state and take violent retribution against fellow squatters? What is the future of development intervention in such complex environments? And finally what are the legacies of this turbulent decade of South Africa's history?

4. Conclusion

Understanding the political struggles that occurred and are continuing to occur in informal settlements like Crossroads is, as Mabin (1989) has noted, crucial to the future of the country. Violence is not, as it is commonly perceived, directed solely at, or manipulated by the state and its agencies. The material circumstances of settlements like Crossroads have created struggles over access to resources. Small numbers of entrepreneurs or exploiters - depending on one's viewpoint - have been able to accumulate wealth: the majority have not.

In Crossroads the "struggle for the city" (to use Cooper's, 1985 phrase) took place along many cleavages. Ngxobongwana manipulated the cleavages in Crossroads to control the settlement's political economy. His control was further enhanced, Cole (1987) and Glover (1987) argue, through extortion and physical repression.

Crossroads, like other informal settlements, is as Graaff (1987) and Tomlinson and Le Grange (quoted in Mabin, 1989) found, a relatively cheap place to live. Its relative

cheapness however, must be seen in the context of a lack of services and a state of individual powerlessness in the face of autocratic local leaders. Refuge from official harassment, which some settlements provide, is replaced by an often more violent unofficial harassment.

It was out this "new urban regime" (Mabin, 1989) dominated by political struggles and rooted in the crippling material circumstances of Crossroads that Sam Nkonyeni and Nomathemba Matiwana emerged as "alternative leaders" determined to challenge this new regime.

Chapter Six

Nkonyeni and Matiwana: From Crossroads to Philippi via London, Washington ...

1. Sam Nkonyeni

Sam Nkonyeni was a key figure in the Crossroads drama. His involvement is partly documented by Glover (1987) and referred to by Cole (1987). In conversation Glover talks fondly of him as a well-meaning if misled man who has survived largely because of personal abilities and prospered through an entrepreneurial flair. The details of his involvement included in this section are culled from Glover and Cole's work, newspaper articles and numerous conversations with Nkonyeni, Matiwana and other community leaders involved in the Crossroads conflict.

Nkonyeni has little formal education. He achieved Standard 6 at a Queenstown School and at the age of 16 embarked on a two-year motor-mechanics course in Pietermaritzburg which he was unable to complete for "family reasons". In the early 1950s he moved to Cape Town and soon after married for the first time. Responding to demands of a growing family, Nkonyeni moved homes between Nkonyeni and Gugulethu, sometimes renting formal houses and other times living in back-yard shacks. He had various jobs, most of which were casual and were involved with cars: mechanics, panel beating and respraying.

In 1975 he married for the second time and established an additional home at the newly-settled squatter site which became known as Old Crossroads. Nkonyeni spent his first years in Crossroads acquiring plots of land upon which he planned to construct workshops and a retail shop. As his businesses flourished he became friends with other senior male figures in the settlement including Johnson Ngxobongwana.

In 1985 Ngxobongwana became the leader of the UDF-affiliated Western Cape Civic Association, a position which, Nkonyeni informed me, gave him great status inside Crossroads. Shortly after Ngxobongwana's appointment, Nkonyeni was selected - a selection which Glover points out was not arrived at through accepted democratic means (1987:10) - to become a member of the settlement's Executive Committee. Nkonyeni's responsibility was to forge links with outside welfare and development agencies which were keen to provide the essential services to the area, services which the government would not provide.

During his period on the Executive Committee Nkonyeni's business interests continued to grow. By mid-1986 he had built a shop (with, he estimates R50,000 worth of stock at any one time), a motor repair yard and a small construction company which benefitted from new construction opportunities in New Crossroads. His income was sufficient to support both households which now included five children.

On 4 May 1986, however, Nkonyeni's self-described "good life" came to an end with his violent expulsion from Crossroads by

his former friends and colleagues. He estimates losing R14,000 worth of equipment in addition to his home and its contents. For fear of his life he claims he can no longer re-enter Crossroads. Langa's experience is an interesting example of the way in which struggles in the "new urban regime" turn around bids to control the political economy of informal settlements.

Nkonyeni's involvement in Crossroads arose, he says, out of a genuine will to "help the people" and as a result of other people's recognition of his entrepreneurial talents. He was not, Glover believes, a political leader of the same calibre of Ngxobongwana and nor was he a strongman like Ndimba (personal conversation). He is sensitive to accusations of corruption and intimidation which it is claimed occurred during his period on the Executive Committee.

Having previously established himself as a business-leader Nkonyeni rose to political prominence during the period of Ngxobongwana's imprisonment on incitement to murder charges in 1984-1985. He stood-in as Acting Chairman, taking over the joint role as chief negotiator between the settlement and government representatives, and as community-auditor.

During Ngxobongwana's internment Nkonyeni found himself in the middle of a dispute between the Executive Committee (which he temporarily headed) and the 'headman'/'homeguard' alliance. The latter's main grievance concerned the way monies were being collected and administered by the Executive. Nkonyeni had overseen the shift in responsibility for collecting money

move from the 'traditional' local headmen to the Executive. In response the headmen formed an alliance with the youth to remove the Executive who, they believed, were using WPCC, Urban Foundation and World Vision money to support their own "extravagant lifestyles".

On his release, Glover (1987) argues, Ngxobongwana discovered that his lifestyle was exposed to the wider community. Realising that his position was threatened by a new and potentially powerful alliance he acted swiftly to break that alliance. Ngxobongwana coaxed the headmen away from the CAYCO-affiliated youth by assuring them that his desire was the same as theirs; to topple the Executive Committee. At this point, Nkonyeni explained, his days in Crossroads were numbered.

Nkonyeni and Alfred Naphakade (who later partnered Nkonyeni in establishing Philippi Enterprises) along with the 'progressive' organisations became the target for physical attacks from Ngxobongwana and his increasingly ruthless headmen. In February 1986 Nkonyeni stood against Ngxobongwana in crucial elections to decide, what effectively became the position of Crossroad's unofficial mayor. Ngxobongwana was elected with 3,629 votes, Nkonyeni came second out of eight candidates receiving 522 votes.

During his campaign, Nkonyeni told me, he reminded the community of the selfless way in which he had served them. Some four years after the events he was able to recall his success in raising "R1 from each house until we eventually had R2587.80 with which we could build the Noxolo School for 1600

children ... the Urban Foundation and the WPCC also gave us money for twenty classrooms; but the government would not help" (interview, 25 August 1989). After the election Nkonyeni continued, still as a member of the Executive Committee, to oppose Ngxobongwana. He recalls watching the evolving partnership between the local security forces and Ngxobongwana and calculated that they presented a direct threat to his life.

In April 1986, Nkonyeni, who was at that stage Vice-Chairman of the Committee, and Naphakade voiced their concern about the alliance and split away from Ngxobongwana because, Nkonyeni says, they were not willing to condone the level of violence which threatened the squatter community. Nkonyeni's decision resulted in his violent expulsion from Crossroads (he claimed to have gunshot wounds in the head and leg) and the seizure of his business interests.

Nkonyeni's former status as an active supporter of the sort of leaders which were labelled reactionary and collaboratory by the UDF was rapidly overturned. He had, like Toise who also removed and cleansed himself from the decidedly impure Ngxobongwana-Hoza camp, become 'progressive' and 'popular'. This new found status proved crucial as Nkonyeni set out on his new venture: Philippi Enterprises.

2. Nomathemba Matiwana

Nomathemba Matiwana, unlike Nkonyeni during the Crossroads crises, was never officially associated with any committee or

organisation. Part of the reason for her independence lies in her often stated distrust of, and suspicion towards leaders and formal bodies which claim to represent the interests of the people. She summed-up the struggle for Crossroads in a characteristically pithy way:

"There were those who were genuinely committed to this particular struggle; then there were those who were committed to an ideological struggle; and finally there were those who were out to improve their lot on the back of the struggle" (interview, 15 November 1989).

Matiwana is a shrewd and passionate woman in her fifties. She was born in 1932 in Ndabeni, Cape Town's first African township. Her parents moved to Langa when formal housing was constructed where her mother and aunts began a small dressmaking business. During her schooling years Matiwana helped her mother with the dressmaking and acquired skills which later proved useful. In 1950 she married a 'Ciskeian' man who was working on contract in Cape Town. They remained in Langa until the mid-1970s during which time she gave birth to four sons and two daughters.

In 1976 however, the Matiwana family became victims of the Group Areas Act which was introduced by the newly-elected National Party in the year of Nomathemba's marriage. In terms of the Act, and by virtue of her marriage to a 'Ciskeian' they were no longer permitted to live in the City in which she was born and educated.

The removal of rights and fears of arrest because of pass offences led her to "work underground". In 1976 she was

finally arrested for an infringement of the pass laws and briefly detained. Shortly after her release the family decided it would be "safer to leave Langa and lose themselves in the recently settled Old Crossroads squatter camp (interview, 16 November 1989).

Once established in Old Crossroads Matiwana continued to work as a cleaner at a local Golf Club as well as making dresses from home and selling cooked sheep heads. During this period she continued to put pressure on the local Bantu Affairs Administration Department offices for permanent resident status. This status was finally granted in 1979 and in-line with the Koornhof Agreement (see Cole, 1987 for the terms of this Agreement) her family was offered a home in New Crossroads.

At first the family refused to move to the new site, as only certain people had been chosen a decision which they felt to be unfair. They remained in Old Crossroads until late 1981 when their shack was accidentally destroyed by fire and they had no option but to move. In New Crossroads Nomathemba Matiwana continued her dressmaking business whilst her husband secured a job at the docks refitting boats. The move to New Crossroads, however, did not remove Matiwana or her family from the struggles which dominated life in Old Crossroads and rapidly spread into surrounding satellite settlements and which finally erupted so violently in 1985 and 1986.

Matiwana's decision to become involved in the Crossroad's affair was rather thrust upon her. In Old Crossroads she had

the reputation as a person who could get things done. Residents, particularly recent arrivals in Cape Town, would seek her advice on a range of issues from form filling to family disputes. Her role as an unpaid community worker continued in New Crossroads. As the violence between rival groups in Old Crossroads and 'KTC' claimed victims, groups of people came knocking on Matiwana's door asking for her help.

In 1985 as the tension increased she recalls the pressures becoming nearly unbearable. Her home was used as a place of refuge for children whose parents had decided should no longer remain in Old Crossroads. Unable to provide the material help these refugees needed, Matiwana organised a series of delegations to local church leaders and welfare organisations in a bid to raise money and obtain donations of blankets and food parcels. Most of these missions, she recalled, were unsuccessful.

Throughout the crisis and beyond she remained distrustful both of external and internal agencies and organisations which involved themselves in mediations and negotiations to decide the fate of Crossroads. At no stage did she feel the right questions were being asked of the right people, or that any serious efforts were being made to alleviate hardship and suffering. She refused a position with the United Women's Congress (UWCO) but agreed to act as a "guide" for the Progressive Federal Party's (PFP) Unrest Monitoring Action Committee (UMAC). MP Jan van Eck attests to Matiwana's "invaluable contribution during this period" (personal communication).

Though non-aligned, her involvement and that of members of her family was regarded by certain leaders of the 'witdoeke' as sympathetic to the 'comrades'.

"Because I am a woman" she says 'they thought I was dangerous. They knew I looked after the children and could give birth to 'comrades'".

As the fighting intensified Matiwana and members of her family were physically intimidated. She came to the attention of the police who regularly visited her house in search of weapons and "ANC terrorists". In March 1986 her husband was attacked; he received a blow to the head which has had many physical and mental health repercussions.

At her own admission Nomathemba Matiwana was on the point of a breakdown when the 'KTC' clearances began. She had no option but to escape Cape Town. Her exile in Swaziland lasted six months. Early in 1987 she returned to Cape Town and first proceeded to rebuild her home and family. She then considered what should be done to address the the wider problems.

3. Recipient and Donor Come Together

By 1987 Crossroads had become a global media issue. Like the Soweto uprising of 1976 the events in Crossroads have come to mark a turning point in South Africa's history. Around the world despatches of unrest aroused anger at the appalling living conditions at Crossroads, the system which made such places necessary, and the apparent complicity of the

government in the carnage which occurred. The question on everyone's lips was, according to Leach,

"How is it that a country as rich as South Africa can allow such insanitary and degrading living conditions to continue ... For many Crossroads was the ultimate advertisement for apartheid, the darkest stain on the government's reputation. Its history showed how once again, the fate of ordinary human beings had taken second place to the dreams of the apartheid masters" (Leach (1989) quoted in McDowell, 1990:6).

There was wide-spread consensus both within the country and internationally that apartheid had to go.

In 1986 and 1987, Commonwealth countries - with the important exception of Britain which has consistently argued that sanctions will not bring about a desired change but instead would harm the interests of those most affected by apartheid itself - sought to strengthen arms embargoes, sports boycotts, economic measures, trades sanctions and cultural boycotts contained in earlier agreements (see the Gleneagles declaration, 1977, CHOGM Measures Nassau, 1985, and the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group Report, 1986).

Also in 1986 a particularly important set of sanctions, contained in the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, were passed by the US Senate. That placed bans on US bank loans to the South African government; banned new investments in South Africa; and also prohibited the importation of textiles, uranium, iron and coal from South Africa (First Report, UK Foreign Affairs Committee Report on South Africa 1991:33-36).

Similar measures, designed to increase pressure on the South African government, were adopted by the European Communities Foreign Ministries at a meeting held in Brussels in September 1986.

The international response to the country-wide violence and resistance in the mid-1980s and the imposition of the strictly-enforced State of Emergency, was accompanied by responses within the country. New organisations and alliances both local and national developed to force the pace of change.

As the nation-wide crackdown continued political parties, 'democratic' alliances, workers movements, human rights groups, business pressure groups, welfare, legal and voluntary organisations emerged with their own often competing agendas. Places of particular conflict, like Crossroads, became the arenas within which knowledge and ideas were, in various ways, connected to the problems of the people.

Organisation's attempts to bring pressure to bear, to direct social, political and economic change, and to genuinely address the needs of the victims of conflict takes place at many levels; my concern here is with efforts to do so at the local or community level.

The situation in Crossroads in 1987 brought together many of these responses at a particular time and place. There began a competition between groups for the urban poor. The question being asked was: "Something must be done; what should we do?"

As I discuss in Part 4 of this thesis, current development thinking advocates development projects that are appropriate responses to local conditions. A key to insuring appropriateness is to undertake rigorous participatory research of the sort recommended by the World Bank (see Salmen, 1987). Evidence of such pre-programme research being undertaken by funders of community development projects in the Crossroads area is not immediately available.

Community-based intervention requires significant contact with a range of people who arguably could be seen to represent the views of the majority of the community. In the course of my research it has become clear that donors and developers prefer to speak to 'community leaders' rather than to the community.

Nomathemba Matiwana and Sam Nkonyeni satisfied donor's requirements for acceptable community leaders through whom development money could be channelled. Both had a track record in community involvement. Both had been seen in opposition to the unrepresentative, autocratic leaders who were coming to dominate the "new urban regime" of informal settlements on the peripheries of major cities. In the absence of government assistance in upgrading informal settlements some welfare organisations had already been involved in providing help and both Matiwana and Nkonyeni had had contact with these organisations. Lastly, Matiwana and Nkonyeni had a vision for action which - with some creative interpretation - was perceived to be acceptable by the donors.

When Matiwana and Nkonyeni met at the Philippi Industrial Estate in June 1987 to look at available property they had both been offered financial support for their ventures from overseas governments, church groups, multinational companies and welfare organisations, many of which were embarking on significant community development programmes for the first time.

Part Three

Two Community Development Projects

Chapter Seven

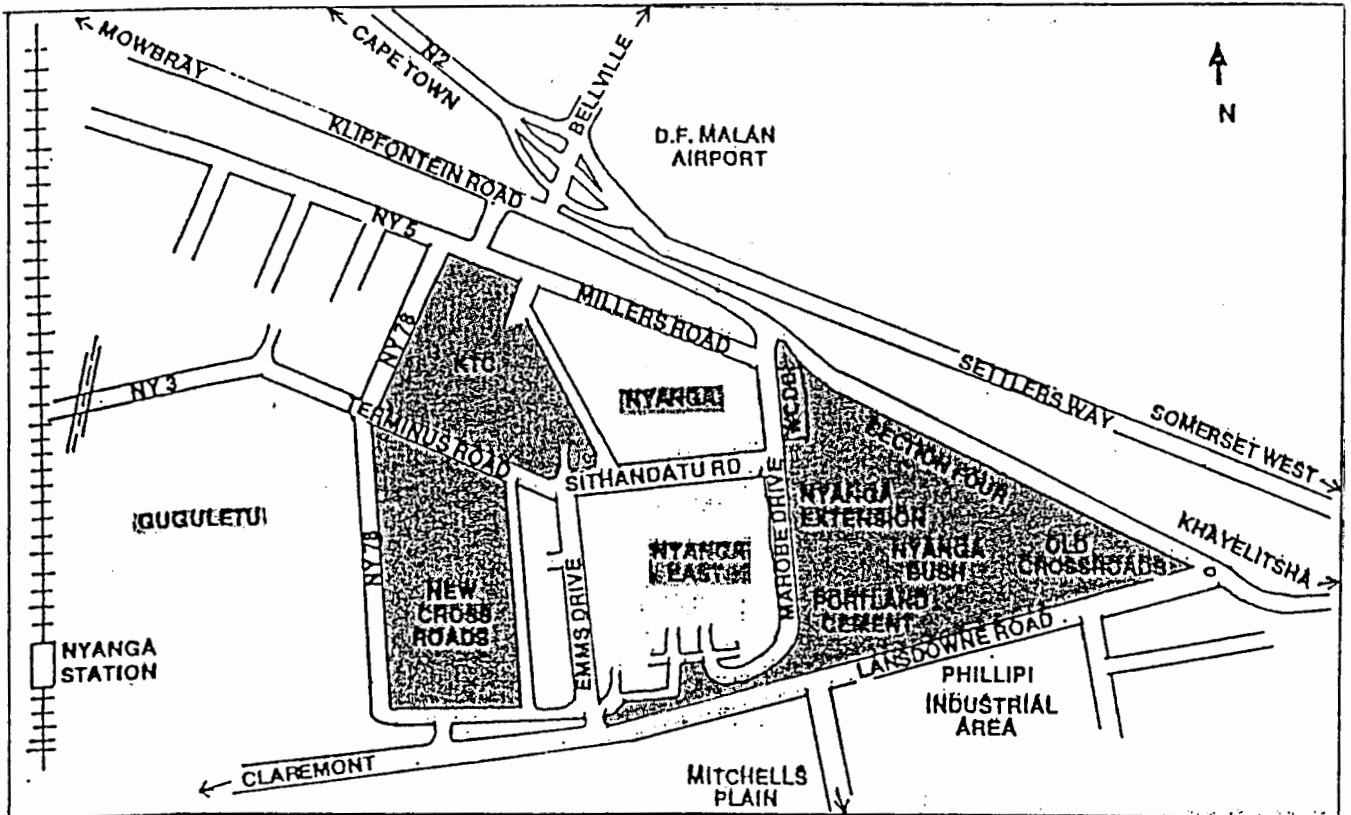
Funding and Performance: Philippi Enterprises

1. The Setting

During our conversations Nkonyeni and Matiwana often recalled their excitement on seeing, for the first time, the 'South African Quilt' warehouse and other available buildings on the Philippi Industrial Estate. The estate is situated about 15 kilometres from Cape Town and was built in the 1940s at which time it was surrounded by largely ex-patriate-German-owned farmlands and bush (conversation with Brian Frost, a local architect, December 1990). Since the 1970s informal housing has begun to spread closer and closer to the boundary of the estate.

The influx of job-seekers into the area, however, did not benefit the estate, partly as a result of earlier policy that "all industrial development should occur in and around Atlantis", it had been in decline as an industrial area for some time (Neville Riley, Deputy City Planner, quoted in Cape Times, 8 July 1989). Local major employers such as the National Portland Cement Works on the Landsdowne Road ceased operations in 1980 with the exhaustion of local limestone supplies and at present the owners have no plans to reactivate

the site (conversation with Craig Waterson a PPC manager, March 1991).



Map showing Phillippi Industrial Estate abutting
Crossroads informal settlement

The future of the estate is under discussion by the Regional Services Council (RSC) (under whose jurisdiction it falls) and the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA). Mr Moodley the Director of KNS Property Investments, which owns both buildings housing the projects, had been informed by the municipality that parts of the estate are likely to be rezoned as black development areas (conversation with Mr Moodley, August 1988). This would mean the setting aside of formerly industrial land for black residential and industrial use.

At present the estate is dominated by a scrap metal reprocessing yard which purchases material collected by township residents. Each day a stream of people, many of whom are women, can be seen carrying, dragging or pushing bundles of scrap into the yard where it is sorted, weighed and bought. At the time of writing this thesis the going rate was 8 cents per kilo of light steel (e.g. tin) and 12 cents per kilo of heavy steel (e.g. wire); employees at the yard estimate that the average carried load is between 12 and 18 kilos depending on the ease of transportation. Some collectors manage two loads a day, three is unusual.

The sorts of business activities undertaken on the estate are related to the changing demography and conditions in the surrounding areas. For example the scrap metal yard draws on the vast pool of unemployed labour to secure a constant flow of discarded steel. And KNS Property Investments acquired two large warehouses as storage and supply points for the Tile 'n' Brick Haulage Company to take advantage of the housing boom in the Khayelitsha/Mitchell's Plain area.

Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Development Centre were, the first African initiatives on the estate. They too can be seen, in part, as a reaction to local conditions and have been followed by other self-help type initiatives. At the time of writing (April 1991) there were four projects in addition to the Spiritual Churches Centre operating from adjacent buildings.

The buildings occupied by Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Centre members in 1987 had stood empty for a number of years and remain in need of renovation. The former 'South African Quilt Building' is an L-shaped one-storey structure (2500 sq.m.) with adjoining ground. It is supplied with water and electricity, a supply which in 1989 an RSC inspector declared to be "highly dangerous".

The building occupied by the Spiritual Churches Centre is about half the size of the 'Quilt Building' (occupying approximately 1100 sq.m.). Shortly after moving in its members decided to rewire the building completely and make some repairs to the roof which remains dangerous but would cost many tens of thousands of rands to replace. The Centre was broken into four times during my period of research, each time entry was made through loose roof beams.

Considering the building's poor state of repair, Nkonyeni and Matiwana, believed that rental charges were unrealistic but they had no choice since other affordable properties were not available. During my period of research rent on the 'Quilt Building' was increased from R2151 per month in August 1988 to R3500 in December 1989. By February 1990 Philippi Enterprises was in arrears by R12,000 and a legal notice was issued by the owners demanding that project members vacated the premises. They did so later that month.

The Spiritual Churches Centre was placed on a three-month renewable lease after which they were expected to sign three-year leases. The rent charges to project members were R1750

per month rising to R2400 per month. Workers were able to meet these payments and mid-way through 1990, Mr Moodley praised Matiwana for her business-like approach.

"I believe these people should be given a chance. There is an urgent need for employment in Old Crossroads and now at Brown's Farm.

These black businesses have got to be the way forward. But they must learn to pay their bills ... on time! I don't know what is happening with Philippi Enterprises but the Spiritual Churches women are a good example to others".

2. Philippi Enterprises: Founding Principles

In August 1987 a proposal letter sent to prospective funders in which Nkonyeni described the purpose of Philippi Enterprises as "making a practical contribution towards job creation as well as to play an active role in the process of community upliftment amongst our black population". In the letter he drew funders' attention to one particular problem, unemployment:

"The impact of the recent economic decline upon the poorer and more vulnerable communities in South Africa ought not to be underestimated.

The rise in unemployment in the Western Cape has had a drastic effect upon many families. Few attempts, if any, have been made by the private sector or development agencies to address the problem and to improve the situation.

Unemployment benefits are notoriously inadequate. The consequences for the family of a recently unemployed breadwinner are devastating. The rising incidence of prostitution and economic-related crime bear testimony to this".

In order to address the problem of community upliftment, the letter continues, a group of "artisans" came together to "provide skills to community organisations and the community

at large". The type of skills to be offered were: "mechanical and allied services (panel-beating and spray painting); engineering and welding; electrical maintenance; building and construction; brick and vibracrete manufacturing; and joinery and carpentry" (proposal letter 10 August 1988).

In conversation Nkonyeni was more forthcoming about the overt political aims of the project. During an interview in May 1989 he stated:

"By setting-up the cooperative we are fighting apartheid by creating jobs for poor blacks thus curbing poverty. In our operation of the project we are practicing democracy. We oppose capitalism. We identify ourselves with the masses who are fighting against racial oppression in South Africa. We are affiliated to the Unemployed Workers Movement".

Democracy, according to Nkonyeni, was to be organised along the principle of "equal rights" through which "people plan and decide and organise what directly affects them. We aim to create a worker-controlled environment where workers are managers in a framework of 'collective action' and 'flat management'".

3. Philippi Enterprises at Work

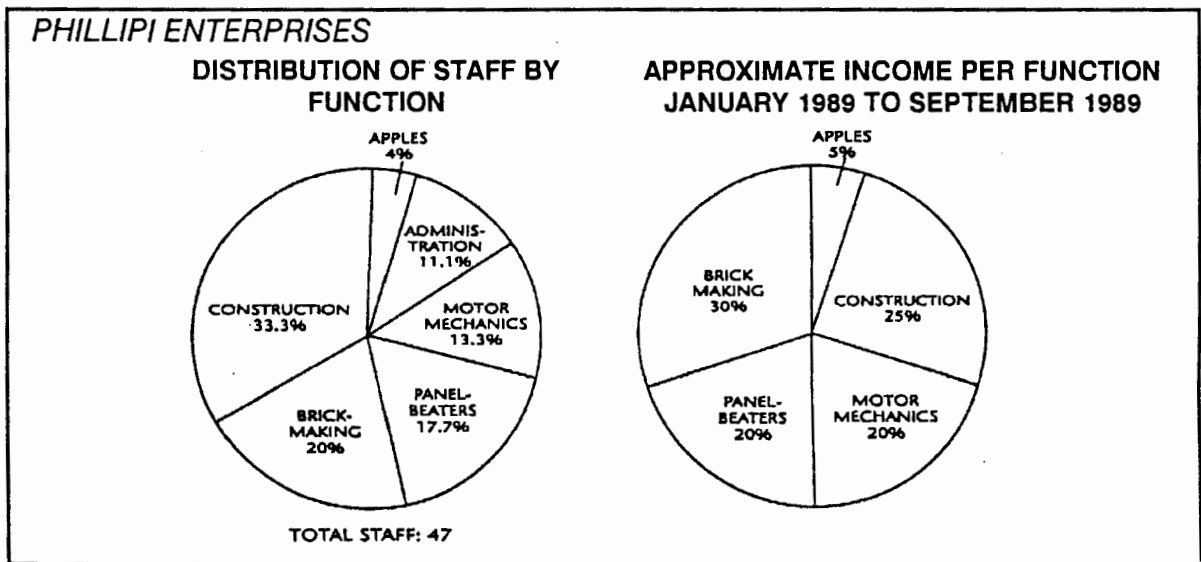
During my fieldwork I would often arrive at the project shortly after sunrise as the Nkonyeni's truck left for a farm near Klapmuts to collect apples. The apples were brought back to the project where they were off-loaded into large wooden crates some of which were stored in the offices. The remainder were bagged and taken to street-side traders throughout the townships to sell to their customers. During

the day other traders would visit the project to buy apples directly.

Nkonyeni explained that the farmer received payment for his produce on a monthly basis. The profit margin for Philippi Enterprises was 10% and the arrangement continued for six months but was eventually discontinued by the farmer because of the project's non-payment.

Once the truck had become available it was used to transport labourers, brick-layers and plasterers to various construction sites. They would return to the project early in the evening. Most of the work was done on a contract basis. Occasionally however, the project received one-off commissions to build private houses, mainly in the 'coloured' areas, and extensions to houses in the African areas.

Pie charts below show the average distribution of staff by section during the period of my research and the approximate income received by each section between January and September 1989.



Consistently the busiest activity involved the repair of taxis which were brought from as far afield as Calvinia and George. At any one time there would be between 20 and 35 taxis awaiting mechanical or body repairs. Throughout the period of my research about one third (15 - 20 men) were employed in this section.

The motor repair section of the project was housed in a space occupying one third of the building. The amount of equipment available to the workers was minimal. They had no hoists with which to take engines out of the vehicles and such tasks had to be performed manually. Fluids drained from the vehicles were simply poured down the storm drains or left in rusting oil cans. Tools, engine and body parts littered the floor. The noise was often deafening and no ear protection was available.

Vehicle respraying was performed outside - again with no protective equipment. Painting was done with the aid of a fairly crude compressor and a spray attachment. I spoke to some customers who complained about the quality of work arguing that the colours didn't match, that paint had been sprayed on windows and bumpers, and that because the vehicle was left to dry outside the paint had become pitted with dust.

The largest space in the building was given over to brickmaking. This task was performed by women and, during school holidays, young children. Work was manual and backbreaking. It involved the shovelling of coarse sand and cement into iron-framed brick moulds which pressed twenty

bricks at a time. Once loaded, the whole frame had to be pushed down several times to compress the mixture into the brick shape. Physically I could not operate the machine on my own; it took two women working together to do so.

Other women were responsible for resupplying the presses with sand and cement which was brought in by wheelbarrow from an outside store. In addition they would stack dried bricks in the sun for extra baking and load finished bricks onto a truck for delivery. Most of the bricks were bought by outside companies though some were used for the project's own building works.

Conditions in the brick-making section of the building were Dickensian. Sunlight would stream through skylights picking out the choking dust which filled the air of the hangar-like building. Though one end of the building was completely open there was precious little breeze to cool the workers down. Children grubby with cement would work all day loading sand into barrows and sweeping the floor clean to allow more bricks to be laid down.

During the period when there was little demand for bricks, under-employed women from the brick-making section would join others from the township to collect used bricks from demolished buildings which they would clean and sell at the side of the road (see photograph overleaf).



4. Donations and Salaries

For the period August 1988 - August 1989, Philippi Enterprises received financial support from the following sources:

'Get Ahead Foundation'	R 6,000
British Government	R 7,584
American Government	R13,800
Mobil Foundation	R20,000
Western Province Council of Churches	R 1,200
Unemployed Workers Movement	R15,000
British Petroleum	R 5,000
Small Businesses Development Corporation	R 5,000
Social Change Assistance Trust	R 1,400
Shell	R 5,000
TOTAL	R79,984

Two thirds of the above donations were given as "gifts" which, donors stipulate, were not required to be repaid. R8,000 of "gift" money was given as a direct response for help in payment of rent and other services. The remaining third was given in the form of a "loan" which should, donor's urge, be paid back at some later, unspecified date. In practice,

representatives of donor organisations have informed me, projects were not expected to repay such "loans" - rather the aim is "to instill a credit ethos" (interview with an American Embassy official, June 1990).

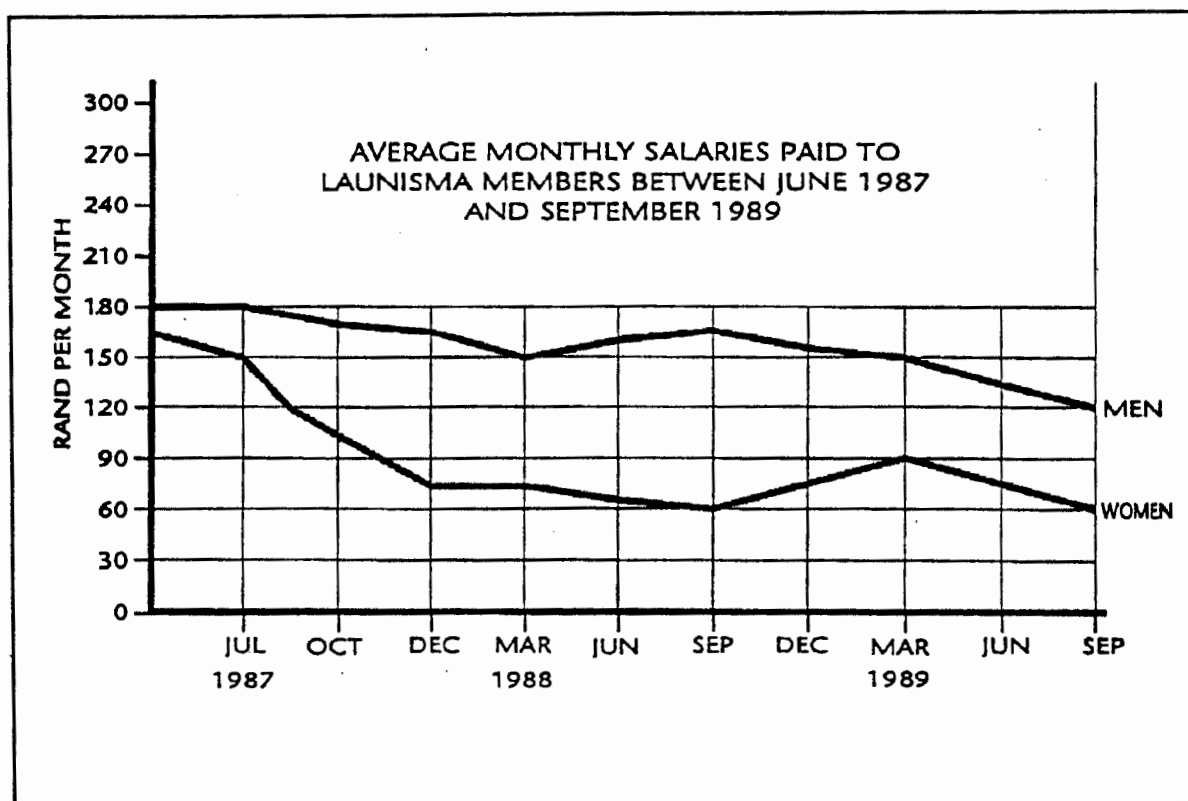
Between August 1987 and December 1989 there were significant fluctuations in the numbers of staff working at the project. In May 1989 Nkonyeni estimated employee numbers as follows:

1987 May, 20 employees; July/August, 80;
 December, 30
 1988 January to December, 30 - 100
 1989 May, 47

In August 1989, with the help of a research assistant, I conducted a questionnaire over a three day period and interviewed 42 employees. Thirty-four employees cooperated in completing questionnaires.

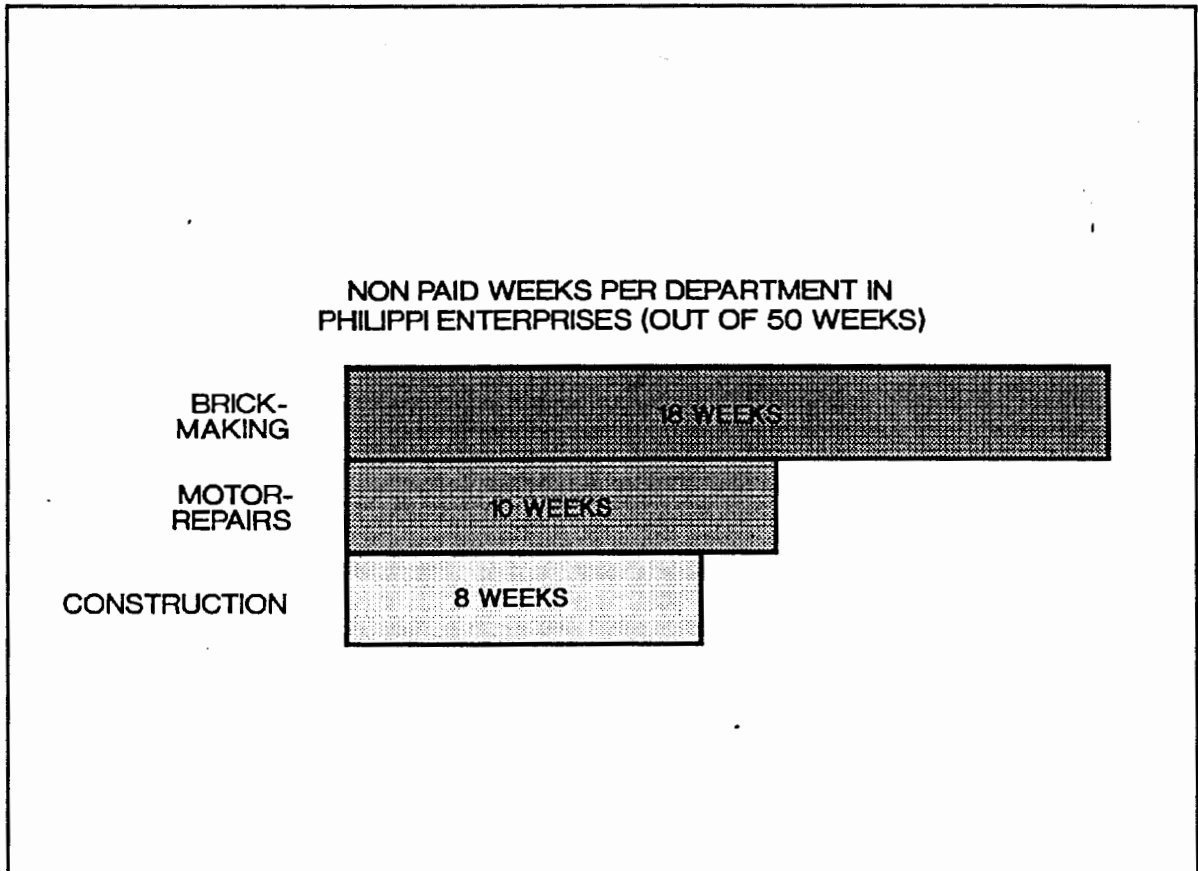
During the period of my research, employee numbers also fluctuated from day to day. Nkonyeni explained this by saying that demand for their produce was unpredictable, and with no income no wages could be paid and, understandably, people left to seek work elsewhere.

As the following graph indicates, wage-levels did not remain constant during the period of my research. As the graph shows male employees were consistently paid more than women employees.



The project operated different wage-levels within and between sections. Mechanics (average R65 per week August 1988 - August 1989) were consistently paid more than the panel beaters (average R45 per week). Bricklayers (average R55 per week) were paid more than labourers (average R40 per week). And everyone, including the administrative staff (average R30 per week) were paid more than the women who made the bricks (average R22 per week).

During particularly lean weeks certain departments would receive no wages at all. Between August 1988 and August 1989, the number of non-paid weeks per department was as follows:



Each section within the project was self-supporting. If a particular section was unable to sell its produce then its employees would not be paid. Because the demand for bricks is seasonal and unpredictable, the women making the bricks were the most vulnerable to such fluctuations.

5. Employees Profiles and Attitudes

Siphino Ntloko was born in Cape Town in 1957. During his stay in Crossroads (1976 - 1986) he was a friend and work colleague of Nkonyeni but was "forced to leave the area in 1986" because of his association with Nkonyeni and Naphakade and moved to Nyanga East. He was educated in Umtata and later in Pietermaritzburg where he qualified as a motor mechanic. At the time of the interview his household comprised his wife, two children and a brother. Including his salary as a "training mechanic" the household income totalled R840 per month.

Siphino described himself as a founding member of the project:

"I am one of the people who first came here. I can say it was through political motivation because our cause was to curb poverty among blacks and to create jobs". His position as a semi-skilled trainer automatically entitled him to sit on the motor section's Representative Committee which met with the Executive Committee. "The cooperative is" he argued "the only place where one can share skills with other fellow blacks. Where one can prove that one is a human being who decides and plans in a worker-managed situation. It is the dualistic system which excites me most. When I entered the project I took an oath that even when there is no money I will sacrifice my time and money".

Siphino acknowledged however, that there were serious problems in the project: "As far as I can see the practicalities of democratic management are not easy to materialise. The coordinators do sometimes assume leadership and sort of imitate bosses. People's complaints and suggestions have often been ignored. There is now much conflict in the co-op. People are not satisfied and conflicts are never resolved. Many members have left, others intend to leave soon. Many do not attend meetings; those who do, do not want to voice their complaints. They are easily persuaded".

He concluded:

"I want to find work somewhere else. If it is a co-op it must have lots of people who are semi-skilled like myself. There are very limited chances of seeing this project fully developed. In a co-op people must feel involved. We are never shown the project's records or receipts for things bought. We used to be told about money coming in, but not now".

I first interviewed Siphino in May 1989. In August he described how the conflict within the project was worsening. He described the different sections breaking away: "We are no longer under the umbrella of Philippi Enterprises," he said.

"We mechanics find our own business and use our own tools. It is not true that we have stolen the co-ops equipment and are using it for our own profit. Now Nkonyeni controls the builders and the bricks. Soon we will have to move away from this building". By December Siphino's prophesy had come true and Philippi Enterprises effectively ceased operating.

Mrs Ellen Qumba arrived in Cape Town in 1963 at the age of 30. She was accompanied by her husband and two children. Two further children remained in Ngqamakhwe. In 1969 Ellen's husband died of tuberculosis (TB) "probably because of the kind of job he was doing in the factory, it was very cold and heavy". At the time of the interview (May 1989) Ellen was living in a shack in Old Crossroads where she was supporting herself and one school-aged child on the money she received from her work at Philippi Enterprises, "about R30 a week, sometimes more, sometimes less".

She joined the project at the beginning of 1989 in the hope "that I could earn a salary and could gain skills to start my own business. I have done char work and was only paid R20. I would like another job because brick-making is hard and I don't always earn a wage. Brick-making is seasonal; people do not seem to build in the winter but in the summer there's a lot".

"I like it here because I have some say in what happens. As a woman I have never felt dominated by the men here because we do tell them whatever does not satisfy us and we are allowed to voice out our complaints".

I interviewed Ellen again in August 1989 shortly before she left the project to take up domestic work with her former "madam" in Green Point. I reminded her of her comments about the project:

"Things are different today. We no longer work together. No one comes to the meetings, people are stealing our things, we cannot afford to buy sand and there is no money to pay wages. Pa Nkonyeni says no more money is coming in from overseas".

When I interviewed **Wali Fatyela** in May 1989 he had only been in Cape Town since January and admitted to it being "very different". Wali was 21 years old with a Standard 1 education. "I left Lady Frere to join my brother who has built a home in Old Crossroads. He found me this job. I was looking for a job that paid R100 a week but I was glad to get work here where I am training as a mechanic".

"I haven't been paid much yet but they say I will earn R50 a week whilst I am still learning. I like not working for a white man who makes us always feel terrified. Here there is no boss, it is like being self-employed. We have to work hand-in-hand to develop the project. I have signed the oath which says that if anything goes wrong I will stay and work".

Three months later Wali appeared to have grown in confidence and spoke more freely about the project:

"As far as I am concerned the project is not practically operating according to its defined rules. To my judgement the fact that this co-op does not have a boss is a myth. Our coordinators are our bosses and Mr Nkonyeni is always the Chairman. I have come up with complaints several times, suggestions and advices in our meetings but no one, especially the coordinators takes notice of what is said. They normally say they are not going to be told what to do by a young boy. Everything I come up with in the meetings is undermined because I am young".

"No one listens because the qualified, semi-skilled people run the department committees and they talk to the coordinators, the managers. Mr Nkonyeni always comes up with a proposal and a decision, he influences people who then object to his opponent. There are rumours that money is coming in from agencies but we don't see the people who give this money, it is done over the 'phone. I once asked why we don't see the receipts I was told I was a nuisance and asked unnecessary things".

Cautious that no one was listening to our conversation his final comments were as follows:

"The bosses are enjoying themselves at our expense. They use the telephone for private calls, then they come to us for R400 and at the same time tell us we are not going to be paid. We are exploited. It's a myth there are no bosses here. There are bosses and they are dictators. They do nothing but sit in their office and dictate. When the co-op started we were all supposed to be involved but not now".

The comments, observations and disappointments voiced by Siphino, Ellen and Wali were repeated to me many times by other members of staff. As these interviews show, the level of distrust felt by ordinary workers towards the semi-skilled and skilled men who sat on the various management committees grew in intensity throughout 1989. In December 1989, Nkonyeni claimed that Philippi Enterprises collapsed because of its inability to meet "inflated rent demands". Others, like Wali Fatyela, believed that the rent issue was not the deciding factor. It was known, he argued, that unskilled members of certain groups (mechanics, panel beaters and construction labourers) were planning to break away from Nkonyeni and his Executive Committee soon after Christmas. And once that had happened the project was bound to collapse.

The central issue which precipitated the fragmentation of the project concerned the nature of the relationship between the

management, which comprised Nkonyeni (and for the first two months Naphakade) and a group of skilled and semi-skilled "trainers", and the ordinary workers. Each new member of the project was given a copy of the proposal letter which claimed that Philippi's Enterprises major aim was to provide a training centre to launch unemployed people into the job market or to begin their own business. After reading the letter employees were expected to pledge an oath which would bind them to the project even when no money was available to pay wages.

Fatyela believes that this was the key to their exploitation. Ordinary members of the project did not at any stage, he argues, receive formal training. They were merely assistants, often unpaid employees of the management committee.

Other issues which led to dissent within the group centred on the amount of money received from outside agencies and the use to which this money was put. The questionnaire I administered in the project asked specific questions about employees' knowledge of the funding process. Only three of the forty-two respondents (Nkonyeni and Khala, who sat on the Executive Committee and Wantyi, a secretary) had any knowledge at all of the organisations which had funded the project and the amounts they had donated.

Whilst there was no clear evidence of corruption there were rumours to the effect that a number of large donations "never got beyond the office" (interview with Fatyela, December 1989). Respondants spoke of "deals" being arranged over the

telephone between Nkonyeni and outside agencies. Few of the respondents recall ever talking with donor representatives.

Chapter Eight

Spiritual Churches Development Centre

1. Ministers and Money

On her return to Cape Town, Nomathemba Matiwana recalls being shocked by the conditions she found. Her own home and personal belongings had been destroyed by "squatters" who occupied her house. But she described the destruction going far deeper into the very fabric of township life:

"People were just walking around - like izitunzela. They didn't know what to do. The leaders had gone into hiding or were in prison. The 'Fathers' still controlled Crossroads. People whose houses had been burned looked for land to build shacks. Toise took some to Brown's Farm but there were so many. I was afraid for our children. They suffered most from the violence. They weren't going to school, they were drinking and fighting. People asked me to help" (interview March 1989).

Matiwana began by contacting representatives of organisations with whom she'd worked during the conflict. PFP Members of Parliament and party workers wrote letters to would-be funders on her behalf. By August 1987 Matiwana together with Nkonyeni had formulated plans for the establishment of self-help projects. Nkonyeni went ahead and signed a lease on the 'Quilt Building' whilst Matiwana attempted to negotiate a lower rent with the owners of a vacant warehouse close to that which would house Philippi Enterprises.

In September 1987 Matiwana presented her ideas to a group of Spiritual Church ministers based in New Crossroads.

"I needed their help" she later told me "to give the centre some direction. I am a church person. I left the Congregationalists in 1986 and joined the Independent Church because they are closer to the people, they are part of our community. The ministers could go back to the township and call the people to come here.

But I also need the name of the church. The police still do not trust me. I sell 'South' newspaper and they think I am a comrade. I wanted to call this place the **Spiritual Churches** Development Centre so the police would think it a holy place and leave me alone" (interview March 1989).

Matiwana wrote to Archbishop Ngada of the Spiritual Churches Research and Theological Institute (SCRTI) in Johannesburg who agreed to recognise the project as a Spiritual Church Centre . According to Professor G.C.Oosthuizen, Ngada claims to have a following of five million people and is regarded by some as instrumental in the development of the South African Independent/Indigenous Church movement (personal correspondence 3 July 1989). SCRTI would, Ngada assured Matiwana, assist the development centre in any way it could.

By September 1987 Matiwana had made contact with prospective funders and secured the involvement of the church and the PFP. With the lease on the building signed she now sought people to join her venture. Her husband, who was laid off from the docks, with an injury received during the Crossroads fighting agreed to become involved in the project. Her two sons also joined, one skilled in sewing and dressmaking the other trained as a carpenter. In addition two women who had earlier worked with Matiwana in her New Crossroads home moved to Philippi.

By the end of 1987 a core of people comprising four members of the Matiwana family, two former work colleagues, and ten

churchmen were based at Philippi. Soon after Christmas people began arriving at the project from Old Crossroads, Khayelitsha and Gugulethu. Most, Matiwana recalled, were unskilled; all were unemployed. The majority were women and many had babies and young children. As more people arrived it became clear that the centre had to offer practical training and teaching and creche facilities with some urgency.

The centre began with three sewing machines and a few carpentry tools. During the first few months the centre received no income. At this stage of its development it was, according to PFP-worker Val Rose Christie, "unsophisticated and informal" but was moving, she believed, towards more "formal organisation" (correspondence between PFP and Anglo-American 22 August 1988).

At the end of December nine of the ten churchmen left the project complaining about the lack of money.

"I was glad they left," Nomjole, a woman from the sewing group informed me, "all day they sat on their hands waiting for the money to arrive. When people came to visit the centre they would say to the visitor 'When there are men around you come and talk to us, not the women.'" (interview July 1989)

Progress in the project was slow. Restricted by a lack of material and poor equipment the members of the project simply produced what they wished without any coherent planning. Scraps of material donated by a Salt River factory were made into dresses and cushion covers. Wood offcuts were nailed together to produce benches and tables for the project's use. During the first three months the project received no income

from sales or donations. Five months after the project had begun it had still not produced a funding proposal letter and approaches to donors were made through intermediaries like the PFP. However, an interest was building and in December

Matiwana recalled her surprise at seeing "a group of white women who just walked into the project carrying bundles of material. We all cried when we saw them. They said they had heard about us from Operation Hunger and wanted to help" (interview August 1989).

Mid-way through 1989 a letter written largely by a representative from the Unemployed Workers Movement, on behalf of the project, was produced and despatched to funders. For the first time the project was defined as a cooperative. Donor interest increased and between November 1987 and mid-1990 the Spiritual Churches Development Centre received financial support from the following sources:

British Consulate	R28,000
Quakers	R 2,500
Anglo-American	R 1,000
American Government	R 8,200
British Government	R16,800
London-based Churches	R 600
Social Change	
Assistance Trust	R 2,340
Mobil Oil Company	R14,400
Unemployed Workers Movement	R 1,049
Unemployed Workers Movement	R 1,750
Mobil Oil Company	R40,000
British Government	R25,000
TOTAL	R143,639

Donations from the Western Province Council of Churches and the American Embassy for R20,000 and \$2,000 respectively were agreed but never received.

As a recent 'South' article shows (see Appendix A) members of the project have attempted to play down the extent of funding

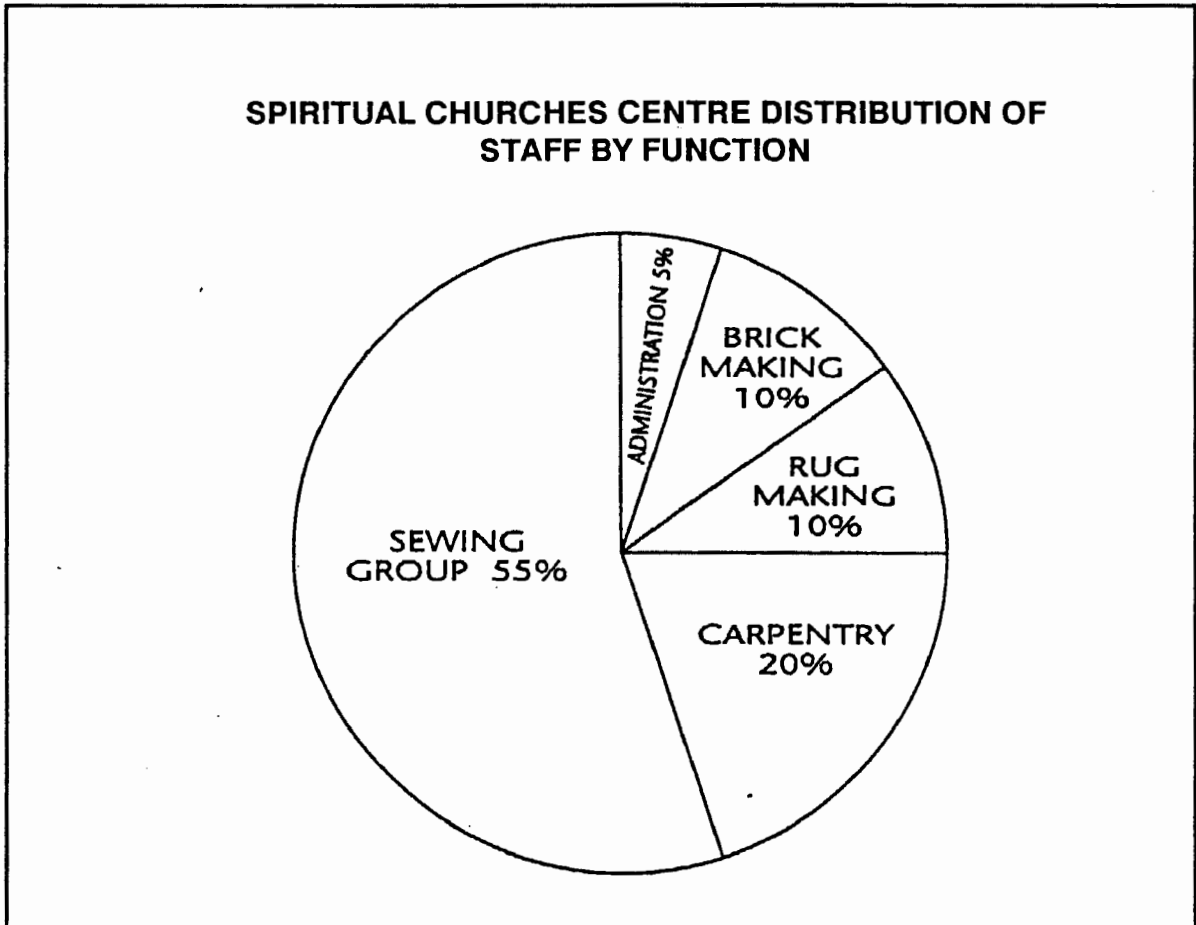
received. This can be seen as a conscious effort on their part to promote the project as genuinely self-help and self-sustaining.

About half of the above money was given as a direct response to requests to assist in the payment of outstanding rent and other services. The remainder was given for the purchase of specific items. The Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT), for example, was insistent that receipts for purchases made with their donation must be submitted before any future help could be considered (interview with I Korber, SCAT, August 1988).

2. Spiritual Churches at Work, Salaries and Expenditure

Aid money enabled the project to purchase six heavy-duty sewing machines, two wood lathes and additional carpentry tools. Material and wood off-cuts were either collected from factories in town or delivered to the project free of charge. PG Wood gave continued support to the project's carpentry section and women from Jews for Justice supplied material, cotton, braiding and needles. Other supplies were bought from wholesalers in town. As part of my involvement in the work of the project I regularly took the women to town to buy their material. Some wholesalers gave generous discounts when they discovered the sort of work the women were engaged in.

During my fieldwork the distribution of staff by the project's five sections is as follows:



The largest portion of the project's earned income came from the sewing group which produced patchwork quilts (R25-45 for a single-size and R75-100 for a double-size), rag-rugs (R25-R100), knotted shoulder bags, cushions, and occasionally clothes. Since the project became productive early in 1988 and until the time of writing this thesis the sewing group had given employment to between twelve and twenty women and one man.

Women talked favourably about working in the sewing group for two main reasons. Firstly they said it enabled them to do the sort of work they enjoyed and gave them the freedom to be creative. And secondly it gave the women a chance to be together in one room where they could talk and sing.

Since it became productive the carpentry section employed between five and twelve men. It produced mainly furniture (tables, chairs, cupboards, benches and chests) for the township market, also receiving occasional orders from local charity groups and organisations such as the Red Cross and the South African Christian Leadership Association. It also produced toys such as rocking horses, and dog kennels. Carpenters told me that often they struggled to sell their produce:

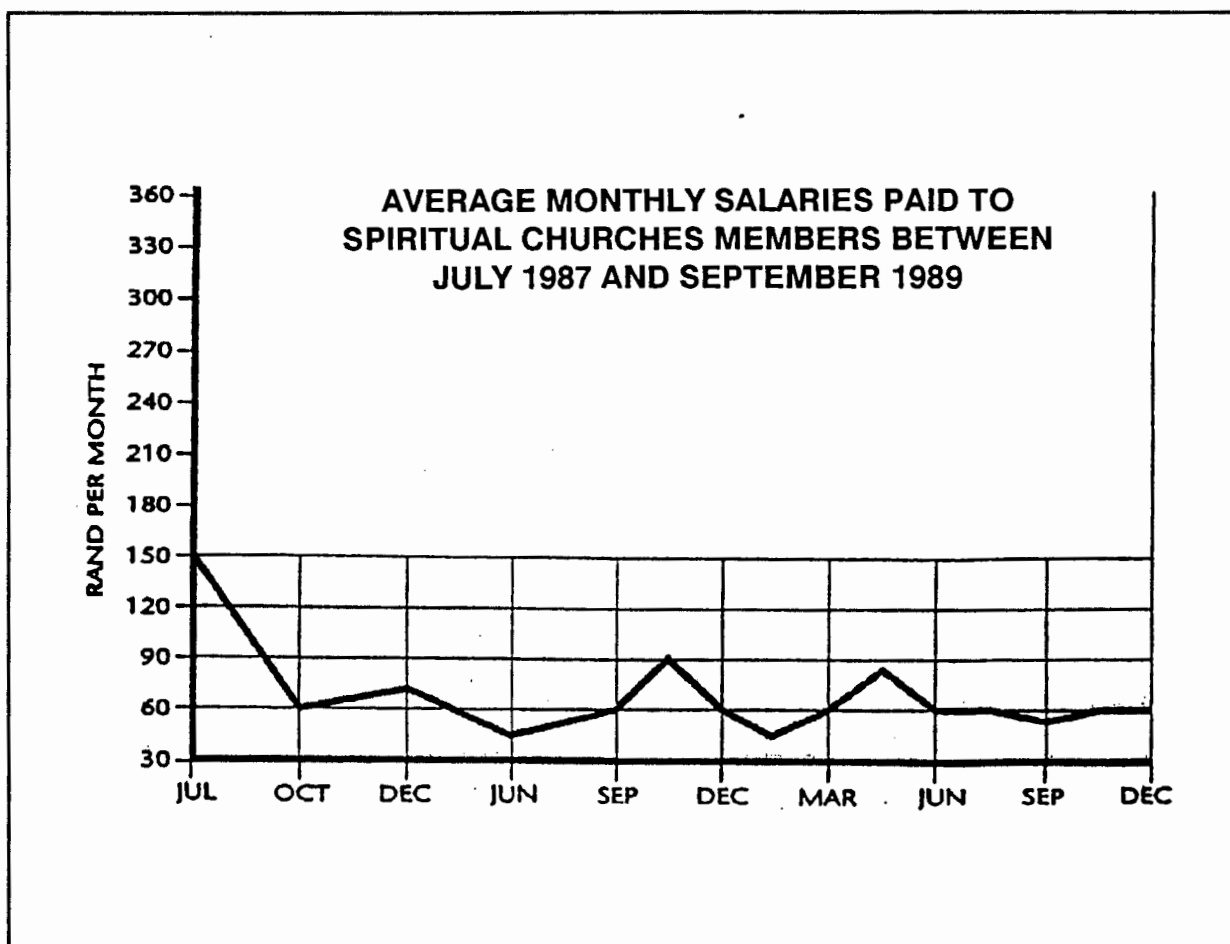
"Our greatest problem," Sidwell told me "is that we don't have the skills to make really good things. These things we make can not be sold in the city, they are not good enough. But they are too expensive for the township people. And we use too much wood to make things. We need someone to train us" (interview, August 1989).

During the summer months the project employed two further people to make cement bricks on a small piece of land adjacent to the building. This, Matiwana informed me, was very profitable when there was a demand. For a short period of time in 1990 a representative from the Unemployed Workers Movement encouraged the project to buy fibreglass moulding equipment to make baths. The equipment was bought, but as I later explain, was never used. Earlier plans for a school failed to materialise when the teacher left after only three weeks

explaining that he could not afford to work without being paid.

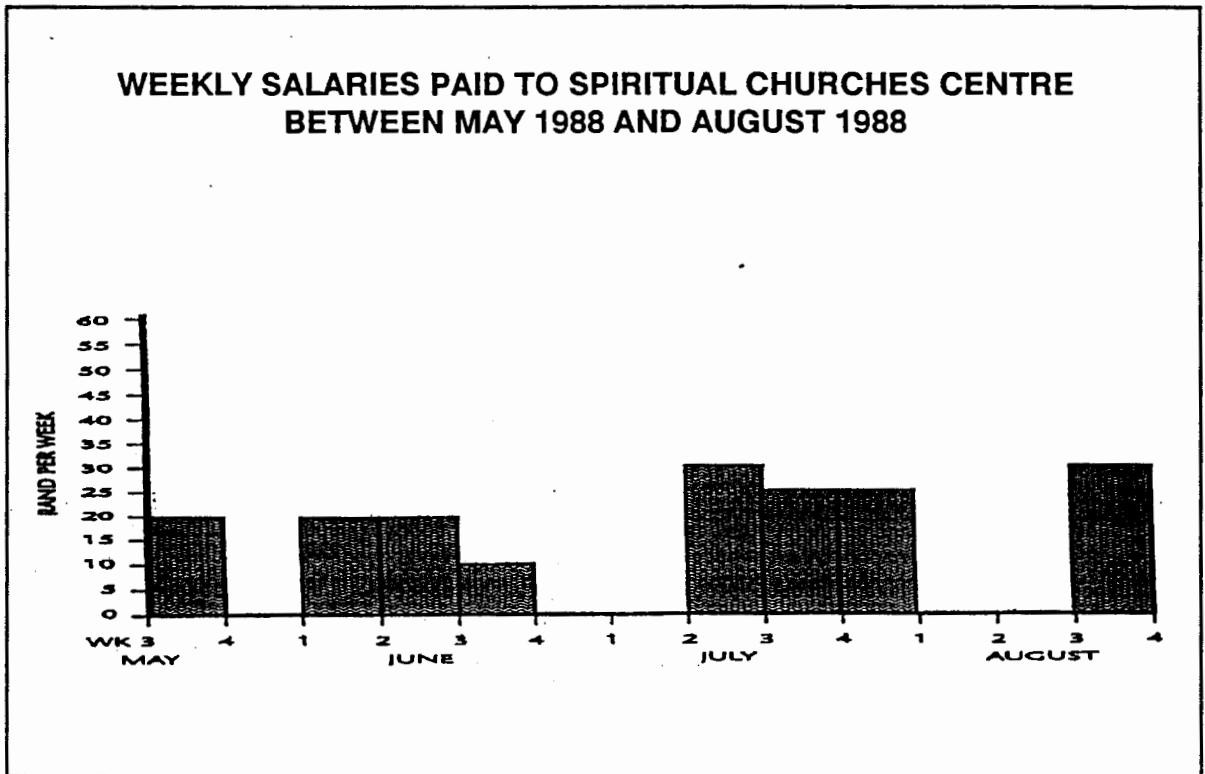
In the area between the carpentry section and the sewing room the project members constructed a small kitchen with creche facilities. There were normally four or five very young children, who, each day, were brought to the project by their mothers. Each member contributed an amount of money to purchase bread, soup, tea and milk which provided one meal a day and two tea breaks for all the members of staff.

Unlike Philippi Enterprises, wage-levels were the same for all members of the Spiritual Church Centre. The following graph shows the fluctuations in average monthly wages over a two-year period from July 1987 to September 1989.



The average monthly salary for this period was R65. The sudden increase in wages in September 1988 is due to a financial injection into the project from a funder. Once that additional income had been exhausted wage-levels again dropped until a further donation was made.

As the graph belows shows during particularly lean periods when the project received little or no income wages were not paid for three or even four weeks:



Wilfred Wentzel, a fieldworker with SALDRU, spent five weeks with the project in 1989 during which time he organised seminars for project members on the principles of cooperativism, marketing and pricing. He concluded that unless the project underwent significant changes it would not survive without the continuing support of donors (interview with Wentzel, April 1990).

Having spent extended periods with members of the project and having been given full access to their accounts it does not appear that funds were misappropriated. Members of the project showed a keen awareness of the problems they faced. During regular weekly meetings, many of which I attended, they discussed the pitfalls that lay in the way of small-scale projects attempting to compete as self-help-oriented economic units alongside profit-driven businesses.

The Spiritual Churches Centre, like other community-based projects, was set up under very different conditions with different objectives from those of conventional business enterprises. It was established during a period of crisis, it is situated in an area of economic marginality and has limited access to capital and markets required to sustain a business. It is competing for a share of what is becoming a highly competitive township market. Its members had no, or very little, experience of, or exposure, to the organisation of an enterprise.

Furthermore, members of the project were largely drawn from the unemployed who had low levels of skill and no access to

capital. Semi-skilled workers, like Nomathemba Matiwana, were constantly required to train new members before they could become productive. In its performance the Spritual Churches project fitted the ideal-type of cooperative outlined in a recent SALDRU Policy Paper (No 5, 1989): it was (1) involved in labour intensive activitives; (2) made use of inferior quality machinery; (3) seldom made a profit; and (4) survived through total reliance on external funding (1989:5).

Spiritual Churches Development Centre: Beyond Dependency

"Many people have come to this project since we started. Some like you come from the University to write about us. Many people come from overseas. Some people make us promises about money and help which never comes. Many times we have had to tell people to go away because they do not want to help us, they want to take us over" (interview, December 1989).

and skills), actions by donors and corruption in the whole process of aid giving, and an inability to compete in a "hostile capitalist market". Explanations for failure therefore were projected outwards away from groups themselves.

Funders on the other hand tended to concentrate on the internal workings of the projects. The example of leaders like Nkonyeni who, it is widely believed, misused funds, is often spoken about within donor circles as a typical reason for failure. Other explanations centre on the sheer inefficiency and lack of planning that characterise such small-scale township-based ventures.

Management, as this Workteam cartoon implies is a difficult issue for self-help, cooperative-type groups and one which causes much dissent.



There is, as Matiwana and Walters (1986) have noted, an almost zealous, ideological commitment within community-based groups to forms of organisation which are seen as anti-capitalist and 'progressive'. One manifestation of this is the denial of leaders or managers. Matiwana and Walters place this tendency against the backdrop of 'progressive organisations' call for participatory democracy.

The call for democracy, they argue, has shaped the internal practices of organisations in a concrete way (1986:65). Within the Spiritual Churches project there was a clear commitment to these principles. During my interviews with members of the project there was a continuous and conscious effort on the part of the interviewees to play down outsiders' inference that Matiwana was the project's leader or manager. Matiwana would make considerable efforts to ensure that as a researcher, I did not single her out for special attention. On a number of occasions I made arrangements to meet her alone, often at the weekend, only to find that she had asked six or more people to accompany her.

It is my impression however, that the effect of this adherence to 'democratic principles' had the unintended consequence of investing all leadership responsibility in the hands of the coordinator. Ordinary members showed, as Matiwana repeated to me on many occasions, no inclination to take over responsibilities. By denying the existence of management positions, project members ignored the necessity of management structures in ensuring efficient administration.

The resulting inefficiency and vulnerability was exposed on many occasions during the period of my research. It took one major set of events which almost resulted in the project's disintegration to effectively jolt the members out of their complacency.

2. Unemployed Workers Movement (UWM) and the Spiritual Churches Centre

Community-based groups like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises are caught in a web of interest which sees organisations competing for influence over them. Since 1976 this competition has, according to Ruiters, intensified with the state-led systematic crackdown on progressive organisations. In a bid to extend their political activity, left-wing groups have, he argues, focussed on cooperativism and self-help as areas of organisation in which long-term and more substantial involvement could maintain their members' interest. Trade Unions too, Ruiters argues, are addressing the issue of cooperatives as part of their mobilisation strategy as they grapple with the problem of organising the unemployed (Ruiters 1989:4).

During December 1988, and January and February 1989 the Spiritual Churches Centre became the focus of attention of one such organisation, the Unemployed Workers Movement - a COSATU project which "aims to bring the unemployed together in one union" - which was seeking to become politically recognised through its involvement in community groups as a service

organisation. Its self-appointed role was to pass on skills to the township's unemployed.

At this time Matiwana was absent from the project on a Roman Catholic Church/Dutch sponsored visit to the Simukai rural cooperative near Harare, Zimbabwe. In her absence a series of events occurred which, according to Mzayiya, "almost destroyed the project".

In mid-December 1988 'Faisal' (a pseudonym) introduced himself to the project members as a "trained employee of the Unemployed Workers Movement" who had been sent by the Government's Department of Manpower to train the unemployed and unskilled. Mzayiya explains the feelings of the women in the sewing group:

"He said he had come to train the unemployed. But we told him we were not unemployed. If he went outside into the township he would see lots of people who were without work. We were not sure about the Government getting involved in our work. We said who is paying you? He said the Unemployed Workers Movement but later we knew he was being paid R2000 a month by Manpower.

"Faisal stayed and spoke to us about what we should be doing. He said the women should not do women's work like sewing. They should do carpentry and work with fibreglass. He promised to send trained people in to look after our accounts with computers. We didn't tell him not to come. We should have done." (interview, August 1989)

Mzayiya telephoned me and asked if I would come to the project the following day when Faisal was due to return.

Faisal arrived at the Spiritual Churches project early the following day accompanied by two white UWM employees whom he

introduced as accountants. Faisal called a meeting and told the group which numbered only twelve people, since many had already "left for the Transkei", that he was there to help them and he held up a cheque for R1,049 "to pay wages and rent". He explained that cooperatives like the Spiritual Churches could not expect to get something for nothing and would have to pay him R800 for the months of January and February.

"We were not sure what to do" Mzayiya recalled later. "Without Ma Matiwana we could not make a decision. So we let him stay" (interview, August 1989)

Over the next few days the accountants sifted boxes of receipts and organised the details with the help of a lap-top computer. Faisal remained in the office, often talking on the telephone, as the women remained in the sewing room and the two carpenters worked outside. I discussed with him his plans for the project.

"This place has great potential but they have to be organised" he said. "Nearly all of these women's groups in the townships are making quilts and rugs. There are too many of them. It is because they don't have any other skills. But there are so many things which people want in the township. Baths, for example. In Khayelitsha people want cheap, small and light baths. All these people need to do is to learn how to use fibreglass" (interview, January 1989).

In January Faisal attempted to instigate three changes in the running of the project which met with immediate resistance. First he instructed the women to leave the sewing room and to join the men in the main part of the building where they would be taught to laminate. He had bought over R3000 worth of fibreglass moulding equipment towards the cost of which the

UWM contributed a little over R1000. The remaining costs were met from the project's saving account.

The women refused to leave the sewing room. At the time Mzayiya spoke for the women by saying that they had orders to complete and could not disappoint loyal customers. Privately, Agreenet told me, the women would not give up their sewing because it was work that they were good at and enjoyed. A stalemate was reached during which time Faisal became agitated and demanded of me, "Why aren't these people willing to be trained. We go to all this trouble but these people will not look to the future".

Faisal made two further demands. He insisted that the project should no longer allow outside visitors other than those from the UWM. And further that the project would no longer accept money from outside agencies. Mzayiya again represented the group by saying that such a decision would have to be taken by all members of the project. Privately she told me that the women in the group were upset by his demands. They enjoyed seeing visitors. Whilst many made unfulfilled promises some did help the group and they would always be welcome.

Throughout January and into the beginning of February the women continued to refuse to cooperate with Faisal. As workers began returning to the project after their holiday Faisal admitted to me that he was feeling increasingly unwelcome. On February 12, I visited the project and the women confronted Faisal and insisted that he left. Mzayiya told him,

"You didn't come here to help the people. You only came to tell us what to do, who to see and what to make. You are living off us. But we thank you because you have shown us not to trust the UWM".

Faisal left and later told a SALDRU worker "I was sick and tired of those lazy kaffirs. The women always tried to undermine me and the carpenters never worked" (interview with SALDRU researcher, August 1989).

A few days after Faisal was forced to leave the members of the project received a "Letter of Suspension" from the UWM. The text of the letter is as follows:

"17/02/89

"Spiritual Churches Co-operative
Phillippi Industria
Phillippi

Dear Comrades

LETTER OF SUSPENSION

It is with great shock that the UWM discovered a contract that was signed between yourselves and the government of the United States.

Comrades, progressives cannot take money from this government. The history of the U.S.A. government is written in the blood of workers the world over

The U.S.A. government invaded vietnam and killed hundreds of thousands of vietnamese in an attempt to save capitalism. It is the U.S.A. government that is donating arms and billions of dollars to Unita to fight against the people of Nicaragua and to the Afghan rebels to fight against the people of Afghanistan. Comrades, I am only mentioning a very, very small part of the bloodthirsty, barbaric, anti-worker activities of the U.S.A. government. This is the main reason why we do not accept their money, or why we cannot accept a co-operative that does.

Secondly comrades, the Americans never donate anything for nothing. We note the contract that whatever their money buys, belongs to them. It is aslo clear comrades, that if they disagree with your direction, they have the right to take back their equipment. Comrades, without equipment, there can

be no Buthisizwe. This means that effectively the government of the U.S.A. controls Buthisizwe.

Furthermore comrades, the Executive was shocked that, you kept this information away from the U.W.M. We do not know what else you are keeping away from the U.W.M. This means that we cannot trust the project anymore.

Finally, comrades, you agreed to sell equipment to the U.W.M. which does not belong to you. This is dishonestly of the highest order.

In conclusion, comrades, we set out above the reasons why we, the Executive Committee of the U.W.M. decided to suspend you from the U.W.M. until the P.C. meeting on 23 and 24 February 1989. We are in fact asking you to choose between the U.W.M. and the government which has more blood of workers on its hands than even Hitler had. With immediate effect we withdraw all U.W.M. officials, advisors, and the trainer from the project."

The letter was read aloud to all the members of the project who expressed their anger at its intimidatory tone - and the threats it contained. A response was typed by Mzayiya and immediately despatched to the UWM. The letter read as follows:

"20 February 1989

Dear Comrade

We are dismayed and surprised at the arbitrary manner in which we has been suspended by your movement.

We feel it is totally contrary to the democratic spirit that you have passed judgment without having had the opportunity to hear both sides of the situation. We feel that it is grossly unfair that you have judged us according to the words of your worker without our knowledge, especially as our Co-ordinator, is away at present in Harare.

We would therefore request that the suspension not be discussed until such time as we are able to be fully represented at any meeting.

Yours in the struggle

MEMBERS OF THE SPIRITUAL CHURCHES CO-OP."

I later learned from a diplomat who was responsible for administering the Canadian Government's aid budget in South Africa that the project was caught in an ongoing war of words between on the one hand COSATU and the UWM and on the other the American Government.

In 1987, the UWM's Secretary General claimed to have uncovered what it called a "CIA plot" which involved an attempt by American agents to infiltrate left-wing township-based organisations under cover of community development programmes. One of the organisations apparently targeted by the American Embassy was the UWM. Whatever the truth of the accusations, the diplomat commented, relations between the American Embassy and township groups became so strained that a diplomat was recalled to Washington and the then Ambassador, Edward J Perkins, was called in to "mend fences". The affair led to the temporary suspension of the American aid programme in the Western Cape.

Whilst at the project Faisal had not mentioned the fact that he was aware that the Spiritual Churches project members had received money from American and other overseas governments. The members of the project rejected the UWM's claim that they had tried to conceal this fact.

On her return to Cape Town on 22 February, Matiwana recalls finding the project members anxious but resolute in their determination not to bow down to pressure from the UWM. I was present at the project when she returned. Matiwana read the

letters and addressed what turned out to be an emotional meeting.

"Whilst I have been away I have learned how important it is" she said "that we have our independence. In Zimbabwe the government is helping cooperatives and groups like ours. In South Africa they do not want us to succeed so we must work harder. It is important that we find people with the money and the skills to help us achieve our goals but we must control what we do and how we do it. In Simukai people get up very early and work in all parts of the farm. Everyone learns to do lots of jobs that way if someone is ill someone else can take over their work. By doing this they aren't vulnerable like we are.

When I was away you couldn't decide what to do. You can see that it is wrong to rely on me. But you knew that Faisal was wrong and you were right to tell him to go.

At Simukai I learned we must show people with our language, we must love our language. We blacks are scared of people who speak English. But we can learn not to be nervous.

I have spoken to Archbishop Ngada; he has told me that we must stay together because we are an example to others around.

I have also spoken to Masifundise who say the UWM are causing trouble. They are trying to get noticed by COSATU. They know COSATU do not like groups accepting money from the Americans that is why they spied on us.

It is wise that we come together. But not to come together at the same time. COSATU and the National Unemployed Workers Coordinating Committee tried to direct coops under one roof but we are not strong enough. Our people are afraid that they are being used.

I have also spoken with Pa Nkonyeni and we have decided to bring all the groups, together to discuss what we can do about funders and service organisations. If we come together and share ideas we will be strong and outsiders will not be able to take us over".

A two-day weekend conference was organised to take place at the University of the Western Cape at the end of June. On the opening Saturday it was arranged that cooperative-type groups from the Cape Flats would come together to discuss their problems and tactics for the Sunday joint meeting between the

projects and service organisations. By the close of Saturday, however, the project members - encouraged, a SALDRU researcher recalled, by Matiwana and supported by community leaders (which included representatives from the Montagu-Ashton Community Centre, MAG) - voted not to participate in the following day's joint meeting.

Matiwana recalls this as being a crucial decision for township groups. For the first time, she argued, a significant number of groups had come together and had in effect said to the service organisations "we need your help but on our terms". Out of the Saturday meeting emerged a coordinating committee comprising a representative from Masifundise and MAG and Nkonyeni and Matiwana. At the time of writing this thesis (April 1991) the committee still exists but, according to a British Consulate representative, "has no real teeth" (interview, April 1991).

3. Conclusion

The events early in 1989 marked a watershed for the members of the Spiritual Churches project. From that point on they began to formulate a greater understanding of the context within which they were operating. They began to discuss the poor performance of the project in terms of dependency. As I have already said small-scale projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre have always tended to seek explanations for poor performance outside of their own circumstances: i.e. in the actions of donors, service organisations and other intrusive organisations. This attitude has, in part, led to a continuous

state of distrust felt by the project members - the recipients of aid - towards donors. Such distrust culminated in the decision taken at the UWC meeting.

This greater understanding however, prompted the project members to begin looking inwards in search of explanations for ineffectiveness. There evolved a realisation that they had become far too dependent upon Matiwana as the project's leader and coordinator. As it happened her motivations for beginning the project were, in my estimation, genuine. I could find no evidence of corrupt practices in the running of the Centre. However, it is shown in the history of Philippi Enterprises that this tendency to reject authority can, as D'Souza (1991) has noted in another context, result, paradoxically, in an embrace of authoritarianism.

Small-scale self-help type projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises collapse or barely survive for a whole range of reasons. It was clear from my research that both projects were poorly administered and organised. They were under-skilled and chronically under-resourced in terms of appropriate machinery and materials. The aid-giving and receiving process is riddled with corruption. Donors are often ill-informed about development and its pitfalls, donor organisations tend not to cooperate and often pursue independent and incompatible strategies for reasons of short-term political gain.

But, elsewhere in the world, there are examples of small-scale community development projects, succeeding in their bid to

increase opportunities for the disadvantaged (see McDowell, 1990). The Panos Institute (1989) has written about successful credit schemes, the World Bank (Salmen, 1987) about participatory development.

But what seems significant about the sort of small-scale projects represented in this thesis by Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Centre are the attitudes into which the project members have been socialised. Firstly, I have earlier described the corrupted-headman-style of traditional leadership which dominated Old Crossroads and to which the majority of the members of both projects were subjected for so many years. Cole (1987) and Glover (1987) have described the way in which Ngxobongwana and other leaders built a traditional-leadership structure through the use of metaphors and allegories. Residents of informal settlements turned to, and actively sought out, this kind of strong authority thus giving it a legitimacy which was seized upon by the State and local security forces.

Similarly undemocratic structures characterised 'progressive organisations' which emerged as political, church and welfare groups. African's historical experience, therefore, of the State, of local leadership and of supposedly representative organisations has been one of non-participation. The members of the project were socialised into an attitude of non-participation which allowed leaders like Nkonyeni to prosper and to take advantage of opportunities provided by donor agencies which did nothing, and were perhaps powerless, to address this situation.

Amongst members of the Spiritual Churches project, notions of leadership and management were denied in line with 'progressive discourse', but authority was vested in the hands of Matiwana. Intervention by the UWM, which may have led to the collapse of the project, exposed the weakness of the organisation as a result of this attitude, but also exposed the need for the membership to re-evaluate their own position. Such re-evaluation demanded a far more complex understanding of the context within which the project was operating. Members began to look closely at the motivations of funders, the misuse of funds by service organisations, but also at their own responsibility to be answerable for resources and the uses to which they are put. The realisation was about the need for initiative and self-reliance in the development process.

Just how successful this new approach will be requires further study and is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a crucial element determining future success or failure of small-scale community-based projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises is the continued involvement of overseas and local donors in the development process. In the following section I examine the extent of funding for community development projects in South Africa (but particularly in the Western Cape), the administrative practices and motivations which lay behind funder's involvement.

Trevor Manuel has recently argued that funder-policy has been instrumental in creating a culture of dependency. Foreign

funding in particular, he argues, has produced a never-ending supply of money which goes to those who write the best proposal letters, supports privileged students; enables people to sit in unproductive coops; corrupts entire layers of people; demands little accountability; and provides sheltered employment for political activists. In essence, Manuel argues, easy money may be destroying "the struggle" ('South', March 14 - March 20).

Part Four

Funders of Community Development

Chapter Ten

Community Development as a Component of Official Foreign Development Aid in South Africa

1. Introduction

In Chapter Two of this thesis I used, with some circumspection, a United Nations definition of community development as a 'process by which the efforts of the people are united with those of the government to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of communities, and their integration into a framework of national development' (UN Report, 1986:100). It is common practice that the link between 'the people' (recipients of aid) and funders (the state and other agencies) is achieved partly through the participation of charities, trusts and voluntary agencies known collectively as non-governmental development organisations (NGOs) (Twose, 1985:10).

NGOs, de Silva (1989) has recently argued, have a crucial role to play in the process of local-level and people-centred community development. Where NGOs are invited by a government to assist in community development programmes they can be a valuable source of expertise and financial and technical assistance. Furthermore, state-led development initiatives are

Chapter Nine

Spiritual Churches Development Centre: Beyond Dependency

"Many people have come to this project since we started. Some like you come from the University to write about us. Many people come from overseas. Some people make us promises about money and help which never comes. Many times we have had to tell people to go away because they do not want to help us, they want to take us over" (interview, December 1989).

1. Introduction

There has been, as Ruiters (1989) has pointed out, a tendency to romanticise the work of community-based, cooperative-oriented projects. They are often seen as or construed as being, peaceful, harmonious organisations conforming to idealised conceptions implied by the notion of self-management (1989:6). My own fieldwork has shown this image to be misleading.

Discord within self-help projects emerges largely as a result of poor performance. It is my impression, however, that project members perceive or at least assert quite different explanations for failure of projects than those perceived by funders or researchers. In the course of my fieldwork I spoke to coordinators and members of about twelve community-based self-help type groups and sought their reasoning for poor performance of such groups.

It was most commonly argued by project members that projects failed because of factors which were thought beyond their control. These factors included a lack of resources (financial



Photograph 3. British Foreign Secretary and Nomathemba Matiwana in the Spiritual Churches project.



Photograph 2. Township diplomacy in action. British Foreign Secretary and the international media in Brown's Farm.

often perceived to be top-down impositions and NGOs have been seen to play a crucial negotiating role by promoting the active participation of 'the people' themselves as integral partners in the development process (De Silva, 1989 (see Panos, 1989):xii; see also Drabek, 1987 and Bratton, 1990).

Development in any country is often determined, Robertson (1984) has noted, by the interests of the state, and is frequently an important mechanism by which the state attempts to exert control over its people (1984:154). This is certainly the case in South Africa where state-led community development has not been characterised by an exchange between the government and the targets of aid (see AFRA Newsletter (1), 1988:8). Instead most development initiatives have, Fischer (1988) argues, been centrally planned and dominated by state ideology (1988:125).

Unlike in India or Latin America, from where de Silva catalogues successful cooperation between funder, recipient and NGO, South Africa's international isolation over the past three decades has seen the virtual complete refusal of NGOs to cooperate with South African government development programmes. Although, as I later explain, this position is now changing.

A small number of international welfare organisations in addition to domestic organisations have maintained a presence in South Africa but their intervention has been relatively low-key and independent of the state. Their involvement has tended largely to be project-aid directed at community-level

nutrition, health, education, small-scale shack-upgrading, income-generation and emergency relief. Large-scale, multi-million dollar, IMF-type infrastructural projects have not thus far been undertaken in South Africa (although there has been some regional cooperation) but again with the international community giving support to increased Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) cooperation this is likely to change (see Whiteside, 1990).

The profile of development aid in South Africa has been changing over the past decade, and with the opening-up of political dialogue, the release of political prisoners and very real steps towards the dismantling of the full apparatus of apartheid, South Africa's status as a donor or funder, and as a recipient of aid, will undoubtedly undergo further changes.

International organisations and their various agencies and institutions (United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, the Commonwealth, European Community, Lome Convention countries), as well as independent charity and development agencies (Oxfam, Medecin Sans Frontieres, Save the Children) are beginning to open new, mostly informal channels of communication both with the South African government and with other non-governmental organisations.

My immediate concern in this thesis, however, is with the increased interest shown, since the mid-1980s, in community development programmes by international and local funders. In this chapter I enquire into the sources of official overseas

funding for community development projects as part of foreign government's overall aid programmes in South Africa. I examine the extent of aid given, apparent motivations behind donor's actions, and the administration of their programmes.

2. Foreign Government's Aid Programmes

It is, as Ramphele (1991) has written, difficult to find a credible estimate of the level of inflow of funds into South Africa for development work but it is likely to run into hundreds of millions of rands a year. I estimate official aid at R625m this figure includes Scandinavian government money which is administered outside of South Africa.

Extent of Official Foreign Funding - Britain, Canada and USA.

British Aid

Date Aid Started:	1986 ⁽¹⁾	
Amounts Donated:	1987/88	R 5 846.000
	1988/89	R16 660.000
	1989/90	R22 027.500
	1990/91	R40 375.000
Number of Projects Sponsored	1987/88	Not Available
	1988/89	50 ⁽²⁾
	1989/90	79 ⁽²⁾
	1990/91	34 ⁽²⁾
Amount Donated to Community Development	1987/88	R 1 480.000 ⁽³⁾
	1988/89	R 2 000.000 ⁽³⁾
	1989/90	R 2 700.000 ⁽³⁾
	1990/91	R 4 275.000 ⁽⁴⁾
Donations to Sectors of Aid 1988/89 ⁽¹⁾		
Total Donation:		R 4 165.000

Education (Scholarships and Technical Assistance)	R 1 965.000
Community Development	R 500.000
NGOs	R 1 500.000
Trades Unions	R 100.000
Refugees	R 100.000

- (1) Britain's Voice in South Africa (1988:19)
- (2) Confidential Source
- (3) British Aid Statistics, 1985-1989 Table 18 pp. 24-25
- (4) British Parliamentary Report 1991:44

Canadian Aid(1)

Date Aid Started 1983

Amounts Donated	1987/88	R10 000.000
	1988/89	R16 200.000
	1989/90	R17 500.000
	1990/91	

Number of Projects Sponsored	1987/88	56
	1988/89	68
	1989/90	40
	1990/91	

Amount Donated to Community Development	1987/88	R 300.000
	1988/89	R 400.000
	1989/90	R 400.000
	1990/91	

Donations to Sectors
of Aid 1988/89

Total Donation R16 200.000

Education	R 6 100.000
Community Development	R 400.000
Propoganda and Censorship	R 2 000.000
Dialogue	R 2 800.000
Humanitarian	R 4 900.000

- (1) Private Correspondence with Canadian Government, August 1989

United States Aid

Date Aid Started (1) 1986/87

Amounts Donated (2)	1987/88	R 42 000.000
	1988/89	R 60 000.000
	1988/90	R 80 000.000
	1990/91	R100 000 0000

Number of Project Sponsored (3)	1987/88	47
	1988/89	62
	1989/90	81
	1990/91	90
Amounts Donated to Community Development	1987/88	R 875.000
	1988/89	R 1 125.000
	1989/90	R 1 250.000
	1990/91	R 1 500.000

- (1) USAID Report 1990
- (2) Private Correspondence (US Embassy)
- (3) Private Correspondence (USAID)

The paucity of records of in-coming donations is partly, Ramphele believes, a result of the secrecy bred by years of repressive laws by the state to discourage funding for resistance groups inside the country. I would also add that amongst donors there is a good deal of self-censorship which leads to a reluctance to talk about their funding practices: Simon Barber has called them 'shy bureaucracies' ('Sunday Times', 22 October 1990).

Foreign funding enters South Africa from a wide variety of sources including foreign governments, international organisations, multinational corporations, charity and welfare groups, unions and political parties. Successive South African governments have attempted, through various Bills - the most recent of which is the Disclosure of Foreign Funding Bill (1989) - to exert control over foreign funding and, some commentators believe, by extension to 'disrupt the activities of opposition groups' (private correspondence EC governments, July 1989). Western governments have been vocal opponents of such restrictions. Significant and increasing amounts of money

have been devoted in recent years to projects and programmes in South Africa by foreign governments.

The most significant donor governments to development programmes in South Africa are the representatives of those countries with whom South Africa has the longest established cultural, financial, trade and military links. Aid committed by foreign governments is, as Mosley (1987) has written, 'an expenditure designed to further objectives of foreign and commercial policy' (1987:85). Foreign government's first and foremost aim in devising foreign policy is to protect their own interests and opportunities in world regions (Northedge, 1984:250). This aim is pursued through diplomatic and cultural ties, aid and trade.

During the past decade western government's diplomacy, aid and trade policy towards South Africa has to be seen against the backdrop of sanctions which have been the main external method of exerting pressure for the dismantling of apartheid (for a discussion of the sanctions/disinvestment debate, see Orkin, 1989 and Adler, 1989; for Britain's view, see 'Sowetan', 19 November 1987). Britain, and to a lesser extent former West Germany and Japan, consistently refused to join other countries in tightening restrictive measures on South Africa, arguing that sanctions harmed the interests of those who were most harmed by apartheid.

At a European Council meeting in Rome in December 1990 European countries agreed to lift their bans on new investment which effectively began the process which, led to the removal

of sanctions. At the same time as announcing their decision to ease restrictions on trade with South Africa, European Community countries and in mid-1991 the US government recommitted themselves to support "the victims of apartheid" through a strengthened aid programme of "positive measures" (Foreign Affairs Committee Report, 1991:36). These measures have recently been described in a UK Parliamentary Report as 'a practical demonstration of our (British Government's) commitment to the creation of a just, democratic and non-racial society in South Africa' (1991:44).

The lifting of sanctions therefore is accompanied by an increase in aid donations. "Positive measures" designed to assist South Africans who have been cast as "victims" fall into a number of broad categories which I have called Political Aid, Education Aid, Emergency Relief, Housing Assistance and Community Development. Funds for overseas government aid programmes are drawn either from the sending government's development department (eg. the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), US Agency for International Development (USAID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)) or from overseas diplomatic funds which are set aside for specific geographic purposes (eg. the British Head of Missions Gift Scheme, US Ambassador's Scheme under authority of Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 or the Canada Fund for Local-Initiatives).

Political Aid is by far the most contentious category of foreign funding (see Ramphele, 1991). Simon Barber, for example, recently highlighted a discrepancy in USAID's 1988

Report on South Africa which left more than half of their budget unaccounted for. He concluded, 'In short, the grants and contracts do not show up in the books because AID's South African hands have been running a slush fund for the revolution' ('Sunday Times', 22 October 1990).

Sinclair (1986) has also exposed the way in which American money has been 'misdirected' and he concludes, 'there is a deep suspicion among important sectors of the black community that the United States has imperialist designs on South Africa. The fear is that the United States will attempt to subvert (through the use of Political Aid) the liberation struggle and coopt the black leaders that best represent black interests' (1986:72).

Suspicion and hostility towards foreign governments who are seen to give unaccountable support to, for example, political parties, leading political figures or 'labour union training' is likely to increase as the demands on foreign governments to give becomes greater.

Education Aid takes the lion's share of foreign government's bilateral aid programmes in South Africa. Such aid can be categorised as follows: scholarships for undergraduates attending South African higher education institutes; provision of funds for local education initiatives (pre-school to adult literacy and 'alternative education'); support for South African labour education initiatives; scholarships for undergraduates attending overseas universities; and contributions to education NGOs operating in South Africa.

The British Government allocates approximately 80% of its bilateral aid programme to Education Aid: in 1990 it supported about 1000 black South Africans in higher education, both in South Africa and in Britain; it also committed a large part of available funds to technical cooperation projects in non-state primary and secondary black schools (UK Parliamentary Report 1991:44).

Remaining funds are given as a response to specific Emergency Relief demands (eg. rehousing flood victims, refugees from conflict or forced removals); in Housing Aid, for example, to underwrite the Urban Foundation's recent scheme to provide low-cost owner-occupied homes and in Community Development which I discuss below.

Such monies are distributed through several channels, but in all cases, embassy officials were quick to inform me, none of the monies provided by foreign governments were given to, or received by the South African Government.

The largest portion of overseas government aid money is administered directly by staff of diplomatic missions scattered throughout South Africa. Other monies are distributed indirectly in partnership with sending-country or South African non-governmental organisations and institutions or through international institutions linked, for example, to the United Nations or the European Community. Embassy or consular officials who administer such schemes are usually career diplomats and are not aid specialists. I have been

informed by representatives of various diplomatic missions in South Africa however, that this position is likely to change and, in the near future, aid specialists will be brought in to oversee their expanding development programmes.

Representatives of some diplomatic missions showed a reluctance to disclose to me the amount of bilateral aid their government have committed to assistance in South Africa (Alan Whiteside, (forthcoming) experienced similar problems). USAID's annual report (the "yellow book") is, for example, classified as a 'confidential' document not available to the general public.

Some governments, however, most notably the British Government whose bilateral programme started in 1979 and has expanded rapidly since, and the Canadian Government, have publicised their involvement quite widely (see 'Britain Voice in South Africa', 1988).

3. Diplomatic Aid Aiding Diplomacy

A recent report drafted by a British House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee contained a number of observations and recommendations about future British Government policy towards South Africa. Aid policy dominated their recommendations.

Currently there is much debate about the linking of foreign aid to political questions and the issue of "good governance". Douglas Hurd the British Foreign Secretary spelled out British Government policy at a recent conference:

"Countries which tend towards pluralism, public accountability, respect for the rule of law, human rights, market principles, should be encouraged. Governments which persist with repressive policies, corrupt management, wasteful discredited economic systems should not expect us to support their folly with scarce aid resources which could be better used elsewhere' (address to Overseas Development Institute Conference, London, June 1990).

Government-to-government aid has long been linked to political and economic conditionality (Twose, 1985:10) but in the future it is likely that conditions will be more strictly adhered to. It would seem likely that this need for "value for money" in aid expenditure at the macro-level will be reflected in micro-level, or what is sometimes called "sectoral aid" (Sandbrook, 1982:8), of which community development programmes in South Africa are a part. In South Africa, however, this is not the case. Whilst there is ample evidence of community development projects failing to achieve their objectives, foreign government funders are increasing rather than decreasing their donations to such projects.

Indeed the 1991 British House of Commons Report on that country's relations with South Africa recommends the extension of sponsored community development for the following reasons. First, because community development 'is used as a deliberate counterpart of the UK's diplomatic efforts to promote political change in South Africa' (1991:44). Second, community development, though labour-intensive, 'has not only brought credit to Britain but has at least partially redeemed the UK in the eyes of some black South Africans' (p.37). And finally,

community development in South Africa 'has been highly and very visibly effective' (p.44).

Sinclair (1986) writing about American government and private involvement in community development in South Africa is rather more forthright than the British Parliamentarians. Sinclair argues that the 'unconventional' development approach (the British Report calls it 'unorthodox'):

'Can' make a significant impact on the "process of empowerment". Through carefully planned and well directed initiatives, it is possible to contribute to the development of institutions, leadership groups and processes that may be instrumental in preparing the ground for a stable majority government' (1986:73).

In discussions with representatives of foreign governments it is clear to me that major political benefits accrue to their governments through involvement in community development. Diplomats I have discussed this issue with have shown a keen awareness of the problems associated with their intervention (i.e their inability to prove its effectiveness in alleviating poverty or promoting opportunity) but justify their continued and extended involvement on the basis of "value for money" and "broad canvas" considerations.

Through my research in the Spiritual Churches Centre and at Philippi Enterprises and more widely in the development industry, problems with such intervention strategies have become quite evident. In the conclusion to this thesis I consider the many factors which together affect the ability of community development programmes to help resolve the problems of poverty. But below I look specifically at the problems

which arise out of the nature and administration of schemes run by representatives of foreign governments.

Foreign governments' aid to community development projects is administered through a self-contained scheme which, for practical purposes, operates quite independently from other aspects of a government's aid programme. Significant overseas donor governments have chosen to administer their schemes through their diplomatic representatives (ie. career diplomats) rather than representatives of aid and development departments.

There are significant consequences of this. Government departments (eg. USAID, British ODA) which are charged solely with development work have strict policy guidelines for the funding, implementation and assessment of development programmes (see Riddell, 1987). These guidelines constantly change through the exchange of ideas with fieldwork-hardened development workers and development theoreticians. Community development schemes administered through diplomatic offices, however, do not adhere strictly to such professional aid-giving guidelines.

It is my impression that the sort of "unorthodox" or "unconventional" schemes described in this thesis are more directly extensions of the political work of the diplomatic missions and by extension foreign governments rather than the development work of an aid office. For this reason schemes which are described as, for example, the Head of Mission's Gift Scheme - through which community development funds are

given - are often seen as Ambassadorial largesse rather than a serious development commitment.

Rossouw has recently written that 'Funds for projects and community-based organisations were generally available on request and were given to those who wrote the best proposals and not to those who meet the needs of the communities' ('South', March 14 to March 20, 1991). From my experience those able to write the best letters tend to be members of an educated and politically active elite rather than ordinary township residents who could make use of a new sewing machine or school blackboard.

A major role of diplomatic missions in any country is to gather and assess information which is relevant to their sending-government for the formulation of foreign policy. Diplomacy involves the constant accumulation of "useful contacts" which enable diplomats to keep abreast of events. There is evidence to suggest that a portion of urban community development funds are directed at local political figures as a form of patronage or client's support.

Whilst some recipients of aid may be involved in a township project (credit league, sewing group, craft centre) it is most likely that their association with a project will be one of convenience. Development projects provide office-space, telephones and back-up staff as well as some status. For the funder the short-term benefits of this, in terms of contact-building, are quite clear; the longer-term benefits accruing

to Western governments who are being seen to support 'progressive leaders', however, is open to speculation.

The procedure for granting payments to projects usually takes the form of a response to a proposal letter. Either a cheque is immediately despatched to the project or a diplomat will visit the project and assess its needs. Involvement by missions is not long-term and is mostly characterised by one-off payments to projects for the purchase of specific items or for the payment of services. Only very rarely are follow-up assessments made.

Pre- and post-implementation studies (such as needs assessments, base-line studies, ex-post evaluation of effectiveness, bi-annual or annual progress reports and reviews plus an end-of-term review) which involve the active participation of the recipients of aid are seen by aid agencies to be central to the development process. Without such continued involvement very basic errors are likely to be made. Such errors, as I show in just one example, have been made in foreign governments' donations to the projects, with which I have been involved.

In mid-1989 the British Consulate responded to a request from the members of the Spiritual Churches Centre to supply them with a combi which would enable the project to market their produce more effectively. It is not normally the policy of the British Government, a diplomat informed me, to purchase vehicles for projects: firstly, because such a purchase would exceed their budgetary limit (approximately R15,000) on single

payments to projects; and secondly because it would demand a long-term commitment in covering running, insurance and registration costs. In this instance, however, the Consulate agreed to provide R16,000 necessary to purchase a second-hand combi.

In order to assist two projects the Consulate decided to give the money to Nkonyeni at Philippi Enterprises with instructions to buy the vehicle on behalf of the Spiritual Churches Centre, and to make any necessary repairs. Six weeks after the money was given, Nkonyeni presented a vehicle to the Centre's members. I examined it with the help of a mechanic who owned a motor repair workshop on the industrial estate. He declared the vehicle to be a "death trap". The engine required a total rebuild, the brakes would have needed complete replacing, new floor panels fitted throughout and extensive bodywork repairs undertaken to make the combi safe. The vehicle was unlicensed, it had no roadworthy certificate or insurance. The mechanic estimated its value at R4,000.

A representative from the Consulate insisted that Nkonyeni take the vehicle back and use the money he'd been given to make the vehicle roadworthy. For four months the combi stood on an area of ground between the buildings housing the two projects. The repairs were never made. Eventually it was pushed into the Philippi Enterprises building, where according to one of the mechanics, it was stripped and parts were used to repair other vehicles. The Consulate was forced to write-off R16,000 and had still to fulfill its promise to the

members of the Spiritual Churches project to supply them with a useable vehicle.

A closer analysis of both projects would have revealed to the Consulate official that his scheme stood little chance of success. At no time did he consult with the members of the Spiritual Churches project to confirm that the arrangement suited them; rather it was presented as a fait accompli.

First, the official had entrusted Nkonyeni with a sum of money attached to which were only vague conditions and no mechanisms ensuring accountability. The scope for misuse was clear.

Second, during this period relations between certain members of the Nkonyeni's project and members of the Spiritual Churches project were poor. The Spiritual Churches members were still angry about the involvement of the UWM in their project and their anger increased when they discovered that Faisal was working with Nkonyeni and was demanding the return from their project of "his" fibreglass equipment. Matiwana insisted that Nkonyeni would never have done the work for their project because "he is our enemy".

Third, a closer analysis of Philippi Enterprises would have revealed the simmering discontent felt by ordinary workers towards Nkonyeni and his management committee. By mid-1988 the mechanics section was working more or less independently of Nkonyeni and certainly would not have followed his instructions to repair a combi which effectively he owned.

The members of the Spiritual Churches project finally received a second combi (also second-hand) in December 1990; the keys for which were handed over to Nomathemba Matiwana in the full glare of publicity during an official visit by the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (see photo).

4. Conclusion

In 1986, Michael Sinclair a researcher for the Washington-based Investor Responsibility Research Unit (IRRU), undertook research in South Africa to gauge the perceptions of people about American governmental and non-governmental involvement in community development. He discovered a general perception that community development programmes 'were seen to perpetuate dependency by failing to address the basic causes of the poverty cycle' (1986:22).

His mainly black respondents criticised American attempts at community development in the following ways: community development schemes were seen to operate without a clear insight into the nature of black underdevelopment; such schemes adopted a piecemeal approach; the nature of assistance was directed at palliative efforts rather than fundamental change; commitment was short-term and did not ensure community initiative; and funder's interest in South Africa was driven by an 'attempt to absolve international moral guilt' rather than a genuine interest (1986:23-24).

Five years on very similar objections to community development programmes operated by foreign governments were expressed to



Photogrpah 1. British Foreign Secretary presents a second combi to the Spiritual Churches Development Centre.

me by individuals involved at all levels of aid giving and receiving. Such reactions to community development programmes are the outcome of a number of factors.

In a sense any development strategies pursued by certain foreign governments will be met by howls of disapproval. 'Progressive organisations' have constantly singled out the American and British Governments as being friends of Pretoria. International diplomacy is an imprecise science. Lipton (1986) has described how in the mid-1980s the 'interaction of external and internal pressures generated a complex chain-reaction of effects, intensifying both reformist and authoritarian pressures' within South Africa. External pressures can, she argues, 'harden attitudes, complicate or impede negotiations, and even intensify violence' (1986:378, 398). It is perhaps impossible therefore for foreign governments, particularly governments of powerful nations which are seen to be ideologically opposed to "the struggle", to adopt a policy towards South Africa which will be positively received.

Community development, diplomats from western missions have informed me, is perceived by embassy staff to be a highly visible and effective counter-measure to such criticism. A diplomatic presence in the townships, particularly at the time of conflict is, they have argued, appreciated by black leaders, both at the national and community level. Embassy funding policies, which are generally perceived to favour ANC associated organisations, are widely known and demands for funding far exceeds supply.

Assistance through community development programmes provides, as I have already said, an opportunity for foreign embassies to broaden their range of contacts within political circles in South Africa. Western governments support for the "victims of apartheid" has been central to their anti-sanctions stance. Representatives of foreign governments talk both in South Africa and "at home" about their commitment to remaining in South Africa to bring about changes from within. A former British Ambassador has often stressed his Government's commitment "to fight against apartheid. We have no intention of disengaging; we will go on providing practical help and whatever the difficulties we will go on working for positive change" (Sowetan, 27 April 1988).

Influential visitors from western countries (both in government, and opposition, journalists and academics) who are seen as opinion moulders are taken into the townships to see first-hand the sort of work undertaken by embassy staff.

I have conducted some of these tours on behalf of the British Embassy and can confirm that visitors are impressed, firstly to be in the township at all, secondly by access enjoyed by embassy staff, and lastly by the unexpectedly practical nature of community diplomacy. In the case of Britain, favourable responses to the embassy's work in South Africa has been translated in an all-Party Report recommending the continuation of present policy. In a bid to oppose the call for sanctions and disengagement, therefore, community

development as a component of overall aid to the "victims of apartheid" has been highly effective.

My research however, would suggest that in purely development terms, community development strategies do not achieve the objectives of development as outlined in the United Nations Report. Through the examples of Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Centre it is difficult to argue that the British Government, for example, has achieved its stated aims of "assisting black economic advancement" ('Argus', 28 April 1988), "helping blacks to help themselves" ('Citizen', 27 April 1988) or "helping people today and creating hope for the future" ('Argus', 18 August 1988). Foreign governments attempts at community development in South Africa are unlikely to succeed for a whole range of complex reasons, many of which are beyond the immediate control of the programme administrators. However, diplomatic mission-funded community development programmes are to a large extent hindered by the fact that they involve the scattering of small amounts of aid, which is notoriously difficult to monitor. Schemes are administered by non-development trained staff and without the input of NGOs are designed to secure often short-term political goals rather than long-term development objectives.

Chapter Eleven

Corporate Social Responsibility

1. Introduction

The largest groups of donors to community development projects in black townships are foreign governments and national and multinational companies. During the period of my research fund managers of corporate social responsibility programmes were closely involved in both Philippi Enterprises and the Spiritual Churches Development Centre. In this chapter I examine the reasons for the business sector to become involved in community development and fund manager's changing attitudes towards such sponsorship. Through the experiences of members of the Spiritual Churches Centre it would appear that fund managers are increasingly less willing to allocate money to schemes which have traditionally performed badly. As the demands on business to become more involved in social upliftment increase, small-scale, co-operative-type ventures will discover this avenue of funding being blocked.

2. Business and Community Development

The role of business in the evolution of apartheid policies, the continuing relationship between business and the state, and the role of business in the reform process are complex issues (see Lipton, 1986, Greenberg, 1987b, and Welsh, 1988). And it is in this context that business involvement in social responsibility - including community development - must be

seen. The debate thus far, Lipton has argued, has centred on 'whether capitalists in South Africa wanted to retain, strengthen or destroy apartheid and whether they had the power to secure their aims?' (1986:2). And latterly as the scaffolding of apartheid is being removed how is the business world facing up to the socio-economic problems which beset the country?

In 1964 O'Dowd proposed a thesis that has recently been popularised by economists like Caldwell (1988) that business people are opposed to apartheid and that they have the power to get rid of a system which is incompatible with capitalism: particularly in its free market form. Liberals like Horwitz (1967) later agreed with O'Dowd that capitalists were opposed to apartheid but that they were powerless in the face of National Party hegemony to eradicate it (Lipton, 1986:3-4). Bromberger (1974) and Lipton (1974) combined elements of the O'Dowd and Horwitz theses arguing that apartheid suited certain sectors of the economy but was imposed upon them and would eventually prove too costly to maintain.

Marxists like Legassick (1973) and Wolpe (1970) and non-Marxists like Welsh (1988) have emphasised the interests of certain business sectors in sustaining an apartheid system from which they benefitted in terms of, for example, the 'reserves' and tied labour. Industrial capital, Welsh has argued, 'adapted itself to the available structures, utilised what was useful to its interests, objected to what was not (such as job ratios and job reservation) but until fairly recent times substantially acquiesced in the racial ordering

of society. South African business elites, Welsh believes, 'were whites before they were entrepreneurs' (1988:162).

It is misleading though, as Lipton has noted, to see capitalists in South Africa as an homogenous group which has been either unanimously opposed to, or wholeheartedly in favour of, apartheid (1986:6-7). Business in South Africa, as in other countries, has applied pressure on the government to secure reforms particularly on issues - like the migrant labour system - which have, it is argued, presented obstacles to economic growth in general, and in certain sectors. Business pressure has been influential in securing change, but as Lipton has said there were important respects in which apartheid was not eroded.

The 1970s, marked by the strikes of 1973 and the Soweto uprising of 1976, were a watershed for business in South Africa. During this decade the private sector, Welsh has argued, realised its limitations to change the environment as it, like the government, had to face the force of urbanisation and organised black labour (1988:165). Out of the violence of 1976-77 emerged the Urban Foundation, a coalition of business people representing 60% of the country's business assets (Welsh, 1988:164). The Foundation, which Rich has described as a 'vaguely liberal pressure group' (1984:135) centred its activities on quality of life issues in urban areas and successfully campaigned for the toppling of influx control and pass laws, and prohibitions on urban property rights for Africans.

The early 1980s saw a warming in relations between business sectors and the state. But in the mid-'80s, as township violence intensified and international pressure for reform increased, business stepped-up its political demands and began talks with the ANC (1988:166-67). In the late 1980s and into the '90s as the reform process gathered pace and was seen internationally as irreversible, business is attempting, Greenberg (1987) has argued, to distance itself from apartheid.

Business is aware, Welsh believes, 'of the perception that the private sector and apartheid are in a symbiotic relationship' (1988:168), and in order to overcome this perception it must promote a commitment to black advancement and general environmental improvements. Greenberg sees this reformist trend led by 'progressive capitalists' as part of a global reinvigoration and reassertion of liberalism (or neo-liberalism) through capitalism's acceptable face.

Brice and Wegner (1989) have seen in this reassertion a new relationship evolving throughout the 1980s between South African business, government and society. Brice and Wegner argue that the greatest challenge facing South African business over the next decade is to develop broad-based social partnerships which balance various public demands for social goals with their objective to remain economically viable (1989:163-64). This, they argue, can be achieved through expanded corporate social responsibility programmes.

According to Sommer, corporate social responsibility means that a corporation 'voluntarily expends its resources to do something not required by law and without immediate economic benefit' (quoted in Optima Supplement, 1982:3). There are two main strategies to social responsibility: the first involves the linking of trade with aid and development in the broad society; and the second involves the encouragement and development of business practices, including industrial relations, which offer a better deal for black workers.

The principle that business had a responsibility to assist in social welfare was established in Victorian England by companies which were invariably owned by Quaker families and situated in depressed areas. In 1975, however, Harry Oppenheimer argued that what was required in South Africa was something quite different from Victorian-style charitable donations. Oppenheimer preferred to think of social responsibility programmes as 'environmental investments' which, he believes, marked a fundamental shift in business ethics since such programmes included the formulation and funding of projects (what is now termed proactive funding) rather than merely the reactive giving of aid (1975:50).

In 1982 Gavin Relly justified Anglo American and De Beers social responsibility involvement, first on the basis that the long-term benefit to society and the country would also benefit the company, and secondly that private businesses are less rigid and imposing than the state and are therefore more able to be sensitive to the communities' own priorities. And lastly, if one believes in private enterprise, one must

believe that private initiative has a part to play in the welfare, education and culture of society (1982:4-5).

Anglo American and De Beers through their Chairman's Fund has provided a model for corporate social responsibility which other companies have followed. And in recent years, as a 1989 Wits Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) Report, and research by Lucas (1987) indicates, the percentage of major South African corporations post-tax profits apportioned to social responsibility has steadily increased (CPS Research Report No. 5, April 1989, Lucas, 1987:13).

The CPS surveyed 52 leading companies which showed that in 1988 in excess of R130m was donated to non-profit activities. Of the 16 companies which provided a detailed breakdown of their expenditure, approximately 60% of their budgets were devoted to education (pre-school, school and university), 5% to business development and 13% to community development.

Many of the companies surveyed first established their social responsibility programmes in the 1980s. The most recent substantial corporate programme was announced by Liberty Life in April 1990. Its Chairman, Donald Gordon, described the formation of the Liberty Life Foundation with a five year budget of R100 million as a 'major initiative'. Its objective he said 'is to provide a financial base to enable disadvantaged communities to achieve significant and meaningful upliftment in the quality of their lives, by the provision, inter alia, of improved educational facilities and

housing and the alleviation of poverty' (Sunday Times, 15 April 1990).

Pressure on major corporations to beef-up their commitment to 'environmental investments' has come not only from within South Africa but also from overseas. The ideals of, and goals for, social responsibility involvement by American-owned companies operating in South Africa were first laid down by Leon Sullivan in 1970s (Whisson, 1980:17). Sullivan's initial response to American companies operating in South Africa was that they should withdraw immediately thus serving notice on the Pretoria Government that it is more profitable to change than to resist. During the mid-70s however, his attitude changed and in 1977 instead of recommending disengagement he, like the British Government in 1974, proposed a number of principles to which companies with South Africa interests should adhere (Sinclair, 1986:61, Foreign Policy Study Foundation Report, 1981:96).

Sullivan's ideals were very similar to those proposed by Oppenheimer in 1975 and Gordon in 1990. His vision was of a capitalist society in which the 'vast majority of the people had sufficient stake in the wealth of the country to make an alternative form of political economy unattractive - particularly if the transformation to the alternative can be attained only by violence' (1980:18).

The British Government over the past decade has also encouraged British-owned companies with investments in South Africa to recognise their responsibilities to social

upliftment. In his address to the Get Ahead Foundation in April 1988, the British Ambassador pointed out that "British companies operating in South Africa had contributed over R130 million in black housing, education and welfare in a single year" ('Sowetan', 27 April 1988). The role of business must be, the Ambassador later said, to assist in the "preservation of the economy whilst changing the politics - not to destroy the economy while reinforcing the worst features of the political system ... what matters most at this stage is to develop self-help structures which increase the confidence and organisational strength of the communities" ('Argus', 18 August 1988).

It is in this context that foreign and South African-owned corporations have donated money to the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi project in line with their rhetorical commitment to build social partnerships and strengthen self-help community structures. As Brice and Wegner have shown the development strategies adopted by business which target the largest amounts of aid to education and lesser amounts to community development, business development, emergency relief and general welfare (1989:165-68) are very similar to those adopted by foreign governments.

It is significant however that corporate social responsibility programmes differ in their administration from foreign government schemes which tend, with one or two exceptions, to be administered in-house. Business environmental investment (rather than workplace improvements) are administered in either of the following ways.

It is most often the case that a company will employ full-time trained fieldworkers who will be based in company offices and will report directly to a senior public affairs manager or the company Chairman (e.g. Shell, BP, Cadbury's). Alternatively a company will establish a foundation which may or may not be situated in company offices but is considered to be a separate entity from the funding institution (Mobil, Gencor, Liberty Life). Fieldworkers employed by the foundation will be supported by a board of trustees which in the case of the Mobil Foundation, for example, are drawn from universities, the business world and include community workers.

During interviews, administrators of social responsibility programmes expressed to me a keen awareness of the need to monitor and become actively involved in the projects they support. Most companies demand some visibility from their aid giving, which one senior executive described to me as "sponsorship in another form". The manager of Shell's social responsibility programme has recently commented that as such programmes gain a higher profile, and because companies are beginning to tie their name and image to the recipient project, companies are far more anxious to ensure effectiveness and accountability. "No business" he added "wants to be associated with a corrupt and inefficient organisation" (interview, April 12, 1991).

It is for this reason that many corporate social responsibility managers are, they have informed me, reducing their involvement in small-scale community-based projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises.

Increasingly fund managers are insisting that aid money achieves the criteria laid down in their objectives. Assistance to education, for example in the area of teacher upgrading, has tangible multiplier effects where a grant of R30,000 can be seen to benefit 100 or 200 school pupils.

The administration required to assist community-based, often co-operative-type ventures is substantial and labour-intensive. The emergence of such projects is, as Davies (1989) has said, a relatively recent urban phenomenon and whilst literally hundreds of ventures have been initiated very few have survived to become growing concerns. In fact, Davies has written, 'success has been the exception; and failure the rule. Little has emerged in terms of finding real solutions to the problem of their apparently inevitable failure' (1989:15).

In 1989 the Mobil Foundation arranged a seminar to discuss the problems facing funders of small-scale community-based projects. The general feeling was that co-operative type ventures would continue to 'assume increasing importance within the Foundation' (Manuel, 1989:58). By the beginning of 1990, however, the Foundation's trustees were urging a move away from such a policy.

Their decision to shift priorities was hastened by their "disappointing" involvement with the Spiritual Churches project in 1990. A Foundation manager expressed his concern to me about the organisation of the project. The Centre, he believed, was an example of the saddest consequences of such community development initiatives. Its members had been

targets of so much conflicting advice and little genuinely constructive assistance. The project had become, he believed, the creation of outside interference. Money had been given with no foresight or planning, the members of the project had lost direction and were now unable to change.

Unlike foreign governments, commercial concerns are concerned about the effectiveness of their aid-giving particularly where it adversely affects the company image. For this reason, it is likely that less and less corporate responsibility money will be made available for such ventures.

Chapter Twelve

Conclusion

1. The Background

Galtung (1979) has written that 'an analysis without policy implications of a strategic nature is no good analysis' (1979:13). This dictum, Sandbrook (1982) has argued, has especial application to studies of poverty and poverty-directed development (1982:228). Whilst this thesis does not propose an action programme for future development work in South Africa's urban settings it does attempt to recognise what is wrong with a current development practice and provide some pointers for the future.

Through a study of the creation and performance of two community-based projects in an African urban area I have tried to place in context the actions and consequences of major protagonists in community development.

Because so much of the experience of urban life for Africans in South Africa has been determined by the actions of the state, my analysis began by cataloguing the continuing attempts by the state to control the urbanward movement, settlement and activities of Africans. In so doing I was able to build up a picture of the experiences of urban living out of which emerged material deprivation, forms of political activity and actions by individuals from within and outside urban communities to tackle poverty.

In my analysis, the projects are seen, at least in part, as a reaction to the consequences of the government's use of the rhetoric and practice of community development in the Crossroads area. Community development was used as a means (in conjunction with many other local and national strategies) to further the state's objectives. In order, for example, to assist the state in its bid to reorder the local political and demographic terrain, a group of men were co-opted and given the means to control Old Crossroads and its satellite informal settlements.

Nomathemba Matiwana and (eventually) Sam Nkonyeni emerged out of the Crossroads crisis as community leaders opposed to such authoritarian rule. Both had suffered financial loss and personal hardship during the worst of the fighting, and both sought ways of addressing the many social problems they witnessed.

Throughout their involvement in the events of Crossroads, from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, Matiwana and Nkonyeni learned something about the "development industry". Nkonyeni, as a member of Ngxobongwana's Executive Committee, was charged with forging relations between members of the Committee and outside agencies including the government to discuss the settlement's future. As a politician and businessman he soon realised the sorts of opportunities presented by development organisations. After his expulsion from Old Crossroads he made use of this knowledge.

Matiwana's involvement was less formal. Her role during the crisis was both as a social worker and as a point of contact between outside agencies and the victims of the conflict. Through this work she gained a realistic understanding of how agencies perceive and respond to situations. Like Nkonyeni, Matiwana retained her contact with representatives of political groups, embassies and consulates, and church bodies and was later successful in obtaining their support for her project.

Nkonyeni and Matiwana's involvement in the events of Crossroads placed them at the centre of local political activity. It was during the early to mid-1980s that the United Democratic Front (UDF) and allied 'progressive organisations' sought to become more closely involved in 'squatter' affairs. 'Squatter' politics are notoriously complex and unpredictable. Ngxobongwana and other male leaders capitalised on divisions within the community and partly through an appeal to 'tradition' built-up a power-base from which they controlled the settlement's political economy. 'Progressive organisations' and other outside organisations, quite unintentionally, assisted these leaders (and by association the state) in their bid to gain control.

Aware of the consequences of their involvement in the events leading up to 1985 and 1986, the UDF and other organisations sought, in the post-crisis era, to repair the damage without replicating past mistakes. A strategy was adopted which involved the promotion and active support of a range of community development projects.

It has been a constant feature of development intervention that local-level aid is channelled through local leaders. Nkonyeni and Matiwana by virtue of their opposition to the Old Crossroads leadership became seen as 'progressive', 'popular' or 'genuine' leaders and therefore as ideal recipients of such assistance.

Their suitability was further enhanced by virtue of the fact that they sought assistance for initiatives which were favoured in 'progressive' circles: co-operative, self-help, and community-based productive projects, which fell in the same category as civic organisations, advice offices and creches. Funding organisations which, for a range of reasons, sought to become actively involved in township affairs, were anxious to work through acceptable channels and therefore made money available to approved projects such as the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises.

These events provided the background to the discussion contained in this thesis about the consequences of community development intervention, the errors of community development intervention, and the motivations of major protagonists involved in such intervention.

2. The Evidence

The Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises ventures, like so many similar ventures before and since, stumbled and faltered, exhibiting all the signs of poorly-

planned, managed and funded projects. The sort of assistance provided made this situation worse. The policy of major donors was driven by motivations other than genuine development concerns. Foreign governments disbursed money haphazardly and ineffectively. Businesses took a little more care but for years poured money into ventures which, if they were offered as financial investments, would not have been given a second look. Service organisations, comprising unions, political pressure groups, university organisations and welfare bodies largely prolonged the confusion by failing to see the problems inherent in such intervention. The process was further complicated by ideological confusion and often corruption.

The outcome of this complex situation is that groups of people who had a genuine desire and the energy to confront the problems caused by material deprivation and political powerlessness were to be found sitting, despondent and often angry, in funder-dependent projects which had little prospect of satisfying their goals. In other places disingenuous men and women were tapping the aid pool for their own gain.

And the beneficiaries of such intervention have tended to be not the recipients of aid but the donors. Only a tiny fraction of the hundreds of millions of Rand that enters South Africa each year for aid purposes is used to support community-based projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi projects, but the returns on such investment for the funders are great.

These projects are just two examples of the thousands of similar projects up and down the country which constitute the 'alternative sector'. Accounting for the ineffectiveness of these projects and to devise future strategies demands one to look at many things.

There are clear practical reasons for failure. As Davies (1989) has noted in the many analyses of community self-help and co-operative type ventures in South Africa, the same kinds of problems and constraints are usually identified. These include 'a lack of managerial or organisational expertise' (Thomas, 1987); 'poor financial management abilities and insufficient management competence' (Thaver, 1988); the 'absence of adequate literacy skills' and a lack of 'understanding of the importance of efficient book-keeping' (Barratt, 1989); the critical 'need for training' (van Heerden, 1988); and a lack of suitable finance (Thaver, 1988).

Another set of reasons has to do with the unrealistic expectations of people involved in community-based projects.

According to Alexander 'there is no co-operativist tradition within the black working class in spite of the romantic delusions of 'African Socialism' cherished by some activists and theorists' (1989:24). Organising people into some collective, he believes, requires a transformation of the 'survival reflex of the unemployed' which is not necessarily based on solidarity. Community-based projects, therefore, rarely fulfill their destinies as 'a fighting organisation in the broader struggle for socialism' (Etkind, 1989:61).

As part of the ideal of co-operativism such projects have been charged with the task of confronting the facets of urban poverty such as disease, illiteracy, unemployment and powerlessness. And moreover, they have been placed at the forefront of transformation in South Africa. Etkind, in an article in 'Transformation', sees community-based projects performing the sort of tasks which co-operatives performed in Yugoslavia, Cuba and Nicaragua (1989:58-59). In so doing he ignores the fact that the economic and political situation prevailing in Eastern Europe or post-revolution Cuba or Nicaragua were far removed from the political and economic situation in contemporary South Africa.

There is as Jaffe has remarked 'rampant idealism and much confusion about the potential for co-operatives to contribute to social and economic transformation' (1989:32). As such ideals pass by unfulfilled, members of projects become disheartened, enthusiasm wanes, organisation collapses and projects close.

One must also consider the nature and consequences of funding received by community-based projects.

Throughout this thesis I have shown that money is available for community ventures like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises. For the two major funders, foreign governments and corporate social responsibility departments, it was the giving of money to the projects was important rather than the consequences of the giving. All too often

funding programmes result in a dependency trap from which it is extremely difficult for small community organisations to extricate themselves.

Offering development aid to township groups provided foreign governments with a means to pursue "community diplomacy". It helped to warm relations between governments which were seen as hostile to the "struggle" and "struggle organisations". Political activists, according to Pieterse, were paid off, 'people were employed in certain projects because they were activists, not because of the skills they possessed'. As a consequence of this projects failed to achieve their aims. 'People' Pieterse has argued, 'are corrupted by the ease with which finance is available, and the idea that they need to work hard for that money is taboo' ('Pieterse' quoted in 'South', March 1991). Easy money, Manuel argued in the same article has 'corrupted an entire layer of people' it is 'destroying the struggle'.

Development aid disbursed through diplomatic offices, as opposed to aid disbursed through official government development departments, was administered without the tight controls normally demanded by the holders of the public purse. Non-aid specialist diplomats representing major western governments in South Africa operated according to a brief which demanded the greatest return from a modest outlay. Consequently aid was both scattered thinly and often inappropriately. At the same time it was strategically targetted at groups and individuals which best understood the process of giving and/or provided an opening into black

politics through which the foreign government could claim to have been received.

The approach of funders was often one of paternalism and double-standards in tolerating shoddy work as the "people's approach".

Community development assistance has provided something of a diplomatic coup for certain western governments. Favourable publicity accrues to foreign governments when their representatives are seen to be assisting the "victims of apartheid". Government representatives have used the practical help they are giving to ameliorate the worst excesses of apartheid to support their anti-sanctions stance by arguing that it is always better to work for change from within rather than leaving the field.

Corporate social responsibility funds provided similar advantages for the business sector. Environmental investment may well, as Oppenheimer argued in 1975, represent a shift in business ethics towards greater social awareness. Social responsibility, however, also acted as the torch-bearer for businesses' attempts to show its liberal, acceptable face and to distance itself from apartheid.

Initially social responsibility schemes were managed in much the same way as foreign governments' schemes. Small amounts of money were given with only a cursory assessment of a project's likely effectiveness. Once again it was the giving that featured in the end of the year reports, not the consequences

of the giving. My research indicates, however, that such an attitude is now changing. As businesses concern themselves more with value-for-money in environmental investment they are withdrawing their support for community-based projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre which are troublesome to administer and project a poor company image.

As part of funding one must also consider the actions of service organisations and other groups which become involved in community development and how those actions effect the performance of projects.

My research has shown that service organisations (organisations which act as filters between funders and recipient projects) are funded from the same sources as township projects and often exhibit the same tendencies to inefficiency, corruption and ideological confusion. Organisations struggling to carve out a niche for themselves in community development in which they can be seen to represent the interests of the unemployed, unskilled, women or co-operatives often pursue inconsistent and antagonistic strategies which lead to tension at all levels of the development process.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, in accounting for the ineffectiveness of community-based projects like the Spiritual Churches Centre and Philippi Enterprises one must consider the socio-political environment into which people have been socialised.

In order for community-based projects to operate effectively there is a need, Wilson and Ramphele have argued, 'to succeed in making people believe in themselves in an environment where everything negates their very humanity' (1989:289). This condition, Davies believes, lies at the very core of projects' failure to achieve their objectives, and it is 'attributable to a socio-political dispensation which has deliberately sought to exclude and marginalise the black majority in South Africa' (1989:16).

One consequence of this condition is 'the ease with which people fall back into despair whenever the going gets tough' (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989:290). This is frequently interpreted as 'community apathy' or a 'lack of motivation'; and results in perceptions that disadvantaged people are incapable of looking after their own affairs. It is important, however, Davies believes, to look at the reasons why people appear demotivated. 'For many decades, the role and status to which they have been consigned by oppressive legislation and custom have been such that they have little reason to believe that their life prospects are anything other than dismal' (Davies, 1989:16).

3. Looking to the Future

In the Introduction to this thesis I argued that South Africa was at the early stages of a period of transition from its effective isolation, to the beginning of its reincorporation into the world "development system". The 1990s will see a

change in South Africa's role both as a donor and recipient of development aid.

As I have previously discussed, major western governments are already involved in South Africa. At present their development involvement is dominated by bilateral aid which is disbursed without any mediation by the South African government. Western governments' aid is given with the stated aim of bringing an end to apartheid and helping those groups disadvantaged or discriminated against because of apartheid. This sort of involvement has been described as 'political' and 'unconventional' and, it is unlikely to have a significant role in a post-apartheid South Africa.

A recent Business International Publication has suggested that 'Bilateral aid will decline in importance as donors channel their funds through multinational (agencies) and donors will increasingly target NGOs for aid as a way of ensuring money gets to the poorest sections of the community where it is most needed' (quoted in Whiteside, 1990:9). Diplomats have expressed to me their view that such a rechanneling of aid is unlikely to occur at least until the transition period reaches its final stages. Bilateral aid, it seems, will continue to be disbursed through diplomatic offices and will be designed to ease the transition with an emphasis on education, social upliftment (which may involve giving support to the government's Independent Development Trust), promoting democracy, and the return of refugees.

If the transition to a democratically-elected government is achieved, however, the form of bilateral aid, which is often characterised as conscience money, will no longer flow into the country. Some bilateral donors (notably Britain and America) will, Whiteside believes, continue to maintain a bilateral aid programme but of a different direction and type to that described in this thesis (Whiteside, 1990:11). A possible direction for new aid could be support to an initiative for regional development in which South Africa is the powerhouse.

Certainly in the new development era in a post-apartheid South Africa, multilateral agencies which were previously prevented from operating would do so. The following donors are likely to become involved: The World Bank; the African Development Bank; UN agencies; the European Community; and Arab Funds.

Future development strategies in South Africa will have to deal with national issues about investment, economic growth, land and other assets, national income, education, health and so on. But there are problems which need to be tackled immediately. These are problems associated with poverty. South Africa desperately needs an anti-poverty programme. Such a programme would entail what Sandbrook (1982) has called non-structural reform. Any new government in South Africa will be in search of legitimacy and must, therefore, be 'concerned to mitigate the daily hardships of ordinary people' (1982:240). There seems to be a realisation in the country that socio-economic upliftment is crucial if democracy is to be given a chance. The government have pledged to commit further

government revenues to development programmes designed to tackle social issues.

There are of course problems with state-led poverty-directed development programmes which are criticised for failing to reach the poorest of the poor. There are alternative basic-needs strategies of change, however, which aim at grassroots liberation. Such strategies which can emanate from government or NGOs are forms of community development which promote the notion of participatory development.

It is hoped that in a post-apartheid South Africa a less rigid and repressive regime will allow the development of autonomous organisations of poor people. Out of local organisation can develop local self-reliance, self-confidence and above all, in this immediate period of transition, a feeling that something is being done, and can be done to tackle the problems of poverty.

Black communities in South Africa are forced to confront the effects of what Davies (1989) has called 'cumulative deprivation', and solving the problem means having to break the cycle of deprivation (1989:18). Grassroots participatory development can, Goulet (1979) has argued, prove liberating in two senses.

First, such projects can help liberate small communities from something. Insofar as the poor share the benefits of projects designed to improve health, educational or housing facilities

or production techniques and facilities, they achieve some relief from material deprivation.

Development participation may also be liberating in a broader sense. Through the process of defining their own needs and designing and implementing their own projects, urban poor educate themselves in organisational dynamics and self-government. This, it is hoped, will give rise to empowerment which entails the 'shifting of the perceptions of subordinate people, enabling them to assume greater control over their lives' (Ramphela, forthcoming) (Goulet, 1979:556-564).

This is not simply an argument in support of the sorts of community development interventions that I have described throughout this thesis. Far from it, I have shown how government-directed experiments were used largely to promote national development along apartheid lines and by extension to exert control over black South Africans. I have also shown that the sort of second-rate community development programmes implemented by foreign governments and other donors have not proved liberating for poor communities.

Old-style community development as I describe it in this thesis has not taken the issue of participatory development seriously. Community development will undoubtedly be a feature of future development strategies in South Africa and what is now essential is that the mechanisms are put in place to ensure that external aid is used positively and constructively. A network of responsible and well-funded NGOs, staffed by trained personnel who understand and respect local

institutions, must be established. Relationships of trust must also be established between strengthened and representative community organisations, NGOs, funders and the state. If foreign governments are serious about committing themselves to programmes of social upliftment then they must be seen to disentangle genuine development involvement from the practice of manipulative politics

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Doing it for themselves

When the Buthisizwe co-operative was established, many people scoffed. But the workers' perseverance has earned them the respect of the community — and financial independence. REHANA ROSSOUW reports:



PERSEVERANCE: These workers at the Buthisizwe Co-operative have reaped the respect of the community

PIC: YUNUS MOHAMED

refurbishment of the premises their first task, building partitions, adding new wooden floors and making chairs and benches for the workers.

Because the co-operative did not make profits immediately and there was no money to pay salaries, most of the participants pulled out by the second month.

Buthisizwe became a target of scorn

in the community. Many people felt that Bengé was wasting her time, misleading the unemployed workers.

"We had to take drastic action because people were beginning to feel very disheartened, so we pooled the little extra money we had and bought groceries for just two staff members each week," Bengé said.

"So the two workers went home with

the grocery parcels and the community could see that Buthisizwe gave its people enough money to support its workers."

Four years later, money is still in short supply at Buthisizwe. The project has no outside financial assistance, except for sewing machines bought by the British embassy.

The project first started paying sala-

ries in January 1988. Each worker received R1,50 a week, which later grew to R4,80 a week.

However, the project was not without its problems. When conditions improved at Buthisizwe and the community heard that it was paying salaries, many of those who had abandoned the project earlier came rushing back.

"We also had people from organisations coming in here, telling us that we did not know how to run things, that we needed to employ them to show us how," said Bengé.

"We told them that we did not need them. Now that the potato was peeled, they all had teeth to eat, but none of them would help us peel it in the first place."

BUTHISIZWE DELIBERATELY does not accept outside funding. Staff are told that if they want to make money, they have to work hard.

The project is built on the understanding that the workers are producing goods for themselves and their communities, not to impress funders or political organisations.

They sell their shirts, jackets, dresses, jerseys, bags, mats, pillows, duvets and woodwork at flea markets all over Cape Town.

The most successful project is the brick-making project, which was started with one bag of cement and now orders more than 100 a month.

The co-operative is managed by a committee of eight people, representing the four projects — sewing, weaving, brick-making and carpentry.

They also run a training programme, teaching people from the community designing skills to assist them with their sewing projects at home.

Despite all its problems, Buthisizwe workers are proud of the fact that they have made it on their own, even if they still occasionally go home at the end of the week with barely enough money to survive.

"I'd rather be left here alone than take outside funding," said Bengé.

"I want to teach my people that they must stop waiting for other people to walk through the door with money to help them, instead of helping themselves.

"Nothing in this world is given to you free of charge; you have to struggle for everything that you've got.

"Even if we aren't sure that there will be a salary, one thing we are sure of is that we have work.

"Buthisizwe will survive, and we will show South Africa that if it wants to survive the future, our people will have to work very hard."

SOUTH 'ARTICLE
JUNE 12 1991

Africa

1991

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROSPECTS FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. It is highly unlikely that the current reforms in South Africa will be reversed under the present administration, although there are still many obstacles on the way to a post-apartheid South Africa. (para 3.1)

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Building Democracy and "Good Governance"

2. The old argument that tribal and regional divisions in Africa make it impossible to construct a workable multi-party democracy seems no longer to be a bar to the introduction or preservation of democracy in Southern Africa. (para. 4.16)

3. African people themselves demand that government be more answerable to the governed. Democracy is in itself not enough to create stable societies in which economic development can occur. There needs also to be good, efficient and incorrupt government—"good governance". (para. 4.16)

4. There is no single model of democracy which may be simply adopted in each country. All the countries of Southern Africa have their own traditions and conditions, and western models may be worse than useless. Certain principles, however, are essential. They are a multi-party democracy, with free elections and freedom of the press; the rule of law; an independent judiciary, an efficient and uncorrupt government and civil service; and a separation between the state and the party in power. It should be brought home to the countries of Southern Africa that these principles are not options, but essential for economic development. If they are permanently to emerge from poverty, they will need to create wealth for all of their people, not only a section of them; and they will need to do so with the consent and co-operation of their people. (para 4.16)

Economic Problems and Solutions

5. The help of the developed world will be essential in the process of economic reform: but the main burden of change will lie upon the countries themselves. (para 4.17)

6. The recognition that the efforts of aid donors should be more fully co-ordinated, more long-term, and more concerned with the final benefits of their aid promises better results for the future. It will of course always be essential to monitor aid closely to ensure that it pursues the goal of effectiveness and sustainability. (para 4.35)

7. We believe that further research and consideration should be given to the basic economic choices facing Southern Africa, and recommend that the government promote such research and new thinking. (para 4.36)

THE UK'S POLICY OPTIONS

Diplomacy

8. If apartheid is swept away in South Africa, and a new Southern Africa emerges in which regional cooperation could provide a stimulus to real economic growth, much of the UK's approach to the region will need to be rethought. Our diplomacy will no longer be dominated by the issues of apartheid. This moment has not yet arrived, and realistically, our diplomacy, aid and trade will need to deal with the situation as it is at the present time. We must, however, look forward, to the new diplomatic, aid and trade opportunities and problems which will emerge in the future. (para 6.2)

Sanctions

9. It is clear to us that President de Klerk is genuinely committed to the abandonment of apartheid and the creation of a multi-racial democracy: Sanctions were imposed on South Africa not just because of its rejection of universal suffrage and its imposition of authoritarian rule but because apartheid imposed by law segregation and discrimination on the basis of race and colour. When the legal foundations of apartheid are uprooted, sanctions which were intended to achieve precisely that result, will no longer be required while South Africa badly

needs new investment and greater trade links. Britain, having maintained strong connections with, and a positive role in the country, is now in a good position to move beyond the sanctions debate, and become more closely involved still with the process in South Africa. We believe that the time is fast approaching for the UK to remove all of the economic against South Africa. They include not only those which remain from those agreed by the EC in 1986—a ban on imports of certain South African iron and steel, and of certain South African gold coins—but also all of those agreed in other fora—which would include the bans on the sale and export of oil to South Africa. They should be lifted as soon as legislation for the repeal of the Group Areas Act, Land Acts and Population Registration Act has been enacted by the South African parliament. Access for South Africa to the IMF will require the consent of the US Government and Congress. The UK should enter into discussions with the US to achieve this result. (para 6.8)

10. During our visit in South Africa we discovered that many South Africans regard sporting sanctions as particularly important. We believe that it is time now for the international community to begin to revive sporting links with South Africa. Nevertheless, it is important that the UK should do this in conjunction with the other signatories to the Gleneagles Agreement. We recommend that the UK back moves to remove the inhibition on sporting links with South Africa at the next meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government for those sports conducted on genuinely non-racial lines. (para 6.9)

11. We believe however that those sanctions which relate to the import and export of arms and related material, and to military contacts with South Africa should remain for the time being. They should not be removed until all South Africans of an appropriate age are given the right to vote under a new democratic constitution within the state of South Africa. (para 6.10)

12. Whatever the merits of the cultural and academic boycotts of South Africa in the past (and we believe that they have closed an important channel through which the UK might encourage and influence the process of reform in South Africa) we believe that they are now out of date. Now is the time for Britain to increase its contacts at all levels with South Africa. (para 6.11)

The Commonwealth

13. We believe that it is important that the Commonwealth should redefine its role to concentrate on more functional activities, such as fostering cooperation in the economic, technical and development spheres. Such a redefinition of its activities may ensure the continued vitality of the Commonwealth in a post-apartheid world. (para 6.12)

14. Britain should support the return of South Africa to the Commonwealth once a post-apartheid constitution is in place. (para 6.12)

The British Missions in South Africa

15. During our visit to South Africa we found the work of the British Ambassador, Sir Robin Renwick, and his immensely able and sympathetic staff to be a model for the operations of any embassy in politically difficult circumstances akin to those in South Africa. We pay tribute to their essential work and hope that it will not only continue in as impressive a fashion under his successor, but also continue to grow. Indeed, we believe that “community diplomacy” has possible applications in other situations and countries. We recommend that the FCO assess such possibilities. (para 6.13)

Political Aid

16. While we believe that it is important for the UK to help along the process of democratic discussion and development, we would lay down a number of rules to govern the use of any funds laid out for this purpose. (para 6.15)

17. We recommend that British financial and technical support be given for any multi-party elections held in Angola or Mozambique. The UK should also send observers to monitor that any such elections are carried out in a free and fair manner. (para 6.16)

British Council

18. We recommend that the British Council should open a centre in Cape town as soon as possible, and that its programmes in South Africa should seek to meet the challenge now posed by the pace of change. (para 6.19)

Objectives

19. The FCO's objectives for Sub-Saharan Africa should include support for democratic reform as well as stability. (para 6.22)

The Aid Programme

20. The weight given to Southern Africa in the aid budget we believe to be justified. We believe that the UK should intensify its aid efforts within the region. (para 6.24)

Aid and Conditionality

21. We welcome the Foreign Secretary's warning to governments in receipt of aid that with the growing demands on aid budgets everywhere, those countries that prove unable to distribute aid because of the ineffectiveness of their administrations or the nature of their regimes may find donors reluctant to use scarce resources to support them. We also support the staged approach to the encouragement of "good governance" outlined in evidence by the Foreign Secretary although, if the final stage of reducing aid to a government is reached, we would prefer to see that aid transferred to a non-governmental organisation, wherever possible. That does not mean, of course, that humanitarian aid or emergency aid programmes should be interrupted. (para 6.26)

Project Aid and Technical Assistance

22. We believe that the Limpopo railway line could provide an important boost to the economic prospects of Mozambique and Zimbabwe and in principle we recommend that ODA should continue to support the project. (para 6.28)

23. The British Government should press for the creation of a land resettlement programme in Zimbabwe which is workable and which will prevent investors losing confidence in the country and agricultural production falling into decline. If it is satisfied on these counts the UK government should aid the programme with fresh money. In any case, it should continue to support the infrastructure and services projects which it has already aided. (para 6.30)

Debt Relief

24. The "Trinidad Terms" provide an excellent opportunity for relieving some of the worst effects of debt on some of the poorest countries and we believe that they should be agreed at the forthcoming London summit of the Group of Seven and begin to be implemented urgently. The UK should also continue to press for further action on the cancelling of debt owed to the European Development Fund. (para 6.32)

We recommend that the British Government adopt certain policy aims when negotiating the new Trinidad Terms, as set out in para. 6.33.

Emergency Aid

25. We believe that the UK should expand its emergency relief commitments this year to meet the threat of drought coming on top of the conflicts of the region. (para 6.34)

26. We recommend that the "community diplomacy" programmes be modestly extended. In keeping with our earlier recommendation (paragraph 6.13 above) we recommend that the experience of our embassy in South Africa in disbursing aid should be assessed with a view to extending such an approach to other countries. (para 6.36)

Aid in South Africa

27. We believe that the British aid programmes in South Africa should continue their steady growth. (para 6.37)

We endorse the current primacy of the education sector in the British aid effort. We would recommend that a greater proportion of educational aid be directed towards education at technician level as well as at the universities. (para 6.37)

28. We welcome Mrs Chalker's statement that the ODA wants to do more work in the "development of small enterprise projects in South Africa." (para 6.37)

29. We believe that ODA and FCO in conjunction with the British embassy in Pretoria should give urgent attention to the possibility of assistance in dealing with returning exiles and former prisoners and their rehabilitation and integration within South African society. (para 6.38)

Non-Governmental Organisations

30. We recommend that the ODA assesses its current programme of assistance to NGOs in Southern Africa with a view to extending the successful programme. (para 6.39)

Trade Policy

31. We believe that encouraging the development of small and medium-sized private sector businesses should become a priority for the aid programme throughout Southern Africa. (para 6.44)

Conclusion

32. A new "wind of change" is blowing through Southern Africa. The first led to the rapid decolonisation and transformation of colonial territories into independent nation states. This second wind of change is blowing through the political and economic structures of those states. (para 6.46)

33. The UK, which has been deeply involved by history and interests in the region, must now be prepared to adapt its policies to these new conditions and developments. There is first the task of ensuring that, with radical political and economic change now going on in so many parts of the globe, the needs and potential of Southern Africa are not forgotten. The UK's position in the EC and in the Commonwealth make her well placed for this role. The process of negotiation and reform in South Africa has to be further supported and encouraged, and ties with all the parties and peoples truly committed to reform strengthened and thickened. (para 6.47)

34. The economy of South Africa has to be given every opportunity to grow and develop. High standards of democracy and good governance have to be demanded and monitored—although without undue insistence on models or blueprints of particular systems of government. Aid and technical assistance programmes have to be re-fashioned to assist the new situation, both in South Africa and in the neighbouring states. (para 6.48)

35. Our report has also identified the other enormous change, the change in the external context in which Southern Africa issues will be worked out. The region had become the centre of internal competition between the superpowers, part and parcel of the Cold War. Many Southern African leaders had turned to the Soviet Union, the East and communist world for support for "the armed struggle" and had adopted Eastern Bloc political and economic structures. The collapse of these structures in Eastern Europe and the change in Soviet foreign policy has fundamentally altered the international context in which Southern Africa issues may now be resolved. It is not likely to lead to a new "western" domination of the region; nor should it. It could lead to a new freedom for Southern African states to search for political and economic solutions which are "home grown" rather than imposed or fashioned from outside. The UK can and must be closely involved in this unfolding process, both to its own advantage and the advantage of all the nations of the region and all their peoples.

POSSIBLE TRENDS IN AID FLOWS TO SOUTH AFRICA (REAL TERMS)

SOURCE: WHITESIDE (1991)

