

AFRICANS IN CAPE TOWN: THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF
STATE POLICY AND POPULAR RESISTANCE TO 1936

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degree of Master of Social Science

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to develop an understanding of the evolution of state policy towards Africans in Cape Town, and to document the resistance engendered by discriminatory and oppressive laws. Utilizing both primary and secondary sources, the thesis describes and analyses complex social problems and political struggles which originated and developed in the period before 1936. By emphasizing the material and political dimensions, as well as the class interests and social categories involved in this uneven process of struggle, the thesis attempts to transcend the limitations not only of functionalist and "conflict pluralist" perspectives, but also of the more simplistic Marxist formulations propounded within the field of South African urban studies.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis traces the origins and early development of state policy towards Africans living and working in Cape Town. It also begins to explore the popular resistance engendered by this developing policy. The historical analysis begins by tracing the emergence of a "Kaffir Problem" in Woodstock in the early 1880's, and ends in 1936 with the contested demise of the government location that had been established earlier in the century at Ndabeni. More broadly, these temporal parameters mark on the one hand the first stirrings of industrialization in what was later to become the Union of South Africa. On the other, they delineate the emergence of a coherent and codified "Native Policy" (embodied in the two "Hertzog Laws" of 1936 and the Natives (Urban Areas) Act Amendment of the following year) which sought to establish effective control over a growing and increasingly urbanized African work force.

The historical mode of analysis adopted in this study, as well as the manner in which its constituent empirical material is organized and presented in the following chapters, are best explained and justified in the context of an overview of the relevant literature. This introductory chapter therefore examines South African urban studies in the broadest sense.

Until recently, the particular combination of historical perspective and sociological analysis adopted in this thesis found little place in South African urban studies. To a large extent, these works could be divided into three categories: firstly functionalist "cultural pluralist" approaches; secondly

Weberian "conflict pluralists"; and lastly Marxist historical materialist perspectives. Although this overview thus utilizes a tripartite typology, it should become clear in what follows that the basic dichotomy is between pluralists (of either "cultural" or "conflict" persuasion) who conceptualize South African society as basically comprising a number of "races", "ethnic groups" or ethnic "nations"(1) and historical materialists who favour class-analysis.

The Cultural Pluralists: Functionalist Approaches

Wilson and Mafeje's study of social groupings in the local Langa location (which replaced Ndabeni) is the earliest available academic work dealing specifically with Africans in Cape Town. Clearly influenced by Mayer and Mayer's earlier seminal study of Africans in East London(2), Wilson and Mafeje addressed as their central issue the adaptation of local Africans, through a variety of voluntary and ascribed associations, to life in a segregated and racially-oppressive city. They sought in their study firstly to identify "the effective social groups in Langa", and secondly to discover the basis for the coherence of these groups(3). For reasons which are avowedly pragmatic, political organizations and trade unions were excluded from the analysis, although the authors conceded that "A very large number of the people of Langa take a lively interest in politics, and readers must make allowance for this fact"(4). The study concluded somewhat tautologically that value-consensus is the basis of group solidarity(5).

Mafeje has since distanced himself from this study, which he admits is fundamentally flawed by its a-historical and functionalist methodology(6). Similar criticisms have been levelled by Magubane at the functionalist school (7). In order to understand these criticisms, it is clearly necessary to provide a brief outline of the central tenets of sociological functionalism. These are best summarized by Van den Berghe(8) whose discussion of the main elements of functionalism is reproduced almost verbatim by Swingewood(9).

Functionalism is predicated on a view of society as a system of inter-related parts. Social causation is viewed from this perspective in terms of multiple and reciprocal interactions, in which social process and institutions are explained teleologically in terms of their effects or functions. Functionalism furthermore embodies a view of human action that is clearly deterministic(10). The social system is considered to evince a dominant tendency towards stability and inertia. Society is thus considered to be in a constant state of "moving" or "dynamic" equilibrium, which is guaranteed by a basic value-consensus produced by mechanisms of socialization. Dysfunctional elements are said to be neutralized and institutionalized by mechanisms of social control. As this view of man/woman and society is predicated on a conception of social order being maintained by the diffusion of norms, values and collective goals, and dysfunctional elements that do exist are seen to be themselves "largely cultural in character"(11). Functionalist overtones are clearly evident in the work of Wilson and Mafeje and of Mayer and Mayer. Both these

studies neglect history and politics, stressing instead functionalist conceptions of adaptation, values and culture. Their stress on culture, which is largely subsumed within racial, ethnic and tribal categories, justifies their characterization as "cultural pluralist" studies.

An earlier example of work within this paradigm is the study of the "racial ecology" of Durban, which was conducted by Kuper, Watts and Davies in 1958. The "residential ecology of the races" outlined in chapters 4 and 5 of Kuper et al's work provided a measure of "natural" segregation, which is a concept originally developed by American functionalists of the "Chicago School". According to Mellor, the Chicago School's Park and McKenzie saw racial segregation as a natural phenomenon resulting from processes of "racial" invasion and succession(12), while their colleague Burgess maintained that

in the expansion of the city, a process of distribution takes place which sifts and sorts and relocates individuals and groups by residence and occupation.... Segregation offers the group, and thereby the individuals who compose the group, a place and a role in the total organization of city life(13).

Kuper, Watts and Davies did not explicitly mention the Chicago School in their study of Durban's development, but they conceded that

the distinction between pure ("natural" or voluntary) segregation and applied (planned or compulsory) segregation may be clear in theory: it is often ambiguous when related to a concrete situation(14).

These authors briefly outlined "two opposite theories (which) are held in regard to the consequences of contact between races". They qualified their acceptance of the "theory" which "asserts that contact promotes harmony" by stressing the importance of "level", "type", "source" and "context" of inter-racial contact, and ascribed to the South African government the erroneous opposite view or "theory" that

contact breeds friction. The customs of people of different races are considered to be incompatible, and harmonious relations can therefore be secured only by reducing points of contact to the minimum(15).

This segregationist viewpoint has been explicitly stated by Afrikaner nationalist intellectuals such as Strauss(16), Marais(17) and Koornhof(18). Although apparently diametrically opposed to the views discussed above, the segregationist perspective may clearly be considered as a variant of "cultural pluralism".

The last important author who needs to be discussed under the rubric of cultural pluralism is Swanson. In an early approach

to the question of urban racial segregation in South Africa he argued that "because of the nature of the urban poor", health hazards and problems of sanitation and overcrowding in South Africa's developing cities at the beginning of the Twentieth Century were "usually perceived in terms of racial or ethnic differences"(19). This is a descriptive statement rather than a serious attempt at analysis, for it accepts as given factors such as poverty and racism, which surely demand explanation.

Swanson eventually abandoned this inadequate conceptualization of the "sanitation syndrome", clearly perceiving that "urban native policy" in the Cape Colony during the first decade of the present century embodied a rational programme designed

to organize society to provide for the mutual access of black labourers and white employers in the coming industrial age, without having to pay the heavy cost of urbanization or losing the dominance of white over black(20).

These formulations marked a definitive break with the functionalist "cultural pluralist" perspective, and signified the adoption of a Weberian "conflict pluralist" analysis in South African urban studies. This particular development is discussed in the next section.

The Conflict Pluralists: Weberian Approaches

Functionalist cultural pluralism has been largely superseded within South Africa's English-language universities by a second form of pluralism in which Weberian influences are for the most part readily apparent. The term "conflict pluralism" is used here to refer to approaches which retain the cultural pluralist emphasis on "race" while introducing the Weberian notion of "domination"(21).

Weber himself never addressed the modern urban question. His pioneering classic The City dealt with the mediaeval city in terms of domination or legitimated power(22). The Weberian approach in modern urban sociology was first developed by Rex and Moore in their analysis of housing and "race relations" in the Sparkbrook area of Birmingham. This study concluded that

there is a class struggle over the use of houses and that this class struggle is the central process of the city as a social unit. In saying this, we follow Max Weber who saw that class' struggle was apt to emerge wherever people in a market situation enjoyed differential access to property; and that such class struggles might therefore arise not merely around the use of the means of industrial production, but around the control of domestic property... there will therefore be as many housing classes in the city as there are kinds of access to the use of housing(23).

Summarizing his work with Moore, Rex explained that the concept of "housing classes" arose out of a (typically Weberian) endeavour to provide

an account in terms of the action frame of reference which explains particular kinds of land-use and building-use in terms of the action-orientation of typical residents(24).

This quest subsequently led him into a growing preoccupation with the concept of "race" and the phenomenon of racial prejudice and antipathy.

Thus in a book entitled Race, Colonialism & the City(25), he argued that the central dynamic of the modern imperialist world is the "race war" raging in many cities in the advanced capitalist countries (where the oppressed black underclass is rising in revolt) and in the countryside in various parts of the exploited and deliberately underdeveloped Third World (where armed struggle against neo-colonialism has become the order of the day). He foresaw the suppression of the revolutionary movement (from which he maintained that the co-opted organized workers are excluded) in the metropolitan countries and the defeat of the guerillas in the Third World. Nevertheless, he predicted that

the ideal of Third World and black revolution will survive and will be the determining factor in world history for many years to come. Compared to it, the revolution of European Marxism will

appear sociologically as little more than a little local difficulty(26).

This line of thinking was further developed in another of Rex's publications, which opened with the assertion that "racial discrimination and racial prejudice are phenomena of colonialism"(27). Here he argued that "certain forms of poverty and underprivilege are built into the structures of urban industrial society"(28) and that black people are forced into these structurally disadvantaged positions (alongside the "native" sub-proletariat) by racial prejudice and discrimination. In many metropolitan cities (including those in certain "settler societies" such as South Africa), the "black underclass" consists, he said, largely of in-migrants from devastated underdeveloped regions(29).

He further argued that the degree to which "black-white relations" resulted in an "urban crisis" depends largely on the level of employment and on the nature of relations between the black community and the police. With high levels of unemployment and bad relations with the police, the insulated black "colonies" in the metropolitan cities could become "the breeding ground of racial revolution"(30). He envisaged three possible lines of development: racial integration, militant black separation, and segregation with suppression (as in South Africa).

Here Rex was building on his suggestion that a general theory combining insights derived from "cultural pluralism" with those derived from Marxism would facilitate the understanding of

South African society. He saw the "cultural pluralist" analysis as being too narrowly political and the Marxist analysis as being too narrowly economic, and his "main contention.... is that all the various groups and segments in this society are held locked together, albeit in bitter conflict, not solely by the institution of government, but by a rapidly expanding economy and the exploitative labour system on which it depends"(31). He argued that this system "might be said to be the theoretically most perfect system of labour exploitation yet devised"(32), and in another essay he discussed "The Compound, The Reserve and the Urban Location: The Essential Institutions of Southern African Labour Exploitation"(33).

This form of analysis of South African society thus opened up a new dimension to the study of urban history and politics. So far as the position of Africans in Cape Town is concerned, four works deserve special mention. Firstly, there is the South African Institute of Race Relations analysis of The Squatter Problem in the Western Cape(34), which is clearly predicated on a supply and demand perspective. The demand for housing (due to natural population growth and in-migration stemming from economic pressures) was said to be far greater than the forthcoming supply, which is limited by a lack of government housing funds and by administrative action such as the implementation of the Group Areas Act, as well as natural factors such as obsolescence and decay which necessitate the demolition of slums. The government attempts to evade responsibility for African housing, sheltering behind the apartheid policy of "homelands", migrant labour, influx control and "Coloured Labour Preference", which

weakens the national and regional economics both directly, (through high administrative costs and by increasing the population density on the land in the Reserves), and indirectly by limiting productivity and restricting skills.

Not only is broader government policy said to be exacerbating the economic ills of the system, but policy with regard to the housing crisis, in which existing townships become increasingly overcrowded until a spill-over into similarly overcrowded squatter camps results, was seen as ineffective. To solve the problem, a comprehensive programme was advocated, including the upgrading of squatter areas through self-help schemes with expert inputs; a large-scale housing programme in which limited State resources should be supplemented by funds from well-meaning individuals, commerce and industry, and bodies such as the Urban Foundation; and the achievement of zero population growth through a family-planning policy, which should include the raising of the socio-economic status of the underprivileged and the provision of training and employment for young woman to delay childbearing age.

More fundamentally, such manifestations of apartheid as the migrant labour system, influx control, the Group Areas Act and the Western Cape Coloured Labour Preference Policy should be phased out, as "there is no group in South Africa that is benefitting from these policies", which merely conceal rather than confront social problems by tackling symptoms instead of real structural causes. Once influx control and the migrant

labour system have been phased out, and the population density in the Reserves or "homelands" consequently lowered, (although the influx to Cape Town would not be excessive once the families of existing contract workers are allowed in), an urgent programme for the development of homeland agriculture should be drawn up, centering on "appropriate technology" and administrative flexibility(35).

The Urban Problems Research Unit analysis of the African housing question in Cape Town(36) was identical in intent to that of the SAIRR, even containing a yellow-paged section entitled "Implications of the Study for Policy-Makers". This focused on the impracticality of effecting influx control through apartheid measures, and the functionality of squatting and the "informal sector" of the economy in providing shelter and income for immigrants from the rural areas and for township residents who cannot afford to pay rent. Devolution of decision-making power to the regional level was advocated, as this would facilitate the formulation of a policy that could take these realities into account.

A more radical brand of liberalism was evident in the late Andrew Silk's journalistic account of the struggle against government policy waged by the squatters of Modderdam (one of a number of local squatter camps that sprang up and were soon razed during the second half of the 1970's). Silk showed how

the story goes beyond the camp's narrow boundaries. For the contradiction which forms the central thread in the life of the squatters is also woven through South African history. The economy's huge appetite for black labour is in conflict with white fears of being "swamped", then ruled, by blacks. Modderdam was a microcosm of this classical struggle(37).

He warned that

chaos and strife is inevitable as long as the government clings to apartheid's fundamental principle and refuses to grant blacks full rights to travel, settle, work, buy land, and ultimately vote in the city(38).

The first section of the book provided insights into the lives of Modderdam's residents, with some of whom Silk obviously enjoyed a degree of intimacy. The second was historical, starting with the conquest of South Africa's indigenous people, and tracing the development of segregation and apartheid both in the broader society and in Cape Town. Silk mentioned, but did not develop, the idea that separatism is the means whereby blacks are "prevented from acquiring the aspirations of a settled working class", thus preserving white supremacy(39). The account of local history was superficial, as Silk failed to make use of any academic work in this field. The third section examined the emergence of the local squatter movement in the

mid 1970's. Silk discussed the manner in which, from small beginnings, this movement grew rapidly during the 1976 anti-apartheid revolt, which spread to Cape Town in August. With the authorities preoccupied suppressing the uprising, many thousands of families moved out of Cape Town's overcrowded urban locations and the desolate rural locations of the Xhosa homelands, into the bush on the outskirts of the city to secure themselves homes. He showed how the squatters were caught in the middle of the brutal conflict fostered by the authorities between the compound-based migrants and the permanent residents of the locations; and how the Modderdam squatters committee became dependent on support from liberal (mainly white) lawyers and community workers, resulting in conflict within the camp. The final chapter described Modderdam's violent demise.

The last work considered here is Western's account of the impact of the segregatory Group Areas Act on the "Coloured" community in the Cape Town suburb of Mowbray. The situation was seen in terms of "the attempts of a racial oligarchy to maintain its hegemony by as many means as possible - including spatial means"(40). Western argued that "the most effective policy for the government has to be one of continual removal, one that does not permit the appearance of place-specific solidarity"(41).

He provided a rudimentary outline of the development of Cape Town as a segregated city, concluding that "segregation means domination. It is one tool by which the increasingly outnumbered white ruling group can maintain social distance from, and hegemony over, other groups in South African society"(42). An

"ideal Apartheid City" was conceptualized, and Western then considered (with the aid of maps) how closely Cape Town actually approximates to this ideal-type.

Here Weber's influence was readily apparent, as it was in Western's stress on subjectivity. He argued that "humanistic geography.... implies looking at the city through the texture of the lives of its inhabitants"(43) and showed how peoples' lives were shattered by their removal to the instant slums of the Cape Flats, where social dislocation gives rise to rampant crime and insecurity.

He considered "very premature" the contention that "the government's plan will backfire" because "the Sand Flats are natural breeding grounds for revolution". He seemed to envisage the townships achieving "a measure of social cohesion"(44) not through such allegedly "reactive" forms of organization as protest movements and political parties, but through the establishment of crime-busting "peacemaker" vigilante groups(45).

He gave a schematic account of the squatter movement that developed in Cape Town in the mid-1970's, and of the (apparently unrelated) "civil unrest" which flared up at that time. His "uncertain conclusion" was that

in the longest term, then, it would seem that [the] exacerbation of intrasocietal tension by the institution of group areas may actually be undermining the security of that shrinking minority in South Africa - the Whites(45a).

He dealt in a postscript with the local resurgence of "civil unrest" in 1980, concluding that "it seems that race is becoming a more important element of self-definition, especially for many among the young"(46), despite the fact that apartheid has historically created self-sustaining barriers between members of different "racial" groups(47).

Western, and the other "conflict pluralists" discussed above, have clearly advanced considerably beyond the functionalist conceptions of the "cultural pluralists". But despite their Weberian emphasis on domination, they nevertheless retain the basic "racial" assumptions of pluralism. This consideration renders their accounts of social control and social conflict problematic. The following section discusses theorists who have attempted to dispense with pluralist racial assumptions, while simultaneously relating social control and social conflict to the underlying dynamics of the capitalist economy(48).

Marxist Approaches

The international urban crisis of the late 1960's stimulated the development of Marxist urban studies. Prior to that date, historical materialist conceptualizations of the social processes underlying urban phenomena had barely advanced beyond Engels' embryonic formulations(49). Unfortunately failing to engage with the developing "conflict pluralist" perspective, the new twentieth century school of Marxist analysts of the urban question initially adopted a self-conscious programme of conceptual mapping in order to clear the way for concrete analysis. This end was however soon forgotten in the prevailing atmosphere of

heady abstraction.

At the forefront of this intellectual movement was the influential Castells, leaning methodologically on the French structuralist Althusser and politically on Althusser's protégé Poulantzas. Castells' efforts to delineate a field of urban studies and to develop concepts with which to analyse the urban question are chronicled in a series of works spanning a full decade(50). His work, however, was increasingly criticized for its formalism(51) and idealism(52) and for its neglect of history(53).

Scholars such as Foster in Britain(54) and Dawley in the United States(55) turned to the writing of theoretically-informed local histories to remedy the imputed scholasticism of Castells and his followers. But serious charges of economism(56) were levelled at Foster's seminal study of Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution, and a new school of "culturalist" local urban history found expression in the pages of the History Workshop Journal and elsewhere. South African scholarship has been profoundly affected by these developments.

Marxist approaches to the urban question in South Africa attempt to move beyond what are seen as the tautological limitations of all forms of pluralism. Radical scholars maintain that the "racial" question is best explained in terms of the exigencies of capitalist development. This approach proceeds from the conviction, best expressed by Johnstone, that the system of racial domination in South Africa is not a doomed "dysfunctional intrusion upon the capitalist economic system, stemming from non-material

factors outside it such as prejudice, racism, nationalism and 'social and cultural pluralism'" but a "product of the system of production of which it form[s] a part, and is determined in its specific forms, functions and nature by this system"(57).

Rich was the first South African scholar to publicly take issue with the pluralist perspective on the urban question. In a paper published in 1978, he castigated Davenport for stressing the irrationality of urban residential segregation(58). Rich called for a class-analysis of urban segregation, which he said had been largely ignored by Marxist scholars, who tended to concentrate rather on the role played by the Reserves in the development of South African Capitalism(59). He concluded that "segregation cannot be solely located in the cheap labour basis of the Reserves", as this view overlooks the role played in the development of state policy by the clash of interests in the urban areas. Urban residential segregation was, he argued, a

rational ideological response by certain groups within the white policy, namely white labour and urban commercial capital, to what was perceived as an economic threat to their livelihood....

In addition, however, the growth of a distinctly segregationist movement in the urban areas checked the power of international capital that would have reduced the white labour aristocracy in its power to reserve certain jobs to itself,

due to "the desire by international capital for a stabilizing petty bourgeois class among Africans in the urban areas"(60).

Rich failed in this paper to show exactly how urban segregation benefitted capitalists, and he also neglected to analyse resistance to state policy. Subsequent work within this tradition has attempted to remedy these lacunae, and thereby to develop a more coherent Marxist account of the South African urban question. Proctor's history of Sophiatown from 1905 to 1940 addressed these questions, but in a rather superficial and unsatisfactory manner. He argued that

government labour policy in this period then seems to have been to encourage the free flow of labour to that sector of industry (i.e. manufacturing) which was able to benefit most from the minimal government regulation, and which was rapidly assuming a position of hegemony within the state(61).

Segregatory legislation and the pass laws, he said, may in theory have been directed towards the maintenance of the migrant labour system and the safeguarding of the labour supply of the agricultural sector, but in practice "they were deliberately worded and applied so as to enable the creation of an increasingly stabilized industrial workforce in the urban areas in the late twenties and early thirties"(62). He maintained that "the State allowed a virtually uninhibited flow of African families into Johannesburg throughout the thirties and early forties"(63) and that prior to 1948 (and the subsequent implementation of the apartheid policy), "the labour market.... was structured more by the operation of economic forces than by deliberate regulation"(64).

This was however the era of segregation, when state policy, as far as the African population was concerned, was directed primarily towards "class-levelling", as opposed to the post-1948 apartheid era in which the state increasingly fosters the natural process of "class-polarization" among the Africans(65). Proctor conceptualized segregation as the "means by which an aspirant black petty bourgeoisie could be successfully contained"(66), yet he argued that the state's response to the upsurge of worker militancy immediately before, during and after the First World War "seem [s] to have been characterised by an intention towards the further fractionalisation of the black working class through an incorporation of its aspirant middle class leadership elements"(67). Theorists such as Innes and Flaut argue far more convincingly and pertinently that

in the face of this offensive by the working class in South Africa.... the most important element of the capitalist strategy was to seek to develop the division which had already been established historically between white and African workers(68).

Proctor did mention "the racial polarization of class forces"(69), but he seemed largely to overlook the fact that this was a period of ever-increasing "racial" repression.

His account of the resistance to this repression was therefore unconvincing. He contended simply (without providing any evidence for this assertion) that "by 1923 the African petty bourgeoisie had accepted the notion of segregation in principle"(70).

Ignoring the massive growth of the industrial and Commercial Workers' Union during the 1920's, the emergence of the Communist - inspired Non-European Trade Union Federation in 1928, the radicalization of the African National Congress, and the "White Terror" which smashed this growing African working-class militancy, Proctor asserted simply that "Black radicalism had always been met by severe repression, and the only African political organizations allowed to operate relatively freely were those dominated by petty bourgeois leadership elements"(71).

Thus very little was made of the resistance of the residents of Sophiatown to the planned destruction of their community (which, due to this resistance, only began in 1955). Here Proctor stressed not organization but apathy. He said that

for a black worker living under such conditions, where life presented one long continual battle for survival, circumstances must have seemed to have a dead-weight permanence, entirely beyond his power to change or control(72)

and that "South African capitalism for these people must have seemed as immovable and as crushing as the hard, sharp quartzite of the Witwatersrand itself"(73). There may be an element of truth in his contention that the residents of Sophiatown, in the face of the hopelessness of their situation, resorted more to backyard shebeens and dance parties than to "overt political action"(74). Yet he acknowledged the Communist Party's extensive presence (including regular public meetings on Sunday

afternoons) in Sophiatown during the 1930's, and he could not completely ignore the fact that there was "a profusion of public meetings and rallies over various issues at various times in Sophiatown" - but this was simply ascribed to "petty bourgeois influence"(75).

Proctor had begun in this paper to develop a Marxist perspective on such crucial and neglected issues in South African historiography as state policy and popular resistance. His rudimentary explanation for the quiescence of the oppressed and the consequent generally low level of intensity of resistance to state policy is of particular significance, for his formulations in this regard were to be taken up and developed in the ensuing years by scholars such as Koch and La Hausse (whose work is discussed below). Before this could be accomplished, however, a necessary process of conceptual mapping had to be concluded.

In 1979 the Development Studies Group published a collection of papers which attempted to develop a Marxist perspective on "the complex but crucial set of intertwined relationships which revolve around squatting, population removals and resettlement, 'homeland' activities, housing shortages and unemployment"(76).

Here Maré argued that analysis of the "housing problem/squatter problem" should begin at the level of production, focusing on the primary contradiction between capital and labour. According to Maré,

squatter movements, food organizations, transport boycotts are some working class responses in the

class struggle. Influx control, provision of housing by the State, the 'homeland' policy and urbanization within these regions, bulldozing of squatter communities, low-cost housing, the Urban Foundation, represent some of the responses by capital(77).

He maintained that

it is necessary to look at the present 'squatter problem' against the background of the history of proletarianization in South Africa - a history that has led to specific economic, political and ideological measures by the State to aid the process of accumulation, and also to 'maintain and create the conditions for social harmony'(78).

Maré discussed five periods in this proletarianization process, in which the value of labour-power and hence the rate of surplus-value shifts continuously with the class struggle. The cost of housing is an important factor in determining the value of labour-power and the different periods (which seems somewhat arbitrary) have different housing policies, culminating in the two-pronged policy adopted in the mid-1970's. This involves firstly urbanization of the "homelands" near "white" industrial development centres, so that a section of the workers become commuters from these "homeland" townships, which also house the resettled relative surplus population. The other aspect of the present housing policy, he said, is the provision of improved services for

a stabilised petty bourgeoisie and part of the workforce (those in permanent employment, and with 'skills' related to production under monopoly capitalism) within black urban areas in 'white' areas. It is in this field that the direct involvement of monopoly capital through the Urban Foundation (UF) and indirectly through changes in State policy can be seen(79).

Maré sketched a theory of housing in the capitalist mode of production, in which it has a "dual nature": as a commodity, i.e. luxury housing (the exchange-value aspect of housing) and also as a necessity for the reproduction of labour-power, i.e. workers' housing (the use-value aspect). This dual nature of housing gives rise, he said, to two contradictions: firstly between building capital and industrial capital, which for obvious reasons demand high-priced and low-priced housing respectively, and secondly between the owners and the non-owners of land. The acrimony between local and central government over responsibility for the cost of public housing was said to reflect a conflict between fractions of capital, specifically between the monopoly and competitive fractions of industrial capital. This suggested theoretical framework for an analysis of the "squatter problem/housing problem" ended with an exposition of O' Connor's theory of state expenditure, as Maré argued that

the enormity of state involvement in the provision of housing demands that a theory of housing in South Africa also be a theory of the state in peripheral capitalist social formations and of state expenditure(80).

In a paper first published in 1980, Wilkinson contributed to the further development of Marxist urban studies in this country. He started off by defining and establishing relationships between concepts such as "mode of production", "forces of production", "relations of production", "means of production", "use-value", "exchange value", "surplus value", "hegemony", "ideology", "social formation", "constant capital", "variable capital" and "exploitation". From this discussion, he concluded that

the reproduction of the capitalist system as a whole, then, cannot be isolated from the continued (and increasing) exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class. Nor can it be isolated from the struggles of workers to resist the domination of capital as they become conscious of it and its origins in the production process(81).

Using Castells' concept of "collective consumption", Wilkinson argued that "housing in the broad sense is a critical element in the reproduction of labour-power"(82). He also employed Harvey to make the points that the housing market provides new fields for capital accumulation (thus contributing to the reproduction of capitalist relations of production) and that investment in the "built environment" is an important means of devaluing capital and thus overcoming the periodic crisis of over-accumulation (or over-production) that are inherent in capitalism. Furthermore, the provision of housing can be an instrument of social control, as in the locations and compounds that are so much a part of the South African way of life.

Having linked capitalism and housing, Wilkinson briefly dealt with the "uneven and combined" development of the capitalist system. Here he defined concepts such as "urbanization", "primitive accululation", "marginalized working population" and "dependent urbanization". Wilkinson's discussion up to this point (halfway through the essay) is a purely abstract exercise in conceptual mapping, methodologically akin to the work of Castells and open to the same charge of idealism since levelled at Castells.

The second half of the essay applies this framework to South Africa, where the system of apartheid, Wilkinson noted, has limited the urbanization process. He maintained, however, that the "housing problem" in South Africa is not simply a question of "the State's manipulation of the rate of provision of African family housing as one more instrument in the battery of 'influx controls'". Many "Coloureds" and "Asians" also live under appalling conditions, and he concluded from this that

it is now clear that the fundamental causes of the 'problem' are not to be located entirely within the ideology of the Apartheid State, since there are no real qualitative differences in the urban housing conditions of these supposedly 'different' groups. The underlying structural causes are to be found, rather, in the historically specific responses of the State to the changing material requirements of capital accumulation in South Africa since the dominance of the capitalist mode of production was first established(83).

He turned therefore to the conceptualization of the state, which he saw as "the guarantor of the general material conditions of capitalist production and reproduction"(84), and he suggested that a useful starting point would be to combine Harvey's insights into the capitalist urban process with Hirsch's theory of the capitalist state. Such a theory, he says, would have to take into account the specificities of the present monopoly stage of capitalism in South Africa.

As for the issue of squatting, Wilkinson pointed out that the apartheid system has limited the size or displaced the location of "informal" settlements, with the result that the urban "housing problem" in South Africa generally takes the form of severe overcrowding in existing townships. Nevertheless, squatter camps do exist in South Africa, but he was unwilling to discuss whether or not squatting can be seen as a form of class action. He did argue though that squatting should certainly "be seen to pose a real threat to bourgeois hegemony, particularly in terms of the ideological relations which legitimize 'property' and 'authority'"(85).

He noted that significant sections of the South African bourgeoisie have begun to propagate the "self-help" approach to housing in order to neutralize this threat, particularly by nurturing "a 'middle class' of black property owners to champion the virtues of the free enterprise system among their less privileged fellows"(86). Following Burgess, Wilkinson concluded that the "self-help" approach "represents yet another case of treating the symptom rather than the cause" in typical liberal reformist fashion(87). However, the "self-help" approach can be

appropriated by the working class to become an ideology of community resistance to 'external' control of the local environment. The extent to which such an ideology can evolve into a consciousness of class and beyond that, be translated into class practice is.... an issue which, in this paper, must remain open(88).

The debate on the urban question within the small circle of Marxist academics and students in the English-speaking universities of South Africa was at this stage clearly in danger of collapsing into pure scholasticism. A number of writers turned to painstaking empirical work to remedy the situation.

In 1981, Wilkinson delivered a second paper, this time dealing with the delimited topic of "the Resolution of the African Housing Crisis in Johannesburg, 1944-1954". In the first section of this surprisingly atheoretical work, he used central and local government reports, as well as various secondary sources, to provide a fairly detailed "political and economic context from which the African housing crisis emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War"(89).

The second section provided a similarly factual account of the evolution of "Native Policy" prior to 1948, focusing particularly on three related issues: "the need for a 'permanent' or 'stabilised' urban African labour force, the distribution of the costs of accommodating this labour force, and the role that African building workers could play in providing cheaper accommodation for it"(90).

The third section

sketches the parallel development during the late 40s and early 50s of firstly, the legislative programme required by the Nationalist government to implement its increasingly coherent but controversial African housing policy and, secondly, the 'scientific' research programme co-ordinated by the NBRI to provide the State with the technical means to translate its policy into material reality(91).

Here Wilkinson argued that the key difference between post-1948 apartheid and post-1948 segregation as regards policy towards the accommodation of Africans in the urban areas was the National Party government's denial of the necessity for a permanent urban African labour force(92). He showed how the new government had by 1952 formulated a coherent policy with which to tackle the African housing crisis and simultaneously re-establish control over the increasingly militant urban African population.

This was the "site and service" approach, whereby squatters would be moved into controlled camps, where they would erect their own shelters on sites provided by the authorities, who would also provide rudimentary services. The self-built shacks would later be replaced by conventional houses(93). Wilkinson quoted Dr Eiselen, who was at that time Secretary for Native Affairs, to the effect that

only by the provision of adequate shelter in properly planned Native townships can full control over urban Natives be regained, because only then will it be possible to eliminate the surplus Natives who do not seek or find an honest living in the cities(94).

The final section showed how the Johannesburg City Council was eventually forced to go along with this plan. Wilkinson argued that

the implicit political threat posed by the autonomous squatter movement was met, not by their expulsion.... but with the realization that it could, in fact, be brought under control by the provision of 'adequate shelter in properly planned Native townships' - which of course amounted to a tacit recognition of the legitimacy of the squatters' presence in the urban areas(95).

Perhaps Eiselen's stated intention to "eliminate the surplus Natives" was not carried out in Johannesburg (although this seems highly unlikely). In Cape Town at any rate, the implementation of the "site and service" policy can in no way be seen as a victory for the squatters. As Younge has noted, once residents of the Cape Peninsula's autonomous squatter camps had been moved into controlled emergency camps, "illegals" were sifted out and expelled from the area(96).

Wilkinson stated in his extremely short conclusion that he found in this account support for the concept of the relative autonomy of the state, as the National Party government's "Native Policy" was contrary to the

strategic intentions of at least that fraction of the dominant class under whose hegemony the Fagan Report had been produced and the ideas of the Social and Economic Planning Council had gained considerable currency.

In particular he mentioned the implementations of the segregatory Group Areas Act as being "difficult to explain in terms of a materialist theory of the State", unless one sees the state as being relatively autonomous of "the 'economic'", focusing on the "intense three-cornered conflict between the central government, the local authorities and the representatives of organized commerce and industry". He suggested that the disagreement between central and local government due to their representing different fractions of capital, and maintained that it is necessary to identify "the dominant social class at the local level"(97).

Since 1981, two issues of the University of the Witwatersrand - based journal Africa Perspective have been devoted to the question of "Townships and Resistance". For the purposes of this study, the most pertinent articles included in these two issues of the journal are those based on the Honours dissertations of Bloch and Cohen.

The first of these articles(98) built on Wilkinson's 1981 paper on the resolution of Johannesburg's African housing crisis during the period from the mid-forties to the mid-fifties. This (and a good deal of other relevant empirical material) was set within a conceptual structure in which state intervention to secure the "management-reproduction of labour power" (concerning particularly "the provision, distribution and management of some of the means of collective consumption") is "located within the general movement of the class struggle"(99). Bloch thus began to theorize the way in which working-class struggle articulates with contradictions within the "power-bloc" (the alliance of dominant classes and class-fractions), giving rise to shifts in state urban policy(100). He referred specifically to fiscal policy, influx-efflux control and "the Bantustan policies"(101).

There are two crucial issues which Bloch said he was unable to address in this discussion. The first concerns the way in which

management-reproduction policies - in their economic, political and ideological dimensions - have been tied to wages and wage policies (and hence to the value of labour-power), the allocation of land and the non-extension of political rights(102),

while the second lacuna is the question whether

the influx and efflux control and labour allocation measures taken in the second half of

the 1960's.... did reflect the growing weight of monopoly capital in the power-bloc(103).

The second Africa Perspective article is Cohen's less ambitious but equally thought-provoking account of the way in which Benoni's African workers forged a working-class culture during the 1930's. They did this by engaging in struggle against "the forces of capital and state which shaped and controlled the lives of working people". Cohen argued that "regional and local histories are an essential prerequisite towards a full analysis of the history and nature of the South African working class"(104), and he showed empirically "how particular local conditions gave rise to a particular response from the local Council and to particular forms of working class resistance". He drew the obvious conclusion that

the day-to-day struggles between the working class and the local authority need to be accounted for, and examined in the context of wider national struggles, when the history of the working class in South Africa comes to be written(105).

Koch and La Hausse have subsequently made significant contributions to the further development of South African regional urban historiography. Their unpublished Master's theses examined the position of Africans in respectively Johannesburg(106) and Durban(107) during the pre-war years. These works clearly embody the conviction that painstaking and theoretically informed empirical work is a prerequisite to the resolution of major theoretical problems concerning for example segregationism, race versus class

and the role of the South African state. Koch and La Hausse displayed an admirable sensitivity to the dynamics of the historical process, avoiding on the one hand the temptation to focus upon and generalize from mere moments within this process, and on the other the imposition upon the historical process of ready-made and inevitably restrictive conceptual grids.

This study of Africans in Cape Town seeks both methodologically and conceptually to complement the work of Koch and La Hausse, thereby contributing to the understanding of the origins and early development of urban segregation and resistance in South Africa. Chapter 2 discusses the relevant historical background, showing how a sizeable African population came to be established in Cape Town. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the local development of the policy of urban residential segregation. The growing "Native Problem" is outlined in chapter 3, while the emerging solution to this problem is discussed in chapter 4. Chapter 5 traces the development of the policies of influx control and squatter control. The development of resistance to these policies is discussed in chapter 6. Chapter 7, the conclusion, assesses the significance of this study and suggests directions for further research. This concluding chapter includes a brief discussion of the manner in which the present study diverges from previous studies, including those of Koch and La Hausse.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

- (1) Nosiswe (1979: 87) suggests such a definition of pluralism, which certainly puts paid to a great deal of unnecessary confusion as to the meaning of the term. This confusion is manifested, for example, in Marais' argument that the pluralist perspective is "the logical outcome of a liberalistic approach to life" (Marais, n.d.: 317), which is negated by theorists such as Stasiulis (1980: 404) and Bozzoli (1978: 41), who draw a sharp distinction between liberalism and pluralism. If Nosiswe's suggestion is accepted in this regard, it becomes readily apparent that all liberals are in fact pluralists, but by no means all pluralists are liberals.
- (2) Mayer and Mayer, 1974. (First published in 1961).
- (3) Wilson and Mafeje, 1973: 11. (First published in 1963).
- (4) *ibid*: 12.
- (5) *ibid*: 175.
- (6) Mafeje, 1975.
- (7) Magubane, 1971.
- (8) van den Berghe, 1967: 304-5.

- (9) Swingewood, 1975:190-1.
- (10) Haralambos and Heald, 1980:533 .
- (11) Swingewood, 1975: 198.
- (12) Mellor, 1977: 213-4.
- (13) Burgess, 1967: 56.
- (14) Kuper, Watts and Davies, 1958: 143.
- (15) ibid: 21-2.
- (16) cited in Lever, 1978: 80.
- (17) Marais, n.d.
- (18) Koornhof, 1972.
- (19) Swanson, 1968: 31 and 40.
- (20) Swanson, 1977:394.
- (21) Degenaar, on the other hand, sees "conflict pluralism" as a state of society rather than a theoretical perspective (Degenaar, 1983: 84-5). Here the term is used to denote a view of South African society which has been developed by theorists such as Van der Berghe, Kuper and

Welsh. Van der Berghe and Kuper agreed in separate articles that racial, ethnic, caste and religious groupings in "plural societies" "can to a lesser or greater extent be associated with status, rank, power and hence with conflict" (Schlemmer, 1977: 4). Welsh contributed the observation that the proliferating school of Marxist South African studies ignores factors such as status and power, which are "also significant and indeed can outweigh class power". He stressed that "with their introduction into the analysis the Weberian concept of stratification has been reached" (Welsh, 1978: 35). Following Bekker (1977: 25), Welsh warned of the danger posed by the fact that lines of racial and class cleavage tend to overlap in South Africa, and he concluded that "racial conflict is fundamentally over the allocation of resources" (Welsh, 1978: 38).

(22) Elliot and Mc Crone, 1982: 36.

(23) Rex and Moore, 1967: 273-4.

(24) Rex, 1968: 212.

(25) Rex, 1973.

(26) *ibid*: 297.

(27) Rex, 1975.

(28) *ibid*: 269.

- (29) Rex, 1973: 267 and 270.
- (30) *ibid*: 297.
- (31) Rex, 1971: 413.
- (32) *ibid*: 405.
- (33) Rex, 1974.
- (34) Ellis et al, 1977.
- (35) *ibid*: 60.
- (36) Weichel, Smith and Putterill, 1978.
- (37) Silk, 1981: 2-3.
- (38) *ibid*: 5.
- (39) *ibid*: 71.
- (40) Western, 1981: 6.
- (41) *ibid*: 7.
- (42) *ibid*: 60.
- (43) *ibid*: 327.

- (44) *ibid*: 269.
- (45) *ibid*: 271.
- (45a) *ibid*: 310
- (46) *ibid*: 331.
- (47) *ibid*: 310.
- (48) Although Rex, for example, recognised an organic relationship between capitalism and racism, he nonetheless eschewed class-analysis.
- (49) Engels, 1973.
- (50) Castells, 1976(a) (First published in French in 1968); 1976(b); 1977(a); 1977(b); 1978.
- (51) e.g. Feldman, 1978: 140.
- (52) Elliot and McCrone, 1982, chapter 1.
- (53) e.g. Byrne and Damer, 1980: 63.
- (54) Foster, 1974.
- (55) Dawley, 1976.

- (56) Stedman Jones, 1975; Proctor, 1983: 106-8.
- (57) Johnstone, 1976: 1-2.
- (58) Rich, 1978: 178. Davenport (1971: 6) does at least mention labour control and canalization in his analysis, and Rich's critique is thus perhaps a little misplaced.
- (59) Rich, 1978: 178.
- (60) *ibid*: 191.
- (61) Proctor, 1979: 68.
- (62) *ibid*: 67.
- (63) *ibid*: 62.
- (64) *ibid*: 68.
- (65) Molteno, 1977: 17 and 25.
- (66) Proctor, *op cit*: 56.
- (67) *ibid*: 54.
- (68) Innes and Flaut, 1978: 56.
- (69) Proctor, *op cit*: 56.

- (70) *ibid*: 56.
- (71) *ibid*: 77.
- (72) *ibid*: 75.
- (73) *ibid*: 79.
- (74) *ibid*: 80-1.
- (75) *ibid*: 79.
- (76) Development Studies Group, 1979: i.
- (77) Maré, *ibid*: 36.
- (78) *ibid*: 34.
- (79) *ibid*: 37.
- (80) *ibid*: 43.
- (81) Wilkinson, n.d.: 25.
- (82) *ibid*: 26.
- (83) *ibid*: 30.
- (84) *ibid*: 25.

- (85) *ibid*: 29.
- (86) *ibid*: 33.
- (87) *ibid*: 32-3.
- (88) *ibid*: 33.
- (89) Wilkinson, 1981: 3.
- (90) *ibid*: 12.
- (91) *ibid*: 3.
- (92) *ibid*: 19-23.
- (93) *ibid*: 33.
- (94) *ibid*: 30-1
- (95) *ibid*: 48.
- (96) Younge, 1982: 18; see also Kinkead-Weekes, 1983.
- (97) Wilkinson, 1981: 48-9.
- (98) Bloch and Wilkinson, 1982.
- (99) *ibid*: 3-4.

(100) *ibid*: 13.

(101) *ibid*: 29.

(102) *ibid*: 4.

(103) *ibid*: 9-10.

(104) Cohen: 1982: 76.

(105) *ibid*: 94.

(106) Koch, 1984.

(107) La Hausse, 1984.

CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Between the mid-nineteenth century and the early twentieth century the developing city of Cape Town and the lives of all its inhabitants were profoundly transformed by the growth of the local transport infrastructure and the first stirrings of secondary industrialization. While this process was clearly influenced by factors specific to the Western Cape, it was crucially shaped by broader forces in the colonial and global political economy.

The rapid expansion of the British textile industry provided the initial stimulus for accelerated local urban development. The greatly increased volume of Cape wool exports from the 1840's onwards resulted in a marked expansion of the Colony's rudimentary communications-network(1). Road, rail and telegraph-line construction proceeded apace, and the Cape's first shipping-dock (the Alfred Basin in Table Bay) was opened in 1870. At the same time, commercial and embryonic industrial activity increased considerably, especially once British capital began pouring into the Colony with the "diamond boom" which followed the discovery of the precious stones in the interior. The 24 joint-stock companies that had existed in Cape Town in 1860(2) had more than doubled by the early 1880's(3), while a belt of industry developed along Dock Road during the 1870's(4).

Economic expansion was temporarily retarded by the severe depression of 1882-1886, the fundamental cause of which was "an over-abundance of capital thrust on to an unsophisticated economy, incapable of properly absorbing it"(5). The development of the gold-mining

industry in the Transvaal, however, soon resuscitated the Cape's economy. The construction of a modern local urban infrastructure accelerated during the 1890's and early 1900's, with the completion of Cape Town's first power-stations, new water-reservoirs, sophisticated sewerage and storm-water drainage systems, an extensive street-paving programme and an electric-tram network(6). By 1908 Olive Schreiner could report that Cape Town was "destroyed by the smoke of bad coal from tall chimneys"(7). This was the most industrially-advanced city in South Africa at the time of Union in 1910, but local development was thereafter rapidly eclipsed by the industrialization of the Rand(8). Nevertheless, the total of 21,000 workers employed in local industry in 1916/17 had increased to 31,700 by 1920(9), due to the stimulating effects of the First World War.

Africans played a major role in this first phase of local construction and industrialization. Although as late as 1916 "Africans made up only 4% of the industrial labour force"(10), their contribution as unskilled heavy manual labourers was vital to the construction of the infrastructure on which industrial development and capital accumulation depended. The vast majority of local Africans were then (as now) Xhosa-speakers, drawn from the reserves of Transkei and Ciskei hundreds of miles away in the Eastern Cape.

[Arising] "initially out of the dynamic relationships of power and authority within rural society as much as from the specific demands of capital"(11), the flow of migrant labour was subsequently largely determined by the consolidation of a relationship of structural dependency between rural periphery and

urban centre. As this chapter explains, the chronic labour-shortage that arose with the emancipation of slaves in 1838 was ameliorated throughout this period by the importation of Xhosa-speaking unskilled workers from the Xhosa reserves.

The Local Labour-Shortage and the Proletarianization of the Ama-Xhosa

A number of Mfengu who presented themselves at the local police station at the end of September 1839 seem to have been the first African settlers officially recorded as having voluntarily made their way to the end of the long wagon-road from Xhosaland. These refugees from the turmoil on the frontier (in the stormy period between the sixth and the seventh of the century-long series of wars which dispossessed the Ama Xhosa) had passes issued by a frontier magistrate in terms of Ordinance 49 of 1828, allowing them to enter the colony and seek employment. The Police Superintendent countersigned their passes as they requested, but being unaccustomed to such matters, he wrote to his superiors for further instructions and was told to regard their presence as legal "until further instructions be given"(12).

Saunders shows that the twenty to forty inhabitants of the half-dozen or so self-built huts comprising the little "Fingo location" that was soon established at the foot of Table Mountain were provided with religious instruction, medical attention and even pauper relief when temporarily unemployed(13). This encouragement seems to have been motivated by the hope that the further voluntary settlement of Xhosa-speakers, most of whom were employed for rough

work in the harbour , would help to ease the serious local labour-shortage.

Within two years of the slaves' emancipation, aspirant capitalists were petitioning the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the effect that the Cape offered "a wide field for the profitable employment of.... capital and labour", if only the labour-shortage could be remedied by the importation of a large number of British labourers(14). Unattractive wages and working conditions, together with the element of coercion retained in production relations in terms of the Masters and Servants Act, resulted in marked reluctance to engage in formal employment on the part of potential workers. The collapse of the export wine trade simultaneously created considerable opportunities to earn a living outside of the sphere of formal employment, and by 1842 there were approximately three hundred and sixty shebeens (or "unlicenced houses") in Cape Town(15).

More than four thousand British immigrants arrived in Cape Town between 1846 and 1851, but they "did not supply the want of labourers, because they rapidly rose to the position of employers"(16). Free labour could not be procured to perform some of the heavy manual work that had previously been reserved for slaves. Mozambican "prize negroes" from Portuguese slave-ships captured as they rounded the Cape(17) and prisoners convicted of crimes which presumably included pass offences and armed rebellion(18) were assigned to sanitary duties on the municipal "town carts", to construction work on the government's road-building programme and to heavy labour at the docks. By 1857

however, disease, desertion and the expiring of indentures had drastically reduced the number of "Mozambiques" available for employment(19) and the municipal "overseer of sheets" prophesized that there was "now a likelihood of their places being supplied by Kaffirs"(20).

The proletarianization of the Ama-Xhosa had been advanced with the imposition in 1855 of a hut-tax of ten shillings per annum, apparently to pay the salaries of the chiefs and the police who maintained order in the Transkei. Governor Sir George Grey observed early in 1858 that "it is not an easy task to bring a race of independent high-spirited barbarians to the state in which they cheerfully pay taxes"(21), but by mid-year he was able to report to London that the last Xhosa resistance to taxation had been stamped out(22). A series of Native Location Acts, including Acts 2 of 1869, 6 of 1876 and 37 of 1884, subsequently rationalized and extended the hut-tax system(23). Long before these measures could begin to register any notable effect on the labour market, however, the local dearth of heavy manual workers was temporarily relieved by the suicidal Xhosa cattle-killing episode of 1857.

Among the many applications for Xhosa labour directed to the Colonial Secretary in this period was one from the secretary of the Cape Town municipality, who stated that

the great scarcity of labourers in this city, rendering it difficult for the Commissioners of the Municipality of Cape Town to obtain a sufficient number of men for their public works,

and having ascertained that many Caffres, at present in a state of destitution, are desirous of obtaining employment in this Colony, they have instructed me to request you to represent to His Excellency the Governor, that if His Excellency would cause to be brought down to Cape Town a number of those men, they would be glad to engage the services of from fifty to a hundred of them for public works(24).

Approximately two thousand Xhosas were in fact shipped to Cape Town in the wake of this disaster, which has been subjected to widely differing interpretations by Theal(25), Walker(26), Hodgson (27) and Mnguni(28). Most of these victims of the "cattle-killing" were indentured (many as families) to local farmers and other employers, while hundreds who had been convicted on the frontier of such offences as the theft of food were imprisoned and employed without remuneration (and much against their will) on the public works of the local and central government. Besides road-building and the construction of such landmarks as the Roeland Street Gaol and the South African Library building, Xhosa convicts built the Suburban railway line and the Alfred Dock and its breakwater(29).

Once they had completed their terms of indenture or served their prison sentences, these unfortunates either "applied for passes to go back to Kaffir-land"(30) or took their chances in a town in which "the people (were) burrowing and sleeping in holes and corners"(31). Some were evidently able to secure accommodation

in the back-streets, and "Kaffirs" occupying an overcrowded "abode" in Rogge Bay were stricken by smallpox in September 1858(32) during an epidemic which claimed two thousand lives in the Peninsula(33). In December a small group of destitute "Kaffir squatters who had completed their terms of service and desire [d] to be sent back to Kaffir-land" established a camp near the Amsterdam Battery, into which they were soon removed. It is unclear whether these men, women and children were given passages back to their devastated kraals, or whether they were simply sent out to new masters(34).

The local demand for labour declined during the depression of the 1860's, only to re-emerge once the Kimberley diamond-rush had begun to lift the economy out of the doldrums. A committee of enquiry into the "Native Question" in 1869 suggested that the Colony's chronic labour-shortage could be relieved by the annexation of the "Transkeian territories" and the imposition of increased taxation on the "Natives"(35). The accelerating diamond-rush drew increasing numbers of workers off the relatively labour-intensive wine and wheat farms of the Western Cape, and Stellenbosch farmers sought the government's assurance in December 1872 that convicts would be used on the planned extension of the Cape Town-Wellington railway. It was argued that the use of free labour would aggravate an already intolerable situation, but the farmers were informed that convicts were simply not available. Agents were trying to recruit labour at the mission stations and it would hopefully be possible "to introduce Native labour from beyond the Colony"(36).

A Public Works Department labour-agent was able to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement with a Mfengu chief from the

Ciskei (the former "Crown Colony" of British Kaffraria, which had been annexed in 1865(37)) and hundreds of "Fingoes" were consequently brought down to work on the Western Line of railway at the end of 1875(38). These workers were presumably housed in tents that could be moved along as the work progressed, as had apparently been the case with the road-building programme in British Kaffraria during the 1850's(39). The labour-shortage remained in evidence throughout the Colony, even on the diamond-fields after the initial "rush" had ended(40). In the Eastern Cape where the situation was said to be less serious due to the close proximity of the Xhosa territories of Ciskei and Transkei(41), the shortage of labour remained a problem, for "black workers.... improved their terms of labour by refusing to leave home for waged work until better terms were offered"(42). More than seven hundred "Mozambiques" were transported to Cape Town during 1876 and 1877 by labour agents and by the government, to be indentured on Western Cape farms(43), and a further four hundred and forty were imported in 1876 to work on the Western railways(44).

Minister of Public Works John X Merriman laconically observed that

in the Cape the government is called on to 'survey mankind from China to Peru' in the hope of creating and maintaining a class of cheap labourers, who will thankfully accept the position of helots, and not be troubled with the inconvenient ambition of bettering their conditions(45).

The official report from which this quotation was taken noted

that unsuccessful attempts had been made to import Italian labour from South America as well as Chinese labour from the Orient. Little confidence was expressed in the continued importation of "Mozambiques", and the report concluded that the most promising source of labour was the "large masses of Natives within and immediately beyond our colonial borders". The introduction of "European wants" and of individual land tenure were expected to impel growing numbers of Xhosas onto the labour market(46).

The problem however was too acute to await solution through the slow and contradictory diffusion of capitalist economic relations. It demanded drastic and immediate action, in the form of the final conquest of the Ama-Xhosa after one hundred years of military resistance. This was accomplished when "in the early months of 1878, imperial as well as colonial troops, with Mfengu and Tembu allies under white officers" crushed the Gcaleka paramount Sarili (Kreli) and his Ngqika allies(47). The Transkei was then gradually annexed: Fingoland, Idutywa and Griqualand East in 1878; Port St Johns in 1884; Tembuland, Gcalekaland and Bomvanaland in 1885; the Xesibe tract in 1886, and finally Pondoland in 1894(48).

Government Notice No 222 of 25 February 1878 invited prospective employers to apply for "Native labour" which would be contracted for a period of three years and six months. The Secretary for Native Affairs warned in the Notice that

there may be difficulties in obtaining single persons for service, but it is believed that no difficulties will be found in meeting the

applications of such as are prepared to take whole families.

During the contracted period, employers would be responsible for feeding, sheltering and clothing the labourers and their families, in return for wages that rose from nothing at all for the first six months to the princely sum of ten shillings per month for the final year(49). Saunders says that "between April 1878 and January 1879, nearly four thousand Africans from the Ciskei and Transkei who had been caught up in the war were transported to the Western Cape by the Government"(50). As had been the case with the previous mass-importation of Xhosa-speaking labour in 1857, most were indentured in the town and surrounding villages or on outlying wine and wheat farms, while hundreds who had been convicted of transgressing the colonial law were housed in the Convict Barracks at the Docks. Many of the men were apparently persuaded to accept indentures by the simple expedient of transporting their wives and children to Cape Town and waiting for the men to volunteer to follow(51). Saunders notes a high desertion rate and reveals that "some Africans (had) walked to Cape Town from the eastern districts of the colony in search of relatives whom the government had transported there"(52).

After complaints had been voiced about indigent Africans begging in the streets(53) and squatting near the military hospital(54), at least one shipload of "chiefly aged or decrepit individuals, who could not be indentured to masters in the Western Districts, being useless as labourers or work-people" was marched under armed guard aboard a ship bound for East London. The vigorous protests

of two women among this group are recorded. One "threatened to destroy herself"(55). Forced repatriation had not yet however become a routine procedure, and the settlement of Xhosa-speaking time-expired labourers and prisoners, with their families, beyond the eastern border of the municipality soon became a matter of grave concern. Smallpox and the determined efforts of the Woodstock Municipality (formed in June 1882 "in part to deal with the Kaffir problem"(56)) soon drove these people into District Six, where they erected makeshift huts or crowded into pestiferous tenements in the back streets.

Their sojourn in District Six was to prove short-lived, for their political impotence and the extremely low level of their wages excluded them from the benefits of the urban development which accelerated along the line of settlement from Sea Point to Wynberg and beyond once the depression began lifting after the discovery of gold in the Transvaal. District Six itself grew quickly after about 1885, with building lots being laid out and labourers cottages springing up in newly-paved streets(57). Rapid population-growth produced intense competition in the housing market, and organized white labour began agitating for the establishment of a strictly-controlled "Native location" (this will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter).

Large employers were simultaneously becoming increasingly disenchanted with "free" African labour. Although migrant wages were already low, employers looked enviously to the north, where the benefits of compounded labour in terms of discipline and cost had been demonstrated. By 1888, Kimberley's compound-system had "entirely superseded the former method of lodging Kafirs in

unenclosed quarters"(58). The local Harbour Board apparently built a new compound in the docks in 1884(59), and started using Mfengu migrant-labour from the Transkei on a regular basis(60).

Hundreds of Xhosa-speaking dockworkers from District Six were dismissed in the early 1890's after they had refused to move without their families into this compound, where men slept on the floor on sacks(61). The municipality similarly dismissed a large proportion of the Xhosa migrant-labourers engaged in the construction of the Woodhead Reservoir on top of Table Mountain after a threatened strike for higher wages. These men were apparently replaced by unemployed farm-workers from Worcester(62).

By 1893, the local labour-shortage was said to be worse than it had ever been(63). Although Merriman (by that stage promoted to treasurer of the Colony and Commissioner for Lands, Mines and Public Works) expressed his "doubt whether the Western Province will ever be satisfied with the Kaffir. He is a savage and is just about as inferior to the Cape boys as we are superior to the Cape boys"(64), it seems to have been generally agreed that from a pragmatic point of view

having such a large amount of Native labour on our borders, our first duty should be to try and get them to take service and derive some benefit from their labour to the Colony, rather than trying to get people from abroad(65).

The employment of greater numbers of "Kaffirs" on public works and in the docks was in fact widely propagated as the only way in which the "Cape boys" could be kept on the farms(66). The City Engineer called for the introduction of "class legislation", which had (he noted) successfully forced the Natal "Kaffirs" onto the labour market(67).

The required legislation was not long in coming, for Prime Minister Rhodes was adamant that

every black man cannot have three acres and a cow.

We have to face the question and it must be brought home to them that in the future nine-tenths of them will have to spend their lives in daily labour, in physical work, in manual labour(68).

It was in this spirit that the Glen Grey Act (which provided for the allocation of allotments that were too small to maintain subsistence) was passed in 1894, and extended in the same year from Glen Grey to the districts of Idutywa, Tsomo, Butterworth and Ngamakwe. The effects of this measure were compounded and accelerated by the devastating rinderpest cattle-disease epidemic of 1896-1897. Many thousands of Xhosas were driven off their land, and the Transkei and Ciskei reserves were within one generation transformed into mere labour-reservoirs, whose continued underdevelopment had become a necessary corollary of capitalist development in Cape Town and elsewhere.

There was consequently a massive influx into Cape Town, where the number of Africans reached ten thousand by the turn of the century. Segregationist agitation simultaneously reached a crescendo, resulting in 1901 in the establishment of a "Native location" at Uitvlugt (later renamed Ndabeni). The local African population was forcibly removed into this location, which was the first officially segregated residential area in the Peninsula(69). The supply of unskilled manual labour was then for the first time (except for brief periods of depression) greater than the demand. Employers were not slow to take advantage of this new situation, and the Harbour Board, for example, finally succeeded in 1903 in lowering wages at the docks from four shillings and sixpence to four shillings per day. This was accomplished by using the residents of the newly-established "Native location" as strikebreakers(70). Local employers generally were clearly able to follow suit, and wages seem in fact to have been reduced still further, for in 1918 (when the "Black October" influenza epidemic temporarily disturbed the unskilled labour market) minimum wages were reportedly raised to four shillings per day after a "Native Deputation" had conferred with representatives of local and central government and of local employers' organizations(71).

The enforced protectionism induced by the First World War stimulated the local production of consumer goods, ending the centuries-long era during which industrial development had been restricted to the processing of agricultural raw materials(72). According to Nicol, Africans comprised about 14% of the industrial labour-force by the mid-1920's(73). Ten thousand Africans were officially employed in Cape Town by August 1927(74). The Great Depression of 1930-33

resulted in a degree of concentration and centralization of capital, with the number of industrial establishments declining while industry as a whole tended to become increasingly capital-intensive and mechanized(75). However those Africans who were formally employed seem to have remained largely confined to labour intensive sectors such as quarrying and construction(76), and the local African population continued to expand. The 1936 census recorded 14,160 Africans in Cape Town(77), and this official total had increased to 18,500 by 1939(78). These census figures are of course notoriously unreliable, and it is safe to assume that they exclude the majority of people rendered "illegal" by the adoption of measures discussed in the following three chapters.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

- (1) Bickford-Smith, 1985: 5; Mabin, 1984: 3.
- (2) Mabin, 1984: 2.
- (3) Bickford-Smith, 1985: 10.
- (4) Whittingdale, 1973: 7.
- (5) Buirski, 1980: 27.
- (6) Shorten, 1963: 149-53, 305, 336-7.
- (7) Schreiner, n.d.: 10.
- (8) Whittingdale, 1973: 16.
- (9) Nicol, 1984: 71.
- (10) *ibid*: 75.
- (11) Beinart, 1982: 6.
- (12) CO 473: 56, Police Superintendent to Colonial Secretary,
2/10/1838.
- (13) Saunders, 1980: 19.

- (14) CO 424: 199, petition of 1049 inhabitants of the Colony, 18/7/1840.
- (15) CO 2806: 109, Resident Magistrate's report, 14/10/1842.
- (16) Theal, 1964(v6): 238.
- (17) CO 493: 27, Superintendent of Police report, 29/4/1840.
See also Saunders, 1979(c) and 1980: 16.
- (18) CO 493: 13, Superintendent of Police report, 13/2/1840;
CO 502: 61, Superintendent of Police report, 16/12/1841.
- (19) Saunders, 1980: 20; Unnumbered Select Committee Report into the Sanitary State of Cape Town, 1857: 806-7, evidence of Municipal Board Chairman.
- (20) *ibid*: 795.
- (21) GH 23/27: 24, Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 20/3/1858.
- (22) GH 23/27: 86, Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19/6/1858.
- (23) see van der Horst, 1942: 113.
- (24) CO 700: 24, Municipality to Colonial Secretary, 28/4/1857.

- (25) Theal, 1964(v8): 44.
- (26) Walker, 1962: 289.
- (27) Hodgson, 1980: 43.
- (28) Mnguni, n.d.: 87-8.
- (29) Saunders, 1980: 20-1; Hodgson 1979: 115.
- (30) CO 715: 29, "Superintendent of Kaffirs" report, n.d.
- (31) Unnumbered Select Committee Report into the Sanitary State
of Cape Town, 1857: 775, evidence of Dr Laing.
- (32) CO 715: 12, return of smallpox cases, 8/9/1858.
- (33) Lombaard, 1981: 24.
- (34) CO 5229: 39, Resident Magistrate's Report, 3/12/1858;
CO 3820: 211, Resident Magistrate's Report, 6/12/1858.
- (35) C3 - 1869: 94 and 101.
- (36) CO 4176: 120, Stellenbosch farmers' petition, 19/12/1872;
and reply 18/1/1873.
- (37) Davenport, 1978: 99.

- (38) G8 - 1876, Public Works Department report on Immigration and labour supply for 1875; G39 - 1893: 136, evidence of former Civil Engineer in Charge of railworks to Labour Commission.
- (39) Theal, 1964(v7): 190.
- (40) CO 2512: 31, reference to Kimberley Mining Board letter of 4/2/1881.
- (41) G8 - 1876, Public Works Department Report on Immigration and labour supply for 1875.
- (42) Mabin, 1984: 14.
- (43) Saunders, 1980: 24.
- (44) G49 - 1877, Report on Cape Immigration for 1876.
- (45) G8 - 1876, quoted in van der Horst, 1942: 118.
- (46) G8 - 1876, Public Works Department Report on Immigration and labour supply for 1875.
- (47) Thompson, 1975: 259.
- (48) Davenport, 1978: 99.
- (49) Government Notice No. 222 of 25/2/1878.

- (50) Saunders, 1980: 24.
- (51) G39 - 1893: 60, evidence of former "native labour contractor" Stevens to Labour Commission.
- (52) Saunders, 1980: 25-6.
- (53) Saunders, 1980: 25.
- (54) CO 2509: 163, reference to letter received from Colonel Hassard, 2/5/78.
- (55) A34-1879.
- (56) Saunders, 1980: 30, quoting Woodstock Municipality records.
- (57) Pinnock, 1980: 132.
- (58) G22 - 1889, quoted in van der Horst, 1942: 81.
- (59) van der Horst, 1942: 95.
- (60) G39 - 1893: 16, evidence of "dock agent" Mc Kenzie to the Labour Commission.
- (61) G39 - 1893: 63 and 79, evidence of "native labour contractor" Stevens and of Rev. Osborne to the Labour Commission.

- (62) G39 - 1893: 112, evidence of the City Engineer to the Labour Commission.
- (63) G39 - 1893: 16, evidence of "dock agent" McKenzie to the Labour Commission.
- (64) G39 - 1893: 143, Merriman's evidence.
- (65) G39 - 1893: 164, evidence of the General Manager of the Railways.
- (66) G39 - 1893: 63, 130 and 136, evidence of "native labour contractor" Stevens, the Mayor of Wynberg and of D.P. de Villiers Graaff, MLC.
- (67) G39-1893: 113, evidence of the Cape Town City Engineer.
- (68) quoted in Mnguni, n.d.: 136.
- (69) Saunders, 1979(a) and 1980: 33; van Heyningen, 1981: 98-9.
See also Chapter 3 below, pages 86 - 83.
- (70) Bickford-Smith, 1980: 117.
- (71) Cape Argus 27/1/1919 and 24/3/1919.
- (72) Whittingdale, 1973: 172.
- (73) Nicol, 1984: 75.

(74) Saunders, 1979(b): 184.

(75) Whittingdale, 1973: 65 and 103.

(76) Nicol, 1984: 75.

(77) Western, 1981: 46.

(78) Saunders, 1979(b): 199.

CHAPTER 3: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY OF URBAN RESIDENTIAL
SEGREGATION IN CAPE TOWN
PART 1: THE GROWING "NATIVE PROBLEM"

The process of urban growth traced in the previous chapter closely approximated colonial patterns elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of regional unevenness and dependency. On the whole, cities developed in European enclaves, where Africans were "denied a permanent stake in urban life"(1). Roberts has observed still more generally that "the urban system in underdeveloped countries is.... organized to exclude much of the population from its material benefits" and that peripheral states tend to rely on "coercion as a means of capitalist development rather than on the integration of the urban population through democratic politics or the direct improvement of the standard of living"(2). In all of these respects, the South African urban experience was typical. Indeed, colonial administrators in many parts of the sub-continent looked south for their models of racial urban development(3).

Chapter 2 also noted that the policy of urban residential segregation was inaugurated in Cape Town during the 1901 plague epidemic, when the city's first officially segregated residential area was established: the African location at Uitvlugt, which was soon renamed Ndabeni. However, this was by no means the first instance of urban residential segregation in what was then the Cape Colony. A "Native Strangers' location" had, for example, been established at Port Elizabeth in 1855(4). Grahamstown's "Fingo location" was set aside in 1856(5), while "Native locations were established in Worcester and Queenstown by 1873 and 1879

respectively(6). Cook and Opland suggest that the establishment of the first "Native location" at East London in about 1860 was due to the white inhabitants having "memories of the frontier wars uppermost in their minds and an idea of Blacks as hostile, cruel, murderous and barbaric"(7).

So far as Africans in Cape Town are concerned, Saunders has in two seminal papers sketched the broad outlines of the development of the process of residential segregation. He has traced the appearance of what was referred to in the racist parlance of the time as a "Kaffir problem" in Woodstock in the late 1870's, and followed the subsequent movement of Africans from Woodstock to District Six and the central City Slums as a result of harassment by the newly-formed Woodstock municipality. In particular, his work has cast valuable light on the evolution of the local location-system, specifically Ndabeni and its successor Langa, opened in 1927(8). The following sections of this chapter take these two studies as their starting point, but also seek to embroider the fabric of his account with more detail, while also teasing out the class interests involved.

Woodstock

Historical analysis of the local development of the segregation-policy must begin in Woodstock in the late 1870's(9). Thousands of Xhosa men, women and children had by that stage been shipped down to Cape Town, particularly in the wake of the 1857 "cattle-killing" and of the final Frontier War in 1878, to be indentured at extremely low wages in the developing town and its surrounding

villages and on Western Cape farms. In the same period, hundreds of Xhosa-speaking men were caught up in the colonial judicial system, and transformed into convicts who laboured without remuneration on local capital works.

Many of these men, once they had served their sentences or completed their terms of indenture, found employment as day-labourers at the docks and elsewhere. Their low wages prevented these "free" Africans from occupying accommodation in Cape Town, where the municipality was enforcing strict regulations against overcrowding in an effort to "create a demand for healthy houses"(10) and thus overcome the working-class housing crisis that had arisen in 1840 with the emancipation of the slaves(11). A witness complained to the 1879 Select Committee on the Supply of the Labour Market that many "Kaffirs" employed by the government in the docks and on the railways were allowed to hire land and thus live independently(12).

Soon a "Kaffir Problem" arose beyond the town's eastern boundary, on the estates of Papendorp (between the upper and lower main roads); Woodstock, Leliebloem, Altona and Roodebloem (above the upper main road) and in the hamlet of Salt River (immediately beyond Roodebloem). These areas were beginning then to develop from "open fields beautiful at times with masses of pink sorrel and white daisies" into quarters where "local and immigrant artisans by the hundred made their homes". Coates says that the first sale of building lots in Papendorp took place in 1845, but that (despite the establishment of a police station and a post office), there were only a few houses in the area by 1860(13).

Woodstock and Altona began being cut up into building lots in 1874(14) and "the big estates were sub-divided and changed hands rapidly from 1880. Houses sprang up neither following a plan nor possessing a water-supply nor drainage"(15). It was into some of these rude cottages as well as into stables, outbuildings and self-built shacks in the area that the freed Africans moved.

The white inhabitants of the area were anything but welcoming towards their poverty-stricken new black neighbours, and after fever had broken out in June 1879 "among some Africans living on land sublet to them in Papendorp where they were 'huddled together in miserable cottages'", a piece of waste-ground between Salt River station and the upper main road was set aside as a "Kaffir location", where the erection of self-built huts was permitted(16). Africans could not however be compelled to move into this unofficial location, as the necessary government proclamation had not been issued. An offer of space in the location was in fact declined by the African residents of Altona and Roodebloem, and a "Kafir Depot" official concluded that "they prefer to live free, rather than under any possible restraint in a location"(17).

Forty-nine (presumably "white") residents of Salt River petitioned the House of Assembly in 1881, complaining of the "danger, annoyance and inconvenience they suffer through the number of Kafirs that have been allowed to locate themselves" in the area. There were said to be one hundred and fifty "Kafirs" in Altona, almost one hundred in Roodebloem and about two hundred in the "location near the main road"(18). Racial feelings were inflamed to the point where a "mob" attacked African dwellings in Papendorp,

and letters to the press complained of a "savage people" having been "forced on the town"(19). Coates writes of "black vagrants who had a stronghold in the vicinity of the military lines from where they launched murderous attacks on the residents" and he suggests that it was suicidal for whites to venture out at night(20). One can only speculate that this high degree of racial antipathy resulted not only from cultural differences magnified by fresh memories of war, but also from unemployment and competition for the scarce resource of housing. Certain landlords seem to have favoured African tenants, who were forced to accept far lower standards of accommodation and higher levels of overcrowding than other tenants, thus providing the possibility of a better return on capital invested.

Calls for the establishment of an official location grew increasingly strident as the conditions under which Africans were living in the area deteriorated with their accelerating influx. Fears of an imminent epidemic became more and more pronounced. These fears proved well-founded, for the 1882 smallpox epidemic affected five hundred people in Woodstock(21), and killed a total of four thousand in the whole Peninsula(22). Many of the Woodstock victims were Africans, among whom the spread of the disease was facilitated by neglect on the part of the authorities. Lombaard cites an accusation of "Murder" made against the "local authorities" after "absolutely nothing" had been done to halt the spreading of smallpox in the "black location above the Salt River station"(23). Mrs Sarah Short, who owned a number of properties occupied by Africans in the area, evidently experienced considerable difficulty

in procuring medical aid and burial facilities from the new Woodstock municipality when the disease began taking its toll among her tenants(24). The Police Commissioner of Cape Town complained to the under Colonial Secretary in October 1882 that "Kaffirs" living in infected houses in Woodstock were working in the Alfred docks every day(25), but nothing seems to have been done about this(26).

The devastating effects of this epidemic, together with the establishment in the area of a local government apparatus that applied itself diligently to the task, proved sufficient to remove the Africans from Woodstock without a location having to be officially proclaimed. According to Laidler, "In 1881 it was decided to form the hamlets Pependorp, Altona, Roodebloem, Woodstock, Leliebloem and Salt River with the surrounding houses into a municipality"(27). This amalgamation was effected in June 1882 "in part to deal with the 'Kafir problem'"(28). Section six of the municipal regulations of the new Woodstock municipality provided for a ten pound fine for the "keeper of any lodging house, location or kraal for Kafirs that is a nuisance". This section also empowered the municipality to set aside land for an official Native location and to appoint a location superintendent.

"Natives" would be compelled to live in this proposed location at a quartely rental of three pounds per adult male occupier of a hut(29). The new municipality then began acting against the owners of properties occupied by Africans. In July, for example, Mrs Short was informed that legal proceedings would be instituted against her unless her "property at Roodebloem, occupied by Kafirs" was provided with a water-closet within fourteen days and measures

taken to reduce overcrowding(30).

In September, the municipality formally urged the government to establish a location and thus place the "Kafirs" under proper supervision, isolated from the other inhabitants. Their lack of decent clothing and of basic sanitary facilities was considered particularly offensive. It was reported that the majority of the African men in Woodstock had recently been discharged from the convict barracks at the docks, where they continued to work as labourers(31). The municipality was told, however, that the government was not responsible, under the 1876 Native Locations Act, for the establishment of locations within municipal boundaries. This was the responsibility of the municipality, which was advised also to promulgate sanitary regulations and to request the enforcement within its area of the 1881 Police Offences Act, in order to prevent Africans from appearing in public with insufficient clothing(32).

The Police Offences Act was extended to Woodstock from the beginning of November(33), but by that time smallpox had apparently greatly reduced the African population of the area. In addition, Woodstock municipality had followed Cape Town municipality's example by appointing a street-keeper, whose duties included the inspection of premises for overcrowding(34). Soon the Cape Times was able to report that "satisfactory results" had been achieved by the prosecution of property owners who were contravening municipal regulations. Woodstock was then growing fast, two hundred and fifty houses having been built between mid-1882 and mid-1883, while the number of voters increased from two hundred to nine

hundred in the same period(35).

Africans had still not been completely cleared out of Woodstock, and the ubiquitous Mrs Short (who was reported in May 1883 to have provided sanitary facilities at one of her properties on the lower main road opposite the Woodstock Hotel by simply blocking off an alleyway and obliging her African tenants to use this as a toilet(36)), was warned after a particularly boisterous weekend in March 1884 that any recurrence of the disturbance among her African tenants at Altona would result in legal action being taken against her(37). In April and May of 1885, the municipality was very concerned about overcrowding among Africans in houses belonging to a Mr Dadabhoy(38). There were also, for example, a number of "Kafirs" in a certain "small shed" who were considered a nuisance(39).

There seems to be no reference to Africans living in Woodstock between 1885 and 1893, when an enterprising journalist was able to discover one dwelling that was still occupied by Africans. This was a shebeen hidden away in a little street on the Cape Town side of Woodstock station. It was reported that "Kafirs" had been a problem in Woodstock a dozen years previously but that they had subsequently been "cleared out"(40).

District Six

Saunders says that most of the Africans from Woodstock moved

onto a tract of land between the east end of the city and Zonnebloem College, known - we do not know why - as the Orange Free State. Because this land belonged to the Government and not to either the Cape Town or Woodstock municipalities, Africans were able to live there virtually free of official supervision(41).

This area was soon incorporated within the expanding town's sixth district, the upper part of which was beginning to be developed after about 1885. Building lots were marked out and labourers' cottages sprang up in newly laid-out streets and lanes(42). Here numerous Africans found shelter, as they did also in the teeming slums of older-established areas such as the lower part of District Six (around Harrington and Barrack Streets), the upper Long and Loop street area with its warren of alleys and lanes, and the dockside area around Waterkant street.

Concerned citizens continued, as they had done for many years, to publicize the deteriorating conditions in these areas(43). The committee of the Free Dispensary stressed the link between the health of the poor and their living conditions(44), and the Town Council, which was at first nonplussed by the extent of the problem(45), began acting against landlords through its sanitation department(46). The Paterson Committee was appointed by the Council early in 1893 to investigate the whole question of slums and the acute local housing shortage(47). A "Native Barracks" was built on the recommendation of this committee, but it was

handed over to the Salvation Army on completion in 1897, and was never used for its intended purpose(48). It served instead to accommodate some of the growing number of local "poor whites".

The accelerating influx of Africans after 1896(49) threatened to reduce more white workers to this lowly status by edging them out of the labour and housing markets. As early as 1892 the Cape Register reported an "enormous increase" in the number of white vagrants, and attributed this to unskilled whites being made redundant by employers who preferred "the more degraded black"(50). The majority of local white workers, however, were artisans for whom the threat from unskilled Africans was not on the labour front but in the field of housing.

The Cape Register reported in 1892 that mechanics arriving from England with their families could not easily find suitable accommodation(51), and observed in early 1893 that while the "lower middle class" increased in numbers every month, "little is done to provide for it in the way of suitable dwellings"(52). The following year a Cape Argus editorial drew attention once again to "the need of suitable, even decent, dwellings for the Cape Town artisan" and noted that "the influx of mechanics and artisans in recent years has been very great"(53). By 1899 it was reported to be "difficult for white workers to find accommodation in the eastern part of town"(54). The Medical Officer of Health observed that

owing to the remunerative nature of the Kafir
lodger (he requires only the barest accommodation

and pays on an average about 2/- per week - one room therefore with twenty Kafir lodgers brings in about £8 per month), there is an increasing tendency to let houses for this purpose, thus displacing the more civilized artisan population(55).

The white artisans(56) in the eastern part of town (particularly in District Six) began to organize in defence of their interests in the housing market. Predictably, due to the historical and social context, their campaign centred around the demand (expressed for the most part in offensively racist terms) for the removal of Africans to a location(57). In mid-1898, the South African Working Mens' Progressive Union urged the Town Council to provide a "Kafir location"(58). The municipality, which had been represented on a Cape Mayoral Congress special committee that had called on the government in 1895 to empower municipalities to establish locations(59), promptly appointed a joint committee of streets regulation and sanitation committee members to decide on a suitable site(60). This committee duly reported that the old quarry at the top of Strand Street was the most likely site(61), but the suggestion was opposed by a deputation representing white workers from District Six which in August 1898 urged the Town Council to remove Africans from town to a location in Salt River or Maitland(62). This deputation presented the Council with a petition signed by 809 residents(63), requesting that "measures be taken in Districts 5 and 6 to prevent them being rendered unfit for the habitation of the respectable working classes by reason of the herding of Kafirs therein"(64).

The Town Council thereupon sent a deputation to confer with Prime Minister Sir Gordon Sprigg, who agreed that a location would have to be established and undertook to order a Native Affairs Department report on possible sites. It was unanimously accepted at this meeting that the establishment of a location would have a beneficial effect on the local labour market, as it would ensure employers of a plentiful supply of good, cheap labour(65). The Prime Minister voiced his conviction that "the dwelling together of Natives and Europeans was not possible, in this or any other country. The races must be separated"(66). At that stage it was however already clear that the municipality was not prepared to accept sole responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of the proposed location(67).

White residents of areas mentioned as possible location sites were predictably unhappy at this prospect. There was much agitation, leading up to a meeting in Woodstock between representatives of Woodstock, Sea Point, Rondebosch, Mowbray, Maitland and Claremont municipalities. This meeting, at which Cape Town municipality was not represented, agreed on the necessity for a location, but decided that as the majority of local Africans lived and worked in Cape Town, the location should be sited within the Cape Town municipal area. Maitland municipality in particular objected to its area being used as a "dumping ground"(68).

Six weeks later it was reported that delegates of these suburban municipalities had decided (presumably due to representations from Cape Town municipality) to request that the government should

allow a portion of its land at Uitvlugt forest to be developed as a location(69). This suggestion was strongly opposed by farmers from Mowbray and by the Department of Forestry, which had started a plantation at Uitvlugt in 1883(70). Saunders says that

when delegates from Woodstock, Cape Town, Mowbray, Rondebosch, Claremont and Maitland met the Secretary for Agriculture on 3 June 1899, they asked him to approve the establishment of a general location for Africans and suggested the government-owned farm Uitvlugt on the Cape Flats between Mowbray and Maitland as a possible site. He was sympathetic, but was not prepared to promise action, especially when a Forestry official insisted that a location at Uitvlugt would mean the destruction of the wattle plantation there(71).

Mr (later Sir) Walter Stanford, the Superintendent of Native Affairs, then suggested that the Old Outspan site near Maitland would be suitable for the proposed location. This site had some time previously been ceded to the Cape Town municipality to be developed as a sewerage farm but had never been used for this purpose. It was inspected and enthusiastically endorsed by the full Town Council of Cape Town on 1 March 1899(72), but Maitland residents held a public meeting to protest against Cape Town "shunting its Kafirs in their direction"(73). After hearing representations from the Maitland Village Management Board, the Divisional Council came out in support of these objections(74). The municipality of Cape Town,

however, refused to be discouraged and persevered with plans for a location at Maitland that would house five thousand Africans in just over one thousand brick houses(75).

The issue then became deadlocked, as the central government and the municipality could not reach agreement regarding responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of the proposed location(76). Meanwhile the momentum of the campaign for segregation among the "white" section of Cape Town's population was maintained by the South African Working Mens' Progressive Union, which organized at least one more pro-segregation public meeting in District Six(77). Town Councillor O' Reilly, who was the Union's president(78), seems to have led the segregationists on the Council(79). His Union colleague Thomas Harris declared that the City Fathers should be swept out along with the "Kafirs" as they were completely incompetent(80). The Council was accused of "criminal negligence" for allowing "Natives.... to live cheek by jowl with the white man"(81) while Dr Alfred E Sellar, a prominent resident of District Six, said that the Council, capitalists and property owners were responsible for the unbearable conditions in that area(82). The editor of the Cape Argus agreed that the Town Council was neglecting its duty towards "the respectable poor of this city (who) are obliged to herd with Kafirs"(83).

A Council deputation met the Prime Minister again in September 1900, and after carefully considering the matter(84), the Government seems to have agreed to accept the responsibility of establishing a location(85). A commission under the chairmanship

of Stanford was appointed to find the most suitable site. The draft report of this commission recommended that the proposed location should be established at Uitvlugt and that the municipality should "pay for and run the location"(86). An epidemic of bubonic plague descended on Cape Town in February 1901, however, before the Stanford Commission had drawn up its final report.

The Establishment of Ndabeni

Elias says that "the outbreak of bubonic plague in the summer of 1901 spurred the colonial government to remove the responsibility for African housing from the C.C.C. (sic) and to assume it themselves"(87). The Colonial Secretary assured a Town Council deputation in mid-February that the government would begin work on a location at Uitvlugt within four days and would issue regulations compelling all Africans in Cape Town to move there(88). The Africans, many of whom worked at the docks where the plague was introduced, were blamed for spreading the infection, and the location was established under Section 15 of the Public Health Amendment Act of 1897, which empowered the government to halt the spread of diseases by means of mass removal(89). Government Notice 209 of 5 March 1901 provided for punishment of Africans who refused to move into the location, and legitimized whatever force might be considered necessary to effect the proposed removal(90). Further regulations promulgated on 12 March officially inaugurated the location (Government Notice 231) and ordered all Africans out of District Six unless they had obtained special permission to remain there (Government Notice 238)(91).

According to van Heyningen

the vendetta which was launched against the Africans when the first cases of plague were discovered, and their living quarters were suddenly invaded by sanitary officers and police, at once provoked fear and suspicion. The shipping company offices were besieged by men seeking passages home, and the refusal of either the shipping companies or the railways to take them contributed further to their unease. When the dock employers attempted to register their addresses on 16 February, the labourers struck.... and it was only after A.R. Mc Kenzie, one of the largest employers of African labour, had addressed a meeting of the discontented on the slopes of the mountain, that they agreed to return to work(92).

On the morning of 12 March, African dock-workers from District Six reported for work as usual, only to be told to return to their homes. There they found their meagre belongings either burning on bonfires or deposited in the street, while a force of "one hundred government cleansing staff Kaffirs" was busy scrubbing and spraying their dwellings with carbolic solution. Not surprisingly, many of these evictees were found to be "in a very unruly frame of mind"(93).

Between eight hundred and one thousand of these people were rounded

up by soldiers that day and marched under an armed mounted-police escort to the Woodstock market siding, where they were forced into trains bound for the new location. They were followed by a large crowd of angry "Coloureds", who "jeered and hooted" as the trains left the siding(94). A further eight hundred were removed in a similar fashion on the following day(95) and the remaining Africans held a meeting on the mountain slopes at which it was decided to hold a protest meeting on the Grand Parade(96). All meetings of more than twenty five people were banned under the Public Health Act in terms of a Government Gazette Extra ordinary issued on 13 March(97) and the approximately one thousand protesters who assembled on the Parade on the 14th were dispersed by mounted policemen(98).

Africans in other parts of Cape Town were required to move to the location by Government Notice 276 of 21 March(99). Many seem to have complied voluntarily, presumably to avoid losing all their possessions as seems to have been the case with a large number of Africans removed from District Six(100). Then on 27 March, a "posse of mounted and foot police" swept through Districts one and two, starting at the top of Kloof Street and netting some five hundred Africans as it worked its way down to the sea(101). A number of illegal Africans still remained in town, and it was reported the following month that "Natives in groups of thirty to fifty" were to be seen wandering around in an apparently bewildered fashion in Long, Burg and Strand Streets(102). It seems that nearly all the Africans (except the few who were exempted) had been removed from Cape Town and its contiguous suburbs by mid-year, when there were reported to be almost seven thousand people in the location(103).

Thus was the policy of residential segregation initiated in Cape Town. Before outlining further developments with regard to the local implementation of the policy of residential segregation in the period leading up to the promulgation of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, it is instructive to quote Saunders' description of conditions in the new location. He says that

Within the area surrounded by a six foot high barbed wire fence and patrolled by an inner and outer location guard, no liquor was allowed, no strangers might remain more than twenty-four hours and no women visitors stay overnight. Those entering the location had to report themselves, on which they were provided with an identification card and allotted a place to live. At first, some were housed in tents, but the basic accommodation, which was to remain in use with few improvements, consisted of five large dormitories, each sleeping five hundred men, and 615 unlined lean-tos made of corrugated iron. In the lean-tos, which measured 18 feet by 12 and, to begin with, had no floors, seven or more men, and sometimes a family, were accommodated(104).

The Deterioration of Ndabeni and the Renewed Growth of the "Kaffir Problem"

This section focuses on deteriorating conditions in Ndabeni. It also explores efforts by the authorities to enforce the residential

segregation policy by moving Africans (who preferred a fugitive existence in the city slums) into the location.

Towards the end of 1901 the Cape Times advocated the provision of additional accommodation at Ndabeni, in order to build up "a labour supply from which it will be possible to pick and choose the most desirable men"(105). This suggestion was not implemented, however, for the location's population dwindled during the 1903-9 depression(106), which was (according to Hallett), the worst in living memory(107). Adverse economic conditions rendered growing numbers of even the most quiescent residents unable to pay their rentals and therefore obliged either to leave Cape Town or to seek shelter alongside their more defiant fellows in the city slums and the outlying shanty-towns. By 1911 there were reported to be a mere 680 people left in Ndabeni, where a number of unoccupied buildings were in fact dismantled and sold(108).

A deputation from the Diocesan Board of Missions complained to the Prime Minister about Ndabeni's inadequate medical facilities and sanitary arrangements in December 1901(109). During the following year the South African Spectator (never the most militant of publications) accused the government of gross neglect in its administration of the location(110), and disclosed that the approximately one hundred men in each long wooden dormitory shed slept on the ground and cooked over open fires. A similar shed which had been partitioned by its inmates constituted the married quarters; and although a few new and improved buildings had been erected, even these did not have floors(111). In 1903 the report

of the Select Committee on Native Locations stated that the government proposed to provide wooden floors and to reduce the number of occupants of the twelve by seven foot huts, each of which housed seven people at that time(112). The residents were still waiting for their wooden floors in 1911(113).

The Department of the Interior's Assistant Medical Officer of Health in Cape Town "made a surprise inspection of the Ndabeni location" in October 1912. He reported that there then 1,119 residents (including 170 families) in the location, which could accommodate four thousand and hence presented "a half-deserted appearance". This situation was due, he said, to

the laxity of the administration of the law requiring the segregation of Natives in this location.... The municipalities have given practically no information or assistance in the matter and there is no doubt a certain class of property owner who is averse to the enforcement of the segregation provisions.

The government had not instituted a "satisfactory system of enforcement", despite the location superintendent Mr Nicholls' repeated representations; and the result was that Africans had re-established themselves in the St. Johns, Francis and Roger Streets areas of Cape Town as well as in District Six and were also squatting at such places as West London (the present Athlone), Ysterplaat and Maitland(114).

The Secretary for Native Affairs wrote to the Provincial Secretary,

asking what action his honour the administrator will be prepared to take to assist this department in checking the unauthorized residence of Natives in the European quarters of Cape Town and its suburbs(115).

The Provincial Administration replied that it would request the local municipalities to enforce the provisions of the 1902 and 1905 Location Acts(116), which had formalized the segregation-principle in the Cape. The Department of Native Affairs thereupon decided to

instruct its local officers to work in conjunction with the various municipal authorities and [will] endeavour to secure the co-operation of the police authorities with a view to the due enforcement of the law(117).

The Native Affairs Department was pleased to report to the Department of the Interior in February 1913

that as a result of representations made through the Provincial Administration, the municipalities of Claremont, Mowbray, Maitland, Rondebosch, Woodstock and Wijnberg(sic) have instructed their inspectors to keep a strict look out for natives

residing in the municipal areas.... with a view to concerted action being taken by the departments concerned(118).

The municipality of Green Point and Sea Point also agreed to co-operate(119), as did the municipality of Kalk Bay, the boundaries of which then stretched as far as Lakeside(120). Maitland municipality averred that it was doing its best to cope with the problem and had sent inspectors with police on surprise visits at night to check on suspected illegal Africans lodging with "Coloureds" at Brooklyn(121). The Town Clerk of Cape Town assured the Provincial Secretary

that all premises within this municipality are being visited with the object of ascertaining if Kafirs reside there, and unless the municipal officer is satisfied that they have permits to reside in Cape Town, or are registered voters, the cases are reported direct to the Inspector of Police(122).

A report by Dr Willmott of the Medical Officer of Health's staff in the Department of the Interior showed that the location's population had increased by almost two hundred people in the next year, as Superintendent Nicholls had

lent two of his Native Police to assist the suburban police to rout out the Natives living on the Flats - mainly at West London.... The

representations made to the various suburban municipalities were also responsible for part of the increase, but the municipal authorities appear to have become lax in the matter of late and it would seem desirable that the Unified Council of Cape Town be asked to take action in the matter.

(The municipalities of Cape Town, Green Point and Sea Point, Woodstock, Maitland, Mowbray, Rondebosch, Claremont, Kalk Bay and Muizenberg had by that stage amalgamated in terms of Ordinance 19 of 1913). An increasing incidence of sick people being attracted to the location by the availability of free medical treatment was noted, but Ndabeni reportedly remained half-empty, and it was suggested that "if the government were prepared to spend the money on building a better class of hut, many more Natives would voluntarily migrate to the location", providing that rents were not thereby increased(123).

Superintendent Nicholls endorsed this view, recommending that the Provincial Administration again be called upon to pressurize the respective municipalities to prevent Africans from residing illegally in the areas under their jurisdiction. He admitted that ideally admission to the location should be on a voluntary basis, rather than as a result of "compulsory driving" by the police, as a significant proportion of the people who were forced into Ndabeni did not stay there for any length of time. The provision of three-roomed cottages would, he said, make the place a lot more attractive(124). The Public Works Department was asked to delegate an official to confer with Mr Nicholl and draw up a scheme which

would improve conditions in Ndabeni, thus making the location more popular among the people for whom it was intended(125). Public Works, however, replied that Native Affairs should "first approach the Finance Department to ascertain whether funds are available"(126). Evidently they were not.

Dr Willmot tendered his second bi-annual report in May 1914. This showed that the location's population had increased to 1,495, compared to 1,313 six months previously, but Dr Willmott argued that

so long as the Unified Council of Cape Town fail to take a serious view of the fact that Natives are living without authority all over the southern suburbs, the location will continue to be short of its full complement of inhabitants.

Many Africans were still said to "only seek shelter in the location when they find themselves stranded on account of illness"(127).

In 1916, the population had reportedly increased to about 1,600 people as the police continued to

make spasmodic efforts to round up Natives found living in the urban areas in contravention of the law, and to send them to the location, but there is no regular system and their efforts are quite inefficient. Natives so found are given notice, and then instead of moving into the location they

usually move somewhere else. Apparently the Municipal Authorities take little or no interest in the matter.

Many of the oldest and most rotten huts had been destroyed and there was consequently very little accommodation available in the location, and "none whatever for families of fairly respectable Natives". Efforts to enforce the Location Acts could therefore, it was argued, not be effective until forty or fifty "better-class cottages" had been provided(128).

The Department of the Interior called on the Department of Native Affairs

to make strong representations to the Provincial Administration with a view to ensuring that local authorities co-operate in enforcing Section 3 of Act No 40/1902 and Section 2 of Act No 8/1905 (Cape)(129).

Native Affairs replied that "it would be quite useless endeavouring to enforce the provisions of Section Three of Act No 40 of 1902 (Cape) until provision has been made for improved accommodation in the location". Unsuccessful representations had been made to the Public Works Department, and nothing could be done until financial conditions returned to normal(130).

Ndabeni by this stage supported a burgeoning "informal sector" based mainly on the illegal liquor trade, which continued to thrive

despite the outlawing of "Danti" and its substitution by African beer brewed under permit. In August 1916 Mr Nicholls called for a total ban on the introduction into the location of liquid yeast and hops, which he said were being brought in from the breweries by the cartload. He cited a police report showing 116 arrests and 113 convictions for unlawful possession of liquor as evidence of the extent of the "liquor evil"(131). The introduction of brewers yeast and hops in liquid form into the location was prohibited in terms of Government Notice 1411 of 14 November 1916(132) but this was challenged in court and declared ultra vires in September 1917(133). Government Notice 1411 was withdrawn in December(134) to be replaced by Government Notice 496 of 10 April 1918, which made the introduction of more than one quart of liquid yeast or hops illegal(135). While a mainstay of the "illegal" economy was thus ruthlessly severed, thousands more "illegals" were pouring into the city.

Rent levels rose rapidly in Cape Town at this time as the available housing stock diminished, with hundreds of houses in the dockside area and in lower District Six and Woodstock (both formerly respectable European areas that had been invaded by "Coloureds" during the post South African War depression(136)) were replaced by stores and offices during the second decade of the Twentieth Century(137). Police action that intensified with the accelerating influx of Africans augmented the effect of rising rent levels in the slums(138), and the population of Ndabeni had risen to 2,753 towards the end of 1917(139). The Department of Finance was asked to provide two thousand pounds per annum for five years to

improve the situation(140) and a Native Affairs official informed his superiors that although there was an urgent need for additional accommodation, "it is satisfactory to note that more use is being made of the Location as a labour reservoir"(141).

By February 1918, the location's population had reportedly risen to 3,300, and was said to be increasing daily. The police continued "driving" Africans into the extremely overcrowded location, where no accommodation was available for them(142).

The position had become so bad by the end of 1918 that magistrates began discharging Africans brought before them for residing illegally in town, where they were (in the words of the City Council's Medical Officer of Health) being "driven from one part of the city to another" by efforts to implement restrictions on their residence(143).

A woefully inadequate building programme got under way(144) and in April 1919 there were reported to be 3,500 people (including 2,300 "single" males) living in the 520 dwellings at Ndabeni.

The Superintendent was sure that "at least another 1,000 would move in tomorrow if they could"(145) while the Assistant Medical Officer of Health reported that the location housed one thousand people too many(146).

Although this was beyond its terms of reference, the Stanford Commission (which is more fully discussed below) felt compelled to urge in its report tendered in January 1920 that immediate steps should be taken to provide housing for the approximately one thousand people (mainly "bachelors") living in the 140 bell-tents

Reasons for being housed covered by memo

that had recently been put up at Ndabeni, and for the fifteen hundred or so Africans living in the city(147).

By March, people living in the "very dilapidated ancient tents" which are certainly not rainproof" were beginning to die of pneumonia(148) and it was reported the following month that many people were living in the location without the Superintendent's knowledge, making the prevention of epidemic disease extremely difficult. People were reportedly being "allowed to rig up any sort of shelter composed of paraffin tins, sacking etc, under which they can sleep". The Native Affairs Department, in an effort to ease the appallingly overcrowded conditions, had decided to erect temporary wood and iron barracks, but only one of these shelters was then under construction. A case of typhus had been traced to Ndabeni, and the health official concerned recommended that (once control had been re-established) all new arrivals should be deloused(149).

Early in May the Superintendent assured the Advisory Board that dormitories were being built as quickly as possible for those then living in tents, as well as for "batchelors"(sic) occupying huts that could be used as married quarters. Asked whether people who had erected their own "shanties" could justifiably be expected to pay rent, he replied that the ten shillings they were paying per month was in fact "site rent for the temporary use of the ground upon which the building was standing"(150).

Soon Superintendent Nicholls was urgently requesting a disinfectant,

as Ndabeni had, he said, become "very much of a dumping ground of Natives from everywhere including those areas affected with typhus and smallpox"(151). In July the Advisory Board was extremely concerned at the growing incidence of crime and disturbances in the location, and it was revealed that frequent attacks on the location police force were occurring, necessitating the calling in of police reinforcements from Woodstock. Nicholls admitted that the official population figure of 4,340 did not take into account the unauthorized surplus population driven in by constant police action. The true size of the population was, he estimated, approximately six thousand people. A few dormitories had been completed and occupied under close supervision to prevent unlawful tenancy, as "the surplus would squeeze into anything offering shelter"(152).

Ten of the new dormitories had been completed by August and were occupied by 1,500 "bachelors" from the "tents and hovels" and also from 115 of the huts, which were added to the stock of "married quarters". There were still about one thousand "bachelors" occupying huts that were considered better suited to the accommodation of families(153).

By the end of the year there were "cases of typhus cropping up at Ndabeni every few weeks or so", but delousing facilities had still not been provided(154). A medical inspection in January 1921 revealed two recent deaths from enteric fever and it was noted that "with the increased population the water supply is.... insufficient and often no water is available"(155). In March the location's

Medical Officer drew attention to the increased incidence of Africans arriving from outside for medical attention(156). The Superintendent drew the attention of his superiors to the fact that there were no treatment facilities for sick Africans outside the location(157), but the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs echoed Superintendent Nicholls when he told the Secretary for Public Health that it would be necessary to restrict the provision of medical treatment to "registered residents" if Ndabeni was not to become a mere "dumping ground of sick Natives"(158). Mr Nicholls was duly instructed "to refer other cases of sickness, i.e. where the patients are not 'registered residents', in the location to the Magistrate for disposal by the District Surgeon"(159). The Department of Public Health, however, pointed out that this was contrary to the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1919, which placed "the duty of dealing with cases of infectious and communicable diseases on the Local Authority of the place of discovery"(160).

The Cape Argus reported in mid-May that there had been ten cases of typhus (three of them fatal) at Ndabeni during the previous week(161) and its editor called on the City Council to act against the health hazard constituted by the conditions under which Africans were living both in Ndabeni and illegally in town(162).

The Minister of Public Health, the Secretary of Public Health and the Assistant Health Officer of the Union inspected Ndabeni at that time. They found the dwellings "generally speaking very dirty and verminous.... The whole Location", they said, "is

unkempt, dilapidated, dirty and insanitary. There are evidences on every hand of inefficient control and supervision". A thorough clean-up and the institution of an effective system of cleansing, maintenance and control was recommended; and the provision of a "portable disinfestor" was called for in order to put an end to the repeated outbreaks of typhus that had been occurring in the location for the past year or so(163). The Cape Argus complained that "the Native location is mainly a dormitory for our unskilled labour. This is its first and great function; and the shame of Ndabeni is that it fails to fill adequately even this simple duty"(164).

By 1921
came to reality
 The influx of Africans continued unabated, presumably due to the accelerating underdevelopment of the Xhosa reserves, where the productive capacity was beginning to collapse. In 1921 there were estimated to be one thousand Africans in the local slums. This had increased to three thousand in early 1922(165) and to seven thousand by the end of that year(166).

Thus by the early 1920's a "Kaffir Problem" of far greater magnitude than that which had given rise to Ndabeni had become a major social issue in Cape Town. Pressure for segregation once again intensified, but there was no need now for organized white workers to press for the legislative entrenchment of this form of racism. Residential segregation of Africans was an established fact, a principle enshrined in the statute books and "almost universally accepted by whites, (even) in the Mother City"(167). The skilled white workers, their interests in the housing market by that stage more or less secured, no longer maintained the momentum of segregation

as they had a little more than two decades before. This role was left to liberal philanthropists and (interestingly enough) to organizations of white women, who were beginning then to agitate for their own enfranchisement, which was won in 1930. The "Native Invasion" was an issue on which this newly politically-active sector of the white population could cut its metaphorical teeth.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

- (1) Rosser, n.d.: 27.
- (2) Roberts, 1978: 8.
- (3) La Hausse, 1984: 80-1.
- (4) A28 - 1883, undated petition of residents of this Location against its removal.
- (5) Welsh, 1975: 179.
- (6) Davenport, 1971: 1.
- (7) Cook and Opland, 1980: 2.
- (8) Saunders, 1979(a) and 1979(b).
- (9) see Saunders, 1979(a).
- (10) Cape Times 4/9/1895, editorial supporting similar measures at a later stage.
- (11) The Wardmasters' reports drawn up in the wake of the 1840 small-pox epidemic reveal a foul and filthy town, with only the most rudimentary facilities for the disposal of sewerage and other household wastes (CO 490: 159, Wardmasters' reports of May 1840). The position had hardly improved two

decades later, when six "Native Inhabitants" petitioned the Legislative Council to reject a Bill it was then considering, in terms of which increased powers were to be conferred on the local municipality. This body was accused in the petition of oppressing the

labouring people, by compelling them to live in filth, and [preventing] them from obtaining the means of washing and cleansing their residences and premises. In consequence of the combination by which your petitioners have been made to suffer, thousands of their class have been attacked by disease (small-pox and measles especially) and have been either disfigured for life or swept off from the face of this earth

(C26 - 1861, undated petition).

(12) A26-1879.

(13) Coates, 1976: 53-4.

(14) Laidler, 1939: 402.

(15) Coates, 1976: 53.

(16) Saunders, 1980: 26-7.

- (17) *ibid*: 29.
- (18) A42-1881.
- (19) Saunders, 1980: 29.
- (20) Coates, 1976: 53.
- (21) Cape Times 28/7/1883.
- (22) Lombaard, 1981: 128.
- (23) *ibid*: 115, referring to Cape Times 5/9/1882, letter from "Murder".
- (24) 3WSK 136: 23 and 28, Woodstock Municipality to Mrs Short, 20/9/1882 and 26/9/1882; CO 1197, Woodstock Municipal chairman to Colonial Secretary, 6/10/1882.
- (25) CO 3412: 22, Police Commissioner to Under Colonial Secretary, 10/10/1882.
- (26) *ibid*, unsigned note on reverse of above letter; CO 1197, Woodstock Municipality to Colonial Secretary, 26/9/1882.
- (27) Laidler, 1939: 402.
- (28) Saunders, 1980: 30.

- (29) Government Gazette 9/6/1882.
- (30) 3 WSK 136:9, Woodstock Municipality to Mrs Short, 25/7/1882.
- (31) CO 1197, Woodstock Municipal Chairman to Colonial Secretary, 26/9/1882.
- (32) ibid, handwritten note on reverse of above letter, signed T.C.S., presumably Prime Minister Thomas Charles Scanlen. Official reply unlocated.
- (33) Government Notice No. 196 of 1882.
- (34) 3 WSK(V1): 149, minutes of Woodstock Municipal Council meeting, 27/3/1883.
- (35) Cape Times 28/7/1883.
- (36) 3 WSK(V1): 170, minutes of Woodstock Municipal Council meeting, 21/5/1883.
- (37) 3 WSK(V1): 348, minutes of Woodstock Municipal Council meeting, 31/3/1884.
- (38) 3 WSK(V2): 129, 132 and 138, minutes of Woodstock Municipal Council meetings, 7/4/1885, 20/4/1885 and 4/5/1885.
- (39) 3 WSK(V2): 166 and 189, minutes of Woodstock Municipal Council meetings, 15/6/1885 and 3/8/1885.
- (40) Cape Argus 27/2/1893.
- (41) Saunders, 1980: 30.

- (42) Pinnock, 1980: 132.
- (43) e.g. Cape Times 18/8/1891, letter from "Interested One";
Cape Times 19/1/1892, letter from "Sanitas".
- (44) Cape Times 17/2/1892.
- (45) Cape Times 26/2/92.
- (46) Cape Times 24/2/92, 18/3/92, 11/5/92, 18/5/92; Cape Argus
4/8/92.
- (47) Cape Register 4/2/93.
- (48) Bickford-Smith, 1981: 44; Cape Times 12/5/1900 and 28/8/1900.
- (49) see Chapter 2: 56-7
- (50) Cape Register 9/4/92.
- (51) Cape Register 16/7/92.
- (52) Cape Register 18/2/93.
- (53) Cape Argus 22/8/94, editorial.
- (54) Cape Argus 30/5/1899.
- (55) van Heyningen, 1981: 95.

- (56) Katz (1976), Davies (1979) and Bozzoli (1981) have provided the best accounts of the position of white workers in South Africa during this early period. All three authors agree on the significance of the class-alliance cemented between white workers and the national bourgeoisie. This alliance seems to have developed early in the Cape, and as early as 1912 a Cape Peninsula Natives Association meeting strongly protested against the Labour Party's advocacy in Parliament of a "white Labour Policy", which was said to be "really playing into the hands of the capitalists" (APQ 2/4/1912). Reference was made the following year to a Labour Party - Nationalist alliance intent on reducing "Coloureds and Natives to slaves" (APQ 22/2/1913).
- (57) Letters published in the local press reflected what was certainly the prevailing white perception of Africans in Cape Town as "semi-naked savages" (Cape Times 19/8/1898, letter from "Cosmopolitan") with "dirty evil ways" (Cape Times 16/8/1898, letter from C.W. Downing), "insanitary habits and a generally repulsive mode of living" (Cape Times 26/8/1898, letter from "Resident").
- (58) Cape Argus 1/6/98; Cape Argus 4/6/98, letter from J.H.P.
- (59) Cape Times 12/1/95, 9/2/95 and 13/2/95.
- (60) Cape Times 27/7/98.
- (61) Cape Argus 10/8/98; Cape Times 11/8/98.

- (62) Cape Times 12/8/98, editorial.
- (63) Cape Times 12/8/1898.
- (64) Elias, 1980: 4, quoting 1898 Mayor's Minutes.
- (65) Cape Argus 1/9/1898; Cape Times 2/9/1898.
- (66) Cape Times 2/9/1898.
- (67) Cape Argus 2/9/1898, editorial.
- (68) Cape Times 12/4/1899.
- (69) Cape Argus 30/5/1899, editorial.
- (70) South African News 6/6/1899.
- (71) Saunders, 1979(a): 137-8.
- (72) South African News 2/3/1900; Cape Argus 25/8/1900.
- (73) Saunders, 1979(a): 139.
- (74) Cape Argus 6/3/1900; Cape Times 7/3/1900.
- (75) Saunders, 1979(a): 139.
- (76) Cape Times 12/5/1900, editorial.

- (77) Cape Times 3/3/1900; Cape Argus 3/3/1900.
- (78) South African Review 10/6/1898 and 1/7/1898.
- (79) South African News 2/3/1900; Cape Times 7/3/1900.
- (80) Cape Argus 23/8/1900, letter from Thomas Harris.
- (81) Cape Argus 23/8/1900 , letter from A Berlyn.
- (82) Cape Argus 24/8/1900, letter from Alfred E Sellar.
- (83) Cape Argus 24/8/1900, editorial.
- (84) Cape Times 24/9/1900.
- (85) Saunders, 1979(a): 139.
- (86) *ibid*: 140 and 163, footnote 30.
- (87) Elias, 1983: 3.
- (88) Cape Times 15/2/1901.
- (89) Saunders, 1979(a): 140.
- (90) *ibid*: 140 and 163, footnote 32.
- (91) *ibid*: 141 and 163, footnotes 33 and 34.


- (92) van Heyningen, 1981: 98.
- (93) Cape Times 13/3/1901.
- (94) Cape Times 13/3/01; van Heyningen, 1981: 99.
- (95) Cape Times 14/3/01.
- (96) Cape Argus 14/3/01; van Heyningen, 1981: 99.
- (97) Cape Argus 14/3/01.
- (98) Cape Times 15/3/01; Saunders, 1979(a): 147, van Heyningen, 1981: 99.
- (99) Saunders, 1979(a): 141 and 163, footnote 34.
- (100) van Heyningen, 1981: 87.
- (101) Cape Times 28/3/1901.
- (102) South African Spectator 20/4/1901.
- (103) Cape Times 6/6/1901.
- (104) Saunders, 1979(a): 141-2.
- (105) Cape Times 6/9/1901

- (106) GES 816 F585/13, Acting MOH (Cape) report to Secretary of the Interior, 21/10/1912; NA 2437 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs to Minister of Native Affairs, 22/2/18.
- (107) Hallett, 1979: 28.
- (108) NA 2437 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs to Minister of Native Affairs, 22/2/18.
- (109) South African Spectator 7/12/01.
- (110) South African Spectator 2/8/02.
- (111) South African Spectator 27/9/02.
- (112) Cape Times 27/8/03.
- (113) NA 341 6441/F1100, Minutes of Ndabeni Advisory Board meeting, 5/9/11.
- (114) GES 816 F585/13, Dr Mitchell to Secretary of Interior, 21/10/12.
- (115) GES 816 F585/13, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Interior, 8/11/12.
- (116) GES 816 F585/13, Provincial Secretary to Secretary of Native Affairs, 12/12/12.

- (117) GES 816 F585/13, Secretary of Native Affairs to Provincial Secretary, 18/1/13.
- (118) GES 816 F585/13, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of the Interior, 27/2/13.
- (119) *ibid*, Provincial Secretary to Secretary of Native Affairs, 7/3/13.
- (120) *ibid*, Provincial Secretary to Secretary of Native Affairs, 25/3/13.
- (121) Cape Times 13/2/13.
- (122) NA 51 3619/1912/F63, Town Clerk to Provincial Secretary, 21/6/13.
- (123) NA 51 3619/1912/F63, Assistant MOH (Cape) Report, 3/10/13.
- (124) *ibid*, Nicholls to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/2/14.
- (125) NA 51 3619/1912/F63, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Public Works, 10/3/14.
- (126) *ibid*, Secretary of Public Works to Secretary of Native Affairs, 14/3/14.
- (127) *ibid*, Dr Willmott's report, 14/5/14.

- (128) *ibid*, Assistant Medical Officer of Health to Secretary of the Interior, 17/4/1916.
- (129) *ibid*, Acting Secretary of the Interior to Secretary of Native Affairs, 2/5/1916.
- (130) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of the Interior, 4/9/1916.
- (131) NTS 7026 16/322, Nicholls to Secretary of Native Affairs, 10/8/1916.
- (132) Government Gazette 14/11/1916.
- (133) The case of *Rex v George, Mooi, Nagade and others*. See Cape Times 6/9/1917; Cape Argus 11/9/1917; NTS 7026 16/322, Nicholls to Secretary of Native Affairs, 17/8/1917 and 20/9/1917.
- (134) Government Gazette 14/12/1917.
- (135) Government Gazette 19/4/1918.
- (136) Cape Times 28/3/1922.
- (137) Cape Times 12/2/1922.
- (138) NTS 2437 23/290, Location Inspector's report to Secretary of Native Affairs, 16/11/1917.

- (139) *ibid*, judgement in criminal appeal, *Rex v Kasi and others*, 12/11/1917.
- (140) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Finance, 26/11/1917.
- (141) *ibid*, Location Inspector to Secretary of Native Affairs, 16/11/1917.
- (142) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Minister of Native Affairs, 22/2/1918.
- (143) Cape Argus 31/12/1918; Cape Times 23/1/1919.
- (144) NA 51 3619/12/F63, Assistant Medical Officer of Health to MOH, 23/4/1918.
- (145) Cape Argus 16/4/1919, quoting Nicholls.
- (146) Cape Times 26/2/1919.
- (147) NTS 2438 23/290, "Report on Native Location Requirements - Cape Town and Suburbs", 26/1/1920.
- (148) GES 816 585/13, Assistant Health Officer to Secretary of Public Health, 18/3/1920.
- (149) *ibid*, Assistant Health Officer to Secretary of Public Health, 29/4/1920.

- (150) NTS 2435 14/290, minutes of Ndabeni Advisory Board meeting, 4/5/1920.
- (151) NTS 6747 36/315, Nicholls to Secretary of Native Affairs, 27/5/1920.
- (152) NTS 2435 14/290, minutes of Ndabeni Advisory Board meeting, 6/7/1920.
- (153) *ibid.* Minutes of Ndabeni Advisory Board meeting, 3/8/1920.
- (154) NTS 6747 36/315, Assistant Health Officer to Secretary of Public Health, 28/12/1920
- (155) GES . 816 585/13, Medical Inspector to Assistant Health Officer, 4/1/1921.
- (156) *ibid.*, Dr Lee to Nicholls, 21/3/1921.
- (157) *ibid.*, Nicholls to Secretary of Native Affairs, 23/3/21.
- (158) *ibid.*, Under Secretary Native Affairs to Secretary of Public Health, 5/4/1921.
- (159) *ibid.*, Under Secretary of Native Affairs to Nicholls, 4/5/1921.
-  (160) *ibid.*, Secretary of Public Health to Secretary of Native Affairs, 20/5/1921.

- (161) Cape Argus 15/5/1921.
- (162) Cape Argus 17/5/1921, editorial.
- (163) GES 816 585/13, "Memorandum of Inspection", 16/5/1921.
- (164) Cape Argus 25/6/1921, editorial.
- (165) Cape Times 7/2/1922.
- (166) Cape Argus 7/12/1922, letter from "Sigma"; Cape Times 20/12/1922; Cape Times 11/1/1923; Cape Argus 31/1/1923, letter from A Bellas.
- (167) Saunders, 1979b: 199.

CHAPTER 4: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY OF URBAN RESIDENTIAL
SEGREGATION IN CAPE TOWN
PART 2: THE EMERGING SOLUTION

Slowly a solution emerged to the racially-perceived social problem of poverty and homelessness, the growth of which was outlined above. The effects of the influenza epidemic of October 1918 (which claimed over four thousand lives in Cape Town) underlined to the authorities the seriousness of the situation(1) that had been allowed to develop through racist neglect and avarice.

Liberal philanthropists such as the Reverend (later Bishop) Lavis led the call for houses for the "poorer classes"(2). The municipality announced that it would build 122 dwellings in Maitland for its own workers (apparently both "Coloureds and Whites, but predictably not Africans(3)). The Minister of Mines and Industries told the Mayor that the municipality should provide accommodation for all Ndabeni residents who were not government employees, but the City Council insisted that housing urban Africans was the responsibility of the central government(4).

Meanwhile employers began, in their own interest, to press for the amelioration of the housing crisis. A committee representing the Cape Province Manufacturers Association, the Master Builders' Association and the Associated Master Printers was formed to draw up a workers' housing scheme for non-municipal employees. This was felt to be imperative, as insecurity of tenure and rising rentals were identified as prime causes of industrial unrest(5), which had become a matter of grave concern to local employers by that stage. This Employers' Housing Committee stressed in a

communication to the Mayor that "there can be no hope of a settled and contented industrial population until the question of proper housing for the working classes has been dealt with"(6).

One of the main aims of this committee was the drafting of a Bill providing government assistance for municipal housing schemes(7). It was obviously pressures of this nature that led to the enactment of the Municipal (Provision of Homes) Ordinance of 1919 and the Housing Act (No. 35) of 1920, which made local authorities responsible for the establishment, with government subsidization, of housing schemes for those who could not afford to provide themselves with accommodation that complied with existing legal standards. This enabled great strides to be made in overcoming the "poor white" housing shortage, but the position with regard to "Non-Europeans" remained critical. Morris says that "For many years.... the powers given by the [Housing] Act in respect of black and coloured housing were little used"(8). In fact the 1919 Housing Commission (the recommendations of which formed the basis of the Housing Act) did not even attempt to quantify the deficit of housing for Africans in Cape Town, although it did provide extremely low estimates of the "coloured" and "white" housing shortages. Its major recommendation seems to have been the upliftment of the "poor whites" and the prevention of "dangerous racial mixing" by the perpetuation of urban residential segregation(9).

Conflict and Eventual Agreement Between the Local and Central Authorities

Municipal officials, preoccupied with precisely these concerns, conferred with those of the Native Affairs Department, who admitted that

under present legislation the Government have to deal with the housing and general good government of aboriginal natives, and it recognizes the need for further accommodation at Ndabeni(10).

This was taken to mean that the central authorities had accepted "sole responsibility for native welfare", and the municipality urged the Government to deal with the increasing overcrowding in the location(11). The Mayor repeated this call at the beginning of March 1919(12), after the Minister of the Interior had promised to try and find tents for Ndabeni's surplus population and to clear the "natives" out of town(13). Towards the end of that month, however, it was announced that Ndabeni was to be handed over to the municipality in terms of the Urban Areas Bill which was then being debated in Parliament(14). This would hopefully, said the Cape Argus, facilitate the clearance of "natives" from the city and thus ease the overcrowded conditions in many quarters(15).

Towards the end of April a City Council special committee was considering an offer from the Government to provide £20,000 for additional accommodation if the municipality would assume

responsibility for the location(16). These terms were accepted in June(17) and the Native Reserves Location Acts (Cape of Good Hope) Further Amending Act of 1919 provided for the transfer of Ndabeni and Port Elizabeth's New Brighton locations to local authority control. The Council soon realized that upgrading Ndabeni would require far more resources than had been envisaged. The agreement with the Government was unilaterally rescinded in October, and "lengthy negotiations followed.... concerning the Council's wish to build a new 'model location' to replace Ndabeni"(18). Early in December, the Minister of Native Affairs was persuaded by a City Council deputation to appoint a "small commission", including three Council representatives, "to enquire and report on (a) The suitability of Ndabeni as a site for a permanent location; and (b) alternative or additional sites"(19).

This commission, chaired by the prominent "native administrator" and brother of Sir Walter, Mr A.H. Stanford, recommended that Ndabeni should be demolished, as it was bounded by Maitland on the one side and by the proposed "Garden City" of Pinelands on the other. The Government was advised that

with the large increase in the industries carried on in the Cape Peninsula, which there are strong reasons for anticipating, there is.... necessity for making provision for a very much larger influx of native labourers.

The commission was convinced that this could only be accomplished

by the establishment of a new location housing at least twenty thousand people. A part of Epping Forest where the Railways Department grew timber for railway sleepers was recommended as the most suitable site(20).

In March 1920 the Minister of Native Affairs called on the City Council to support the Stanford Commission's recommendation that a new location should be established at Epping(21), but the Mayor replied that Council officials had still not been given access to the site in order to survey it(22). The South African Railways decided during the following month that it was not prepared to give up part of its plantation as the site for a location(23). The Secretary of Native Affairs informed the City Council of this development, and suggested the Old Outspan at Maitland as a suitable alternative site(24). A City Council joint committee, however, resolved to insist on the Epping site, as the Outspan was said to be waterlogged(25), a contention that was of course denied by the Railway authorities(26).

The editor of the Cape Times supported the municipality, which was said to be anxious "to deal with the problem of its local reservoir of labour on progressive lines", and was quite correct in rejecting the Outspan site as this was in fact waterlogged in winter(27).

A City Council deputation conferred on 8 June with Prime Minister Smuts, who undertook to negotiate with the Railways authorities with a view to securing the Epping site(28). The Railways, however, remained "very averse" to losing part of its plantation(29);

and the municipality was told to discuss the question of possible compensation with the Railways authorities(30). The town clerk protested that the Prime Minister had undertaken to conduct such negotiations personally(31), but the municipality was advised towards the end of the year that the Prime Minister's efforts had not borne fruit. The Railways would only give up the site upon receipt of £27,000 in compensation, which would have to be paid by the City Council as the Government had no funds available for this purpose(32). The Council replied that this was totally unacceptable. Epping was the only suitable site for the proposed location and the local authority could not be expected to pay for the implementation of the Stanford Commission's recommendations(33).

It had become apparent by this stage that

the location difficulties in Cape Town are....
only part of the large and vexed question of the
treatment and control of natives in the urban
areas throughout the Union(34).

The Native Affairs Commission, (which had been set up to study the "native question" in its broadest dimensions, as the political, economic and cultural problems engendered by the rapid development of a new class of town-bred Africans, without rural ties, had become extremely urgent and perplexing) was asked to consider the situation in Cape Town and make recommendations for its amelioration(35). The Commission reported to the Minister of Native Affairs (it is unclear exactly when) that the growing number of Africans attracted to the Cape Peninsula by ongoing

industrial development and their increasing tendency to settle permanently necessitated the establishment of a new location either at Epping or at the Outspan, but preferably at the Outspan. This should primarily house the permanent, settled section of the African population, while Ndabeni should house the "floating male population". The Minister of Native Affairs (Mr F.S. Malan), who also happened to be the Acting Prime Minister, hosted a meeting with the Administrator of the Cape, members of the Native Affairs Commission, various heads of Government departments and City Council representatives on 1 July 1921. The day before this conference took place, he was informed by the Native Affairs Commission that the municipality's Vijgekraal property on the Cape Flats would be as suitable for the new location as the Outspan site(36).

The City Council delegation at this conference insisted however that only the Epping site was acceptable, as the Outspan was waterlogged and Vijgekraal had been purchased for the specific purpose of absorbing effluent from the adjoining municipal sewerage works. Furthermore, the municipal representatives were adamant that Ndabeni would have to be removed, as it was too close to the proposed Garden City. The Government would have to provide the municipality with between £150,000 and £200,000 to pay for the construction of the new location. The General Manager of the Railways declared his departments continued strong objections to relinquishing its plantation at Epping; and the Acting Prime Minister stressed that the Government would not pay for the establishment of the new location, as it was the local authority's responsibility to accommodate the Africans working in the city.

He threatened "drastic action" if a solution could not be agreed upon(37).

This conference was adjourned until July 6 to give the various interested parties time to consider their options. A special meeting of the City Council on July 5 resolved to ask the Government for £50,000 to remove Ndabeni and £150,000 to build a new location at Epping(38). The Council was evidently not prepared to back down on this issue. Neither, it was soon to discover, was the Acting Prime Minister.

At the meeting on July 6 (which was expanded to include Divisional Council representatives) Mr Malan announced that new legislation making local authorities responsible for the establishment and maintenance of locations would be introduced during the next session of Parliament. He recalled that the Government had offered the Council a free site for a location in 1919, and disclosed that in view of the Council's subsequent rejection of this offer, it had been decided that the granting of free land to a local authority for this purpose would create a dangerous precedent. The municipality, he said, was responsible for the accommodation of Africans whose presence in Cape Town benefitted local industry and the local ratepayers. Until the municipality had found a suitable site and built a new location, the population of Ndabeni would have to be limited to a reasonable size, which would be determined by a survey. The surplus population of the location would, said the Acting Prime Minister, have to be repatriated to the "Native territories". A committee comprising two representatives

of each interested party (except the affected Africans) was set up and instructed to make practical suggestions by the end of the week(39).

This committee could not agree on a suitable site for the new location. Two reports were presented to the Acting Prime Minister in mid-July. The majority report, signed by all except the local government representatives, made no definite recommendations, but clearly favoured the site in the Uitvlugt Forest north of Vijgekraal. The minority report, signed only by the Cape Town City Council and Cape Divisional Council representatives, recommended that the Epping site was most suitable, but stated that Vijgekraal would be an acceptable alternative. There was clearly consensus within the committee on the wider issue of the status of local Africans, for the covering letter to these reports noted with approval that

the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill, published in 1918, has been referred for revision to the Native Affairs Commission, and it is intended at no distant date to publish the revised draft for general information, with a view to legislation when Parliament again assembles(40).

Within the national political arena, the Native Affairs Commission and the Local Government Commission, together with Native Affairs Department representatives, agreed at a three-day conference in Johannesburg during August 1921 "That a statutory duty (should) be placed on municipal bodies to provide adequate housing

accommodation for all natives within its area" (sic), for which purpose "adequate tracts of land" would have to be placed at the municipalities' disposal. Great stress was laid on the necessity for influx control and the repatriation of "redundant natives"(41).

Ndabeni's population had by then been frozen at a maximum of three thousand(42), exacerbating conditions in the city slums(43). The site of the proposed additional location remained the subject of much contention. Residents of Goodwood, Parow and Bellville held a protest meeting to voice their opposition to the use of the Outspan site as a location(44), while the Combined Civic Associations of the Cape Flats endorsed the Vijgekraal site(45). The City Council's Special Committee on Native Locations pressed the reportedly-sympathetic Prime Minister Smuts for financial assistance and a free grant of land at Epping or Vijgekraal(46). The Council remained opposed to the two-location system suggested by the Government, which envisaged the proposed new location being exclusively for settled African families, while Ndabeni was retained for the migrant-workers(47). The matter was apparently considered by the Cabinet(48), and after a four-month delay Smuts was happy to offer a Council deputation four hundred morgen of land at Uitvlugt Forest north of Vijgekraal(49). This was gratefully accepted, and the local press congratulated all concerned for having chosen an ideal site(50).

The fate of Cape Town's Africans had thus been decided (entirely without their participation) by early 1922. All that remained was the working out of details and the promulgation of legislation

whereby the machinery of state could intensify the segregationist dynamic that had been developing since the 1880's. This involved (as will be shown) not only the further development of the location-system, but also the attempted stemming of the "native influx" and the eradication of squatter camps.

While state policy was thus crystallizing immediately after the first world war, the segregationist momentum was maintained by liberal philanthropists and their organizations and by organizations of white women. The following section briefly outlines the mounting racist pressures from these quarters.

The Renewed Segregationist Agitation Among Local "Whites" in the Early 1920's

Organized pressure for segregation within the "white" population re-emerged forcefully in early 1921. Negotiations between the central and local authorities were deadlocked at that time while more and more Africans were refused admission to the hopelessly inadequate location and crowded into the city slums. The issue seems originally to have been taken up by the Social Reform Association.

In March 1921 the Cape Argus printed a letter from a Mr R.G. Ross, saying that he had forwarded a petition signed by residents in the vicinity of "a certain lane" to the Mayor and the Inspector of Police, calling for the removal of the "Natives" residing in seven houses there. No action had as yet been taken, and these

"natives" continued to reside in the centre of the city "in open defiance of the law" many of them engaging in the illegal liquor trade which had made the neighbourhood unsavoury and dangerous. The removal of these and other Africans to temporary accommodation in Ndabeni would, it was argued, not only stamp out vice and crime but also "secure increased housing accommodation" in the city(51).

A fellow segregationist revealed that the lane in question was Heliger Lane near Riebeek Square(52), and in May Mr Ross (writing as a representative of the Social Reform Association) revealed that Africans living there had been subjected to two liquor-raids by the police, whom he implied should turn their attention also to other quarters of the city. He declared that "Horses and mules are better cared for in our city than the Natives.... The Native is a big asset to the country; the treatment he receives in our city is scandalous"(53). The Cape Argus commented editorially that public safety was endangered by "allowing natives to live amongst Europeans in conditions that make health and decency impossible"(54), while the Reverend Savage (a mission priest at Ndabeni) stressed that Cape Town's Africans were in general "decent and honourable people", living in terrible conditions in the location and in many parts of the town. He called on the local public to face up to its responsibilities towards "those who are the real 'labour' class today" by paying living wages and providing decent accommodation(55). The Cape Peninsula Evangelical Church Council urged Acting Prime Minister F.S. Malan to take "immediate steps" against "Natives" living conditions in the location and the slums(56).

The problem constituted by the growing presence of Africans in the city slums was discussed at a public meeting of concerned "whites" in the YMCA Hall at Three Anchor Bay in September 1921. Mr Ross informed the meeting that there were twelve localities in town where "natives" had become a health hazard. Although no resolution was taken, it was agreed that a Native Welfare Association should be established to provide a channel for Christian involvement(57).

The Cape Peninsula Welfare Society was eventually inaugurated in May 1922, replacing the apparently defunct South African Association of which Sir Walter Stanford had been chairman. Sir Walter was elected chairman and John X Merriman president of the new society, which included on its executive committee such luminaries as Canon Lavis, Father Savage and Professor Radcliffe-Brown. At the inaugural meeting, Dr Loram of the Native Affairs Commission urged that a "Joint Committee of Europeans and Natives" should be established, as experience in other centres had shown that Native Welfare Societies were most effective when working in conjunction with such committees(58).

A Joint Committee was duly established, and one of its African members, speaking at the Native Welfare Society's first annual general meeting in December, upbraided the municipality for not consulting Africans over plans for the proposed new location(59). The activities of this Society and of the Joint Committee which it spawned obviously require investigation. For the moment, one can only quote Canon Lavis' segregationist pronouncements here,

and mention his and Father Savage's views on influx control in the following chapter.

Early in 1922, Canon Lavis hailed the Urban Areas Bill as a "great step forward", which heralded the end of the intolerable situation whereby

for the sake of a few thousands expenditure on the location, the natives.... have been allowed to crowd into this notoriously overcrowded city and thereby force the Coloured population into conditions of housing even more unspeakable than those which prevailed before(60).

A year later he argued that the removal of "Natives" to the proposed new location would not only be an "act of justice to the natives" thus rescued from the slums, but would also be "an act of reparation and liberation to the Coloureds", for whom more accommodation would thus become available at cheaper rents, as they would no longer have to compete with Africans in the housing market(61).

Organizations of "white" women came to the fore during 1922. Concerned citizens at a public meeting convened by the Fairhaven Work Party (which was apparently a womens' charitable organization concerned with the welfare of "white" ex-servicemen) urged the City Council to make land available in the location where Africans could temporarily build their own huts. This would, it was felt,

put a stop to

Kafirs sleeping on the mountain-slopes, in gardens - in out-houses, many of them out of work, and coming and going quite freely, by day or night, quite uncontrolled by pass laws or anything else(62).

At least one more meeting of this nature was held at that time(63), and the Fairhaven Work Party complained to the Native Affairs Department that "gangs of natives wandering on the slopes of Lion's Head and Signal Hill" near "white" residential areas constituted a danger to "white" women(64). The Women's Enfranchisement League reiterated this allegation at public meetings whereby it too began pressurizing the Council to provide temporary accommodation for homeless "wandering natives"(65) but the police denied that white women were being interfered with and claimed that the problem was being exaggerated(66). A third group of "white" women, the Women's Municipal Association, joined in the condemnation of the Council and urged it to provide temporary accommodation for Africans living on the slopes of Table Mountain and Signal Hill "under the rudest of shelters and without sanitation". The Council was further urged to use force if necessary to remove "degraded natives" from their hovels in the slums, but the Africans were being referred to then as a health hazard rather than as a threat to "white" women(67). Letters in the local press supported the Women's Municipal Association's position regarding the removal of Africans from the slums, maintaining that this would benefit "poor whites"(68).

Ministers were visited by segregationist deputations at this time. A Cape Peninsula Native Welfare Society deputation apparently urged the Minister of Native Affairs to ensure that temporary accommodation was provided at Ndabeni so that the unwanted Africans could be removed from town(69). The Minister of Railways was told by a Women's Municipal Association deputation that there were sufficient African dock-labourers living illegally in town to fill the condemned Docks "location" several times over. During police raids the previous Sunday, he was informed, up to sixty dock-labourers had been found living in a single house. The Minister agreed to consider the continued usage of the decaying barracks(70) (it was not really a location at all), once its inhabitants had been removed to new premises on the breakwater(71). Following representations from the City Council(72), the government did undertake to allow eight or nine hundred Africans to continue living in the Docks "location", and the Women's Municipal Association deplored the City Council's failure to remove the thousands of "illegal natives living all over Cape Town"(73). The Gardens branch of the Women's South African Party and the Rondebosch Ratepayers Association were among the organizations that voiced their concern at the lack of "progress"(74).

Pressures of this nature certainly speeded up the decision-making process and contributed to the "solution" of the local "native problem" through the disestablishment of Ndabeni and the development of a new location at Langa. The next section discusses the segregatory aspect of this "solution", while the following chapter outlines concomitant attempts at influx control and squatter control.

The Demise of Ndabeni and the Development of Langa

The Magistrate of Cape Town reported to the Native Affairs Department late in 1922 that

the whole question of Native housing is as bad as it possibly can be and the policy of letting matters slide may result in very serious results. The bedrock of putting the native housing question on a proper basis is money. Is the Government prepared to spend this money? A temporary solution is, will the Government allow the natives to erect their own huts within the area of Ndabeni Location?(75).

The Government had however by that stage

decided as a policy that responsibility for the native population in urban areas should devolve upon the local authority, this being the principle underlying the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill now before Parliament.... The Government will in due course relinquish the Ndabeni location, and in these circumstances it is not proposed at this stage to incur additional capital expenditure on accommodation at the Ndabeni Location(76).

The City Council was authorized to raise the quarter-million pound loan necessary for the building of the proposed new location,

after an extremely heated public meeting at which many of the approximately six hundred ratepayers present voiced their indignation at the rate-increase that this would involve(77). The Minister of Native Affairs was then able to announce in Parliament that the Government had agreed to hand over the Ndabeni site and buildings to the City Council, and that title deeds to the site of the proposed new location would be issued to the Council within two weeks(78). The Mayor and his deputy thereupon set off on an inspection-tour of the Johannesburg, Durban and Bloemfontein location-systems(79); while the Council called for the curfew provisions of the Natives Registration Bill to be incorporated into the Urban Areas Bill, and for the inclusion within the latter Bill of a clause making the non-payment of location rent a criminal offence(80).

In May 1923 the City Council secured from the Native Affairs Department permission to provide temporary accommodation at Ndabeni, and resolved to erect two hundred "Nissen steel tents", each ten feet high and fifteen feet in diameter(81). Ten men would be housed in each of these huts(82), one hundred and forty of which had been erected by November. The Council called on the police to begin "reducing the large number of natives now resident within the City"(83), but there were only fifty-seven "single" men in the Nissen huts by the end of 1923(84). A City Council Native Townships Committee deputation complained to the Minister in May 1924 that there were still six hundred vacancies due to the lack of resolute action on the part of the police(85), but the situation improved somewhat (from the authorities' point of view)

in the following month and by mid-June there were reported to be 1,750 men living in the Nissen huts(86).

The Municipal boundaries were extended to include Ndabeni at the end of January 1925(87). Then at the beginning of May responsibility for the control, administration and maintenance of the location was transferred to the City Council in terms of Proclamation 95 of 1925(88). Confident in the abilities of its new "Superintendent of Natives" Mr George Cook (the respected ex-Superintendent of Bloemfontein location and architect of the Advisory Board system, who was recommended to the Council by the Native Affairs Commissioner Dr Loram(89)), the Council set out to establish a "native administration" system characterized by "that thoroughness and discipline which is necessary to maintain natives under proper control"(90).

Almost immediately upon assuming control, the municipality began to act against rent defaulters(91). A police-station was established in the location at the beginning of September 1925 and in the following twenty months municipally-organized rent and beer raids, with police assistance, netted approximately nine hundred rent defaulters and about five hundred brewers and possessors of "Kaffir beer"(92).

Proclamation 60 of 1926(93) stipulated that as from April of that year Africans in Cape Town were required, under Section 5 of the Urban Areas Act, to live in a proclaimed location unless they had been granted specific permission to reside elsewhere(94). There was an initial difference of opinion between the central and local

authorities regarding responsibility for the issuing of residence permits(95), but the City Council finally agreed in August to undertake the registration of exempted Africans living outside the location(96).

The first section of Langa location was officially opened on 10 September 1927, with accommodation available in the Main Barracks for over two thousand "bachelors"(97). "Single" African migrants living illegally in town were ordered by the City Council to move into the location in terms of Proclamation 60(98), while the Council sought permission to close the Nissen huts at Ndabeni and transfer their inhabitants to Langa(99). On the advice of its senior official in Cape Town(100), the Native Affairs Department replied that, according to the City Council's own figures, there were three thousand Africans living illegally in the city, while Langa could only accommodate 2,200 "single Natives". The closing down of any available accommodation was therefore not to be considered(101).

Saunders reveals that "By mid-October the Council was complaining bitterly that the police were not acting to force Africans out of the town"(102). In mid-November, an attorney acting for "a considerable number of Native Clients" disclosed that "single Natives are being prosecuted for failing to proceed to Langa"(103) and towards the end of that month the Town Clerk informed the Native Affairs Department that

The Council are actively engaged in prosecuting

owners of property for harbouring contrary to the provisions of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act 1923, and also natives who are illegally resident within the City, but difficulty is caused through slow progress in connection with prosecutions and the imposition of unreasonably low fines....

Furthermore the police authorities recently took up the position that Act No 21 of 1923 contains no power to search premises, and in dealing with natives, the Council have been forced to rely on existing regulations re overcrowding. For this purpose special constables have been engaged.... to cooperate with the City health authorities, but the method proves cumbersome and leads to unnecessary delay(104).

Nevertheless, 242 Africans were convicted during one month in late 1927 for not living in the location, and 127 people were convicted for "harbouring" Africans during 1928(105).

A deputation comprising representatives of the "Joint European and Native Council", the Bantu Union and the Combined Civic Associations of the Cape Flats protested to the Native Affairs Commission that due to the exorbitant cost of transport to and from Langa, the high rentals in the new location resulting from its being built exclusively by unionized and hence expensive white labour, and the low wages paid to Africans in the Peninsula, many prospective residents "could not afford to live at Langa with the consequence that they are being forced to squat in the Cape Flats

or on the mountain side". The deputation called on the Government to ensure that the railfare was reduced, to pressurize the municipality for a rent-reduction and to "set a good example by paying a more generous wage to its Native employees"(106).

In June 1928 the Town Clerk reported that "as a result of the steps taken by the Council to remove natives illegally resident in the City to Langa, there are at present over 1,300 single men in residence at the new township"(107). This forced removal was partly negated by the continued influx of Africans into the Peninsula(108), but by May 1929 the Town Clerk was able to inform the Native Affairs Department that almost all the unexempted "single" Africans had been removed from the City(109), as had many Africans from the Wynberg district(110). The removal of African families from the city slums was held in abeyance while the Council concentrated on the clearance of Ndabeni.

The Native Affairs Department's local Officer in Charge reported to his superiors in August 1928 that despite the Council's planned extension of Langa, it might take years to remove all the residents from Ndabeni and close the dilapidated location down(111). The Native Affairs Department was informed that the City Council wished to extend Langa to provide accommodation for the eight thousand Africans shown by registration returns to be normally resident in Cape Town and to reduce rentals in Langa from the beginning of 1929 in order to forestall the ongoing agitation over this issue (which will be discussed in chapter 6). These proposals could only be implemented "subject to consent being given to the closing of a portion of Ndabeni at the end of the current year and

thereafter as further accommodation becomes available at Langa"(112). The Department, however, insisted on a more substantial reduction of Langa rentals than that proposed by the Council, and also on an increase in rentals at Ndabeni in order "to make up the difference in revenue"(113). The Council protested that "the proposals of the Hon. the Minister are not practicable from a financial point of view" as any further reduction in rentals at Langa would be uneconomical, and requested permission to increase rentals for "single" men at Ndabeni by fifty percent(114). The central government concurred, with the proviso that when the Council's deficit had been liquidated, rentals at Langa were to be further reduced(115).

Approval of the revised rental-scales for the two locations was then sought from the Provincial Administration(116), but the Council was reminded that the location's Advisory Boards had first to be consulted in terms of Section 10(2) of the Urban Areas Act(117). There was at that time no Advisory Board in Langa and one had to be hastily constituted before the Council's Native Affairs Committee could confer on 7 February 1929 with both Advisory Boards on the question of rentals. The new Langa Advisory Board presumably had no objection to the proposed rent reduction in that location, but the Ndabeni representatives vigorously opposed any suggestion of an increase. Nevertheless, the Advisory Boards had been consulted as required by law, and the new rentals were gazetted on 22 February 1929, only to be declared ultra vires by the courts, to which local Africans were increasingly turning in their efforts to resist the implementation of state policy(118).

A Joint Council deputation led by Sir Walter Stanford called on the City Council to reduce rentals at Langa substantially rather than using force to relocate the recalcitrant residents of Ndabeni there(119), but the Council was pinning its hopes of filling the new location (which could accommodate five thousand people but only housed about one-fifth of that number) on the Urban Areas Act Amendment which was then before Parliament. It was hoped that the amended Act would (besides facilitating more effective influx control and squatter control), give municipal officials and the police greater powers of search, arrest and removal to the new location(120).

The resistance continued (as will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 6) and in July 1930 the Assistant Native Commissioner recommended the closing down of all accommodation for the 1,690 men in Ndabeni who were "single or detached from their wives.... in the Territories"(121). The City Council was officially requested to reduce rents at Langa, where there was reported to be room for about 2,300 "bachelors"(122). The Council toyed with the idea of allowing people removed from Ndabeni to Langa to pay rent on the Ndabeni scale for the first six months, and then considered a differential rental system, as the Ndabeni Advisory Board insisted that ex-residents of that location should permanently pay a rent set halfway between what they had been paying in the old location and what they were expected to pay in the new(123). When the Native Affairs Department responded unenthusiastically to this suggestion(124), the Council finally agreed to substantially reduce the Langa rentals(125).

This long-delayed decision could not be implemented immediately, however, as the Langa Advisory Board had ceased to function and could not be resuscitated due to the uncooperative mood of that location's residents. The law required the approval of an Advisory Board before a new scale of location-rentals could become operative(126), so the Council resorted, during the first week of December, to serving eviction notices under the amended Urban Areas Act on "single" men at Ndabeni. These notices were predictably challenged in Court, and lengthy litigation followed. The Supreme Court ruled towards the end of 1931 that the Council's action was legal. New eviction notices were then served on Ndabeni's "bachelors", and convictions were secured against those who failed to comply. Langa's population consequently exceeded that of Ndabeni by early 1932. Hundreds of cottages were built in the new location during the following two years, and as they were completed the remaining families at Ndabeni were ordered into them. The Ndabeni huts were demolished as they were vacated and the City Council moved the last few hundred people from Ndabeni to Langa at the beginning of 1936(127). Government Notice number 695 of 1936 then formally confirmed the demise of Cape Town's first officially segregated residential area(128), and Langa, with a population of 5,260 people, was declared full at the end of 1938(129).

Saunders and Elias both allude to the social control function of Langa, which was designed to facilitate efficient policing(130). Saunders makes the additional point that, in providing accommodation for only five thousand Africans, the Council sought by the

establishment of its new location to "confine the number of natives within the Municipality to that necessary for the economic requirements of the city"(131).

It had in fact become obvious by the early 1920's that residential segregation could not be accomplished unless the accelerating influx of Africans to Cape Town could be halted. Chapter 5 discusses this issue, and outlines the attempts made during the period under consideration to implement the policy of influx control envisaged in the Urban Areas Act. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the squatter control measures that were considered necessary in order to ensure residential segregation and facilitate influx control.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

- (1) Elias, 1980: 32. Phillips, 1984: 42 reveals 254 deaths in Ndabeni.
- (2) Cape Times 31/10/1918, letters from S.W. Lavis, "D.C." and G.C. McLaren.
- (3) Elias, 1980: 34; Cape Times 5/11/1918.
- (4) Cape Times 5/11/1918.
- (5) Cape Times 1/1/1919, editorial.
- (6) Cape Times 26/2/1919; Cape Argus 26/2/1919.
- (7) Cape Times 1/1/1919, editorial.
- (8) Morris, 1981: 16.
- (9) Elias, 1980: 65-73.
- (10) Cape Times 24/2/1919.
- (11) Cape Times 26/2/1919.
- (12) Cape Times 7/3/1919.
- (13) Cape Times 8/3/1919, editorial.

- (14) Cape Times 25/3/1919, news report and editorial.
- (15) Cape Argus 25/3/1919, editorial; Cape Argus 16/4/1919, editorial.
- (16) Cape Times 24/4/1919.
- (17) Saunders, 1979b: 168.
- (18) Cape Times 5/7/21; Saunders (1979(b): 195) stresses the inadequacy of available finance, while Phillips (1984: 81) says that the available land-area was too restricted to allow for the extension of the Location.
- (19) NTS 2438 23/290, Minister of Native Affairs' Private Secretary to Mayor, 4/12/1919.
- (20) NTS 2438 23/290, "Report on Native Location Requirements - Cape Town and Suburbs", 26/1/1920.
- (21) Cape Times 26/3/1920, news report and editorial.
- (22) Cape Times 27/3/1920, letter from Mayor W.J. Thorne.
- (23) NTS 2438 23/290, General Manager SAR+H to Secretary of Native Affairs, 20/4/1920.
- (24) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 15/5/1920.

- (25) *ibid*, Report of Joint Committee of Finance, Health and Building Regulations, General Purposes and Estates Committees to City Council, 4/6/1920.
- (26) *ibid*, General Manager of SAR+H to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/6/1920.
- (27) Cape Times 7/6/1920, editorial.
- (28) Cape Times 24/12/1920; NTS 2438 23/290, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 14/9/1920.
- (29) *ibid*, General Manager of Railways to Secretary of Native Affairs, 27/7/1920.
- (30) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 10/9/1920.
- (31) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 14/9/1920.
- (32) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 9/12/1920.
- (33) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 21/12/1920; Cape Times 24/12/1920; Cape Argus 24/12/1920.
- (34) Cape Times 24/12/1920.
- (35) Cape Times 24/12/1920; Cape Argus 24/12/1920.
- (36) GES 816 585/13. Secretary of Native Affairs Commission to Minister of Native Affairs, 30/6/1921.

- (37) Cape Times 5/7/1921; Cape Argus 5/7/1921.
- (38) Cape Times 6/7/1921.
- (39) Cape Argus 6/7/1921; Cape Times 7/7/1921.
- (40) NTS 2439 23/290. Location Site Committee report, 13/7/1921.
- (41) NA 338 1318/1919/F1089, "Memorandum of Conclusions" at conference, 10-12/8/1921.
- (42) NTS 2438 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs to Superintendent of Ndabeni, 3/8/1921.
- (43) Cape Argus 22/9/21, editorial; Cape Times 6/2/1922.
- (44) Cape Times 2/8/1921.
- (45) NTS 2439 23/290, Combined Civic Associations to Minister of Native Affairs, 4/8/1921.
- (46) Cape Argus, 21/9/1921; Cape Times 22/9/1921.
- (47) NTS 2439 23/290, Deputy Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 11/10/1921.
- (48) NTS 2439 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs' "Memorandum to Ministers", 24/10/1921.

- (49) Cape Argus 8/3/1922.
- (50) Cape Times 9/3/1922; Cape Argus 9/3/1922.
- (51) Cape Argus 9/3/1921, letter from R.G. Ross.
- (52) Cape Times 14/4/1921, letter from "T.S.".
- (53) Cape Argus 16/5/1921, letter from R. Ross of the Social Reform Association.
- (54) Cape Argus 17/5/1921.
- (55) Cape Argus 19/5/1921, letter from Reverend C. Savage.
- (56) NTS 2439 23/290, Cape Peninsula Evangelical Church Council to Acting Prime Minister's Private Secretary, August 1921 (no day given).
- (57) Cape Times 19/9/1921; Cape Argus 22/9/1921.
- (58) Cape Times 5/5/1922.
- (59) Cape Times 20/12/1922, Cape Argus 20/12/1922.
- (60) Cape Argus 2/2/1922.
- (61) Cape Times 1/2/1923.

- (62) Cape Argus 17/8/1922.
- (63) Saunders, 1979(b): 172.
- (64) NTS 2439 23/290, Fairhaven Work Party to Secretary of Native Affairs, 23/8/1922.
- (65) Cape Times 30/8/1922.
- (66) NTS 2439 23/290, District Commandant of Police to Magistrate, 8/9/1922 (with annexure).
- (67) Cape Argus 18/10/1922; Cape Times 19/10/1922.
- (68) Cape Times 7/12/1922, letter from Councillor W.B. Shaw; Cape Argus 7/12/1922, letter from "Sigma".
- (69) NTS 2439 23/290, Secretary of Cape Peninsula Native Welfare Society to Minister of Native Affairs, 24/1/1923.
- (70) Cape Argus 11/1/1923.
- (71) Cape Argus 18/10/1922; Cape Times 19/10/1922.
- (72) NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Minister of Railways, 6/11/1922.
- (73) Cape Argus 23/4/1923.
- (74) NTS 2439 23/290, Gardens branch of women's SAP to Minister of

Native Affairs, 21/8/1923; Rondebosch Ratepayers Association to Prime Minister Smuts, 23/8/1923.

- (75) NTS 2439 23/290. Magistrate to Secretary for Native Affairs, 6/11/1922.
- (76) NTS 2439 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Ndabeni branch of the Cape Native National Congress, 9/2/1923.
- (77) Cape Times 18/1/1923 and 22/1/1923.
- (78) Cape Argus 30/1/1923.
- (79) Cape Argus 5/2/1923; Cape Times 1/3/1923.
- (80) Cape Times 28/2/1923; Cape Times 6/3/1923, letter from Councillor Barnes.
- (81) Cape Argus 29/5/1923; NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Superintendent of Ndabeni, 3/8/1923.
- (82) NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Minister of Native Affairs, 5/5/1924.
- (83) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Acting Secretary of Native Affairs, 22/11/1923; Saunders, 1979(b): 172.
- (84) NTS 2439 23/290, Acting Superintendent of Ndabeni to Town Clerk, 24/12/1923.

- (85) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Minister of Native Affairs, 5/5/1924.
- (86) Saunders, 1979(b): 172.
- (87) Cape Provincial Gazette 30/1/1925.
- (88) Government Gazette 1/5/1925.
- (89) Saunders, 1979(b): 175.
- (90) NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Prime Minister 27/8/1924.
- (91) Saunders, 1979(b): 179; NTS 2439 23/290, Superintendent Cook to Town Clerk, 24/7/1925.
- (92) NTS 2440 23/290(B), Woodstock Sub-Inspector to District Commandant of Police, 18/5/1927.
- (93) Government Gazette 12/3/1926.
- (94) Saunders, 1979(b): 180; NTS 5314 77/313E, Secretary of Native Affairs to Officer in Charge of Native Affairs in Cape Town, n.d., July 1926.
- (95) NTS 5314 77/313E, Officer in Charge of Native Affairs in Cape Town to Secretary of Native Affairs, 7/7/1926.
- (96) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 20/8/1926.

- (97) Saunders, 1979(b): 185; Elias, 1980: 124.
- (98) NTS 2440 23/290, part IV, Attorney Burton to Minister of Native Affairs 29/9/1927, 14/10/1927 and 17/11/1927; see also *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Attorney Burton, 18/10/1927 and 27/10/1927.
- (99) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 27/10/1927; Town Clerk to Provincial Secretary, 27/10/1927.
- (100) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Officer in Charge 1/11/27; Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 3/11/1927.
- (101) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 21/12/1927.
- (102) Saunders, 1979(b): 185.
- (103) NTS 2440 23/290, Attorney Burton to Minister of Native Affairs, 17/11/1927.
- (104) NTS 2440 23/290 (part IV), Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 28/11/1927.
- (105) Saunders, 1979(b): 189.
- (106) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), minutes of meeting, 17/2/1928.

- (107) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 30/6/1928.
- (108) NTS 958 10/141, Acting Secretary of Labour to Secretary of Native Affairs, 26/10/1928.
- (109) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 17/5/1929.
- (110) NTS 5314 77/313E, Officer in Charge of Native Affairs in Cape Town to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/8/1928.
- (111) *ibid*.
- (112) NTS 2440 23/290 Part IV, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 3/9/1928.
- (113) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 14/9/1928.
- (114) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 29/9/1928.
- (115) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 6/10/1928.
- (116) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Provincial Secretary, 4/12/1928.
- (117) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), Secretary of Native Affairs telegram to Town Clerk, 28/1/1929.
- (118) Saunders, 1979(b): 190-1.

- (119) *ibid*: 192-3.
- (120) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 3/2/1930 and 5/2/1930.
- (121) *ibid*, Assistant Native Commissioner to Secretary of Native Affairs, 5/7/1930.
- (122) *ibid*, Acting Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 16/8/1930.
- (123) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Acting Secretary of Native Affairs, 16/9/1930.
- (124) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs telegram to Town Clerk, 20/9/1930.
- (125) NTS 2440 23/290 (Part IV), Town Clerk to Acting Secretary of Native Affairs, 1/10/1930 and 29/10/1930.
- (126) *ibid*, Acting Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 5/11/1930; Town Clerk telegram to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/11/1930.
- (127) Saunders, 1979(b): 194-7.
- (128) Government Gazette 5/5/1936.

(129) Budow, 1976: 32.

(130) Saunders, 1979(b): 173; Elias, 1980: 130.

(131) Saunders, 1979(b): 175, quoting the minutes of a meeting
of the City Council's Native Township Committee.

CHAPTER 5: INFLUX CONTROL AND THE ERADICATION OF SQUATTER
SETTLEMENTS

The previous chapter has shown how Cape Town's chronic black housing crisis had by the early 1920's reached a stage where it could no longer be ignored. The establishment of the "Native location" at Ndabeni had not solved the problem, and powerful sectors of white public opinion once again began agitating for residential segregation. These sectors claimed that this could not be achieved without the establishment of control over the continued influx of Africans into the Peninsula. It was also contended that residential segregation and influx control necessarily included a further dimension. This involved the eradication of the burgeoning squatter settlements that harboured "illegal" Africans and those "legal" Africans who either would not or could not live as required by law in the location set aside for them.

This chapter discusses local contributory factors to the crystallization of state policy regarding influx control and squatter control that occurred at this time, and it outlines the local implementation of state policy. Cape Town was of course not the only city in which white public opinion was being mobilized around these issues, and it is impossible to assess without more research the precise extent to which the local situation influenced policy-making on a national scale. However, events in Cape Town were certainly among the more urgent pressures impinging upon the Government (and in particular the Native Affairs Department) at

that time. Davenport notes that Prime Minister Smuts, in introducing the second reading of the Urban Areas Bill in 1923 "recalled the great changes which had occurred in his own lifetime with respect to the influx of Africans into the towns, above all in his own Western Province"(1). Smuts also observed that representations by the Municipal Association of the Cape Province were largely responsible for the ensuing Act's denial to Africans of land-ownership rights in urban areas(2).

Influx Control

The question of influx control (at least in the local context) was first raised officially by the Native Affairs Department at the beginning of 1921, in response to the breakdown of the policy of residential segregation. Saunders says that

in 1919 some Africans whom the police took to court pleaded in defence that there was no accommodation for them at Ndabeni, and they were discharged. From then on the law was a dead letter; the police let Africans live wherever they could find accommodation in Greater Cape Town(3).

As more and more Africans entered the city, the situation increasingly grew out of control. The local Commissioner of Police called for action from the Native Affairs Department(4), which responded by drawing up a circular informing all magistrates in the Cape Province (including the "Native Territories" of

Transkei and Ciskei)

that the accommodation for natives in Cape Town is extremely limited. Under the Native Reserve Location Acts Nos 40 of 1902 and 8 of 1905, all natives in the municipality are required to live in the Ndabeni Location at Maitland, but it has been found impossible to make the accommodation there keep pace with the large increase in the number of natives arriving in Cape Town in recent years. They have accordingly had to find whatever accommodation they could, and in consequence the conditions under which they live are far from satisfactory, and they are under no sort of control. In the circumstances they cannot be prosecuted for living outside the location, and the police are at a great disadvantage in dealing with them. I would therefore request you to warn as far as possible all natives intending to go to Cape Town of the conditions prevailing there and, unless they can satisfy you that they will be properly housed, to endeavour to dissuade them from doing so.

The draft circular was sent for comment to the City Council, which replied tersely that there would have been no necessity for such measures had the Stanford Commission's recommendation for a location of twenty thousand "natives" at Epping been accepted(5).

This circular in fact seems to represent a compromise between different branches of the State apparatus. Issued on the recommendation of the Location Site Committee earlier appointed by Acting Prime Minister F.S. Malan at a meeting between central and local government representatives(6), it clearly represents a retreat from Malan's threat (see the previous chapter) to repatriate surplus Africans from Cape Town to the "Native Territories" unless a solution to the local "Native problem" could be agreed upon(7).

As economic recession settled over South Africa, the local unemployment problem worsened in the second half of 1921. The Provincial Administration sent a telegram to Mr Malan saying that

In peculiar circumstances here Administrator considers all natives not in normal employment should be repatriated make room for residents of district and ease position. He will be glad if Minister will give this matter special consideration(8).

The Administrator was however reminded that this proposal had been discussed months previously, but had been rejected due to the "great distances involved in repatriation"(9). The Native Affairs Department informed the Provincial Secretary that it had

no funds out of which it could undertake the repatriation of destitute unemployed Natives in the Cape Province, a matter which would appear to fall

within the purview of your Administration(10).

This was strongly contested by the Provincial Administration, which argued that "to make the Province responsible for matters which it can neither control nor prevent seems to the Administrator a serious flaw"(11).

This "stand-off" between different levels of government catapulted the questions of housing and influx control into the public arena. An editorial in the Cape Times suggested the imposition of a "native labour licence fee" payable by employers of "natives above a certain quota fixed for each city and town". This was envisaged as a means whereby "cheap rents could be provided for cheaply paid workers without expense to ratepayers, while stemming the influx of natives to the cities"(12). The suggestion was endorsed by the Central Housing Board in its report for 1921, which argued that the payment by employers of registration fees for all "natives" employed in urban areas would provide finance for the development of locations and facilitate influx control(13).

Liberal philanthropists supported influx control for much the same reasons as they had welcomed residential segregation. In August 1921 the Social Reform Association called on the Government, if agreement could not be reached with the City Council, to either house or repatriate the estimated one thousand "natives" living in the city slums and the two-thirds of Ndabeni's six thousand residents for whom suitable accommodation had not been provided(14). When the Cape Peninsula Evangelical Church Council urged the

Acting Prime Minister to take "immediate steps" against "Native" living conditions in the location and the slums(15), Mr Malan replied that the government awaited the City Council's proposals and had warned "natives upcountry" against coming to Cape Town. Existing laws did not however facilitate the establishment of control over the continued influx of Africans(16).

Taking what can only be described as a narrow view, and ignoring the fact that deteriorating economic conditions in the Reserves were forcing more and more Africans into the urban areas(17), Canon Lavis declared that the "Native Invasion" had to be stopped, and Africans encouraged to live elsewhere(18). A report in the Cape Argus conceded that the alarming situation in the Transkei was responsible for the accelerating influx of Africans to Cape Town, but argued that these people would be better off in the "Native territory, as while there is a scarcity of food in many parts, there is something to eat; there is plenty of fresh air too"(19).

The Reverend Father Savage of Ndabeni called on the government in April 1923 to repatriate unemployed "Natives" to the "Native Territories" and prevent them from returning. The influx of Africans was, he maintained,

swamping us with a flood of badly paid unskilled labour. Is it fair to our Coloured people who have first claim on us, as this is their only home? After all, the Natives have their own homes and other resources(20).

Canon Lavis identified the "Native Invasion" as the main cause of an alleged increase in criminal activity and once again urged the authorities to halt the continued influx(21). The Wetton Vigilance Association(22) and the Womens' Municipal Association(23) were among the organizations which supported this line of reasoning.

Bowing to these pressures, the City Council called for the imposition of influx control measures(24). The Council was of the opinion that Cape Town "possessed its own reservoir of labour in the coloured community"(25) and it sought to safeguard the interests of this local "civilized labour force"(26). While the pressure for segregation and influx control was thus intensifying, the local Commissioner of Police sought clarification of the legal position from the Department of Native Affairs. He was informed that there was at that time no law whereby the movement of Africans in the Cape Province could be controlled. Magistrates had on several occasions been reminded that Africans in their areas should be warned against travelling to Cape Town, and once the municipality had assumed responsibility for the control and accommodation of Africans,

It is hoped that by the provisions of the Urban Areas Bill.... and a Pass Bill which the Department is anxious to introduce during the next session of Parliament, means will be found not only to deal with the surplus population of unemployed and idle Natives, but also to control the influx of Natives to industrial areas and provide for the repatriation

of those in excess of the number necessary to minister to the needs of the European [s] (27).

The deteriorating position in Cape Town had by that stage assumed national significance. The need for a revision of "native legislation" was stressed by the Pretoria newspaper Die Volkstem, which published an editorial saying that while 25 years previously there had been "hardly a Kafir in Cape Town" (except at the Breakwater construction site), local factories now employed Africans in their thousands. Many of these people were said to have severed their tribal ties, and they were said to be joining trade unions, taking part in May Day demonstrations and forming a permanent part of the population of Cape Town(28). An indication of the extent of permanent urbanization is provided by Rich, who reveals that the number of African women officially enumerated in Cape Town increased by 110% between 1911 and 1921(29).

The Cape Town City Council was among the bodies advocating some form of amalgamation of the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill and the above-mentioned Pass Bill, the Natives Registration and Protection Bill(30), which were introduced simultaneously during the 1923 session of Parliament. Minister of Mines and Industries F.S. Malan (acting for Prime Minister Smuts who was also the Minister of Native Affairs) strongly hinted at such a possibility in March of that year when he met a deputation from the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which was concerned about the increasing incidence of unemployment and starvation among the residents of Ndabeni. He said that there was plenty of work in the agricultural sector for Cape Town's "surplus army of native

labour". The problem was, however, that these people refused to work on the labour-starved farms, and insisted on coming to Cape Town where rates of pay were higher for those who could find employment. Effective regulation of the African influx, said the Minister, was the solution to the problem; and he disclosed that the incorporation of clauses from the Registration Bill into the Urban Areas Bill was being considered in this regard(31).

After lengthy wrangling in Parliament, this is precisely what happened. A majority of the House agreed that the question of African housing in urban areas (which was in terms of the Urban Areas Bill to be made the responsibility of local authorities) was inextricably linked to the problem of influx control. The municipalities would, in short, not be willing to provide housing for Africans unless their numbers could be restricted(32). Furthermore, the extension to Africans of freehold land-ownership rights in urban areas (as originally envisaged in the Urban Areas Bill) was not proceeded with. The proposed freehold rights were replaced by mere leasehold at the insistence of the ascendent National Party, whose leader Hertzog insisted that the acquisition by Africans of land in the urban areas (albeit in locations) would inevitably lead to their demanding enfranchisement. Nothing could be more detrimental in South Africa, said Hertzog, than to give the "natives" the franchise.

Echoing the views of the previous year's Transvaal Local Government (Stallard) Commission report, Hertzog declared that the 1913 Land Act had made the urban areas "white man's land" in which "the native could only be a temporary resident"(33).

The Urban Areas Act was promulgated in June 1923, and the Native Affairs Department informed the City Council that it would begin to be implemented from the beginning of 1924(34). There seems, however, to have been some confusion over who would finance and exercise the repatriation powers provided by the Act. These details were in fact not clearly specified. The Council apparently waited expectantly for action on the part of the Government, before sending a deputation in early May 1924 to confer with Minister F.S. Malan. Two days after this meeting the City Council formally requested the application of the provisions of the Urban Areas Act to Cape Town, so that unemployed Africans could be repatriated(35). The Department replied that the municipality should apply for repatriation powers under Section 12 of the Act, as "It is not the intention of the government to recommend that the Governor-General should exercise these powers in respect of Cape Town"(36).

City Council representatives discussed the "Native Question" in August with the new Prime Minister Hertzog (who had taken office at the beginning of July). They argued that

whilst it is realized that the question of native pressure on urban areas is largely an economic one, it is necessary, in inaugurating the new township, to take all possible steps to confine the number of natives within the municipality to that necessary for the economic requirements of the City.

The Prime Minister was told that the "unrestricted flow" of Africans into the Peninsula during the previous few years had undermined the "local labour market for the Coloured unskilled worker" and that

in the absence of any effective system to prevent the unlimited influx of natives into the urban area, it is considered unreasonable that the local authority should be required to repatriate large numbers for whom no employment can be found.

The cost of repatriating unemployed Africans, it was argued, "should be borne by the Government", which should hand over the administration of Ndabeni to the City Council. Once this had been done, all that would be required was for the location to be brought within the purview of the Urban Areas Act, from which (being outside the municipal boundary) it was specifically excluded. The solution would then be in sight:

The registration clauses of the Act could be enforced; the repatriation by the Government of idle, dissolute or disorderly natives dealt with; the illicit liquor traffic controlled and generally improved supervision exercised over the location(37).

These arguments did not have the desired effect, and a Council deputation travelled to Pretoria to urge the Prime Minister and the Secretary of Native Affairs to "repatriate" Cape Town's unemployed "Natives"(38). This was after the Deputy Police

Commissioner of the Western Division had suggested to the Justice Department that the repatriation provisions of the Urban Areas Act should be enforced immediately, although the full Act could only be implemented once the proposed Langa location had been built. The police believed that "this would give us some hold and control over the natives, and if rigidly enforced, might drive a considerable number of them back to their kraals". The Deputy Commissioner reported that the uncontrolled influx to the Peninsula had led to a rash of petty theft by homeless and unemployed "natives", and to a situation in which "the Cape Flats swarm with wandering natives who are putting up shacks of all descriptions in the bush"(39).

This extended dispute over administrative and financial responsibility apparently continued for another fifteen months, during which/^{time}the situation steadily deteriorated. Only towards the end of January 1926 did the Native Affairs Department appoint "its own officer in charge of Native Affairs at Cape Town, on whom the duty of repatriating destitute and unemployed natives, as well as alien natives, then devolved"(40). In June of that year, Section 12 of the Act was implemented in Cape Town. Africans entering the area had thereafter to obtain permits allowing them to remain for up to fourteen days in order to seek work, and for up to one month for other purposes. Once these permits had expired, their holders were liable to arrest and repatriation(41). A registration office was opened in Dock Road in July(42), and approximately ten thousand Africans had registered there by August 1927(43).

Already by that stage, however, it had become apparent that the Act as it then stood did not provide sufficient power to effect the desired repatriation. Saunders shows that Superintendent Cook of Ndabeni had hoped to remove three or four thousand Africans under Section 17, which provided for the repatriation of "idle, dissolute or disorderly natives", but after a number of court-cases had been held and repatriation orders issued and defied,

the Council discovered that because repatriation was only a semi-judicial order such defiance was not a punishable offence.... Section 17 was, then, virtually a dead letter(44).

Actually, as Davenport points out, the 1923 Act as a whole was totally ineffective in controlling the influx of Africans to the urban areas(45). What is generally overlooked though is the fact that, due to Cape Town's unique characteristics of firstly having a substantial "Coloured" work-force and secondly being situated hundreds of kilometers from its reservoirs of unskilled African labour, it was possible in the Western Cape to attempt to supplement the normal influx-control measures that applied (at least on paper) elsewhere with a regionally-specific "Coloured Labour Preference Policy".

This policy, the suggestion of which had been bandied about since at least 1906(46), can probably best be understood as forming part of a strategy designed to divide African from "Coloured" workers. Smuts had argued in introducing the second reading of the Urban Areas Act in February 1923 that "Coloureds" should be

treated as a "class apart", separated from "Natives" and "as the years go on.... dealt with on the White basis"(47). His successor Hertzog, who oversaw the co-option of the white workers by means of the "civilized labour policy" after 1924, began making overtures towards the "Coloureds" prior to that year's election which brought him to power. Davenport says that he "played on their cultural ties with the Afrikaner and on the natural desire of many to rise in status by dissociating themselves from the Africans"(48). In the famous speech that he delivered at Smithfield during the following year, Hertzog advocated the extension of full political rights to "Coloureds"(49) and he unsuccessfully placed a Coloured Persons Rights Bill before Parliament in 1926(50).

The Coloured Labour Preference Policy was initiated, as an extension or corollary of the Civilized Labour Policy, even before the Urban Areas Act had been applied to Cape Town. Early in 1923, the Wesleyan Methodist Church deputation which conferred with Minister F.S. Malan about the increasing incidence of starvation at Ndabeni, told the Minister that the location's residents suspected that they were being "ousted by a policy of replacing them with Coloured and White workers"(51). This does not seem to have yet been the case, however, although both liberal philanthropists(52) and the City Council(53) wished it to be so, and the Native Affairs Department condemned local employers for preferring cheap "native" labourers to more expensive "coloureds"(54).

Then on 28 August 1925, as a member of a "Native Deputation" subsequently complained to Prime Minister Hertzog, African labourers at the docks were quite unexpectedly

told not to return to work on Saturday morning as our places would be taken by coloured people. We would not at first believe it, but we found it was correct; we have done nothing wrong; there is nothing against us; we were impressed by and believed your speeches in the Transkei and then the first thing was this replacement and an increase in our taxes. How will we pay them if we have no work? There is no work for us in the Territories; who is going to take care of us? We are very grieved(55).

Hertzog replied that "The Western Province of the Cape (Peninsula, Stellenbosch, Malmesbury, Swellendam etc.) is really the home of the Coloured man". In order to protect "Coloureds" and "Europeans" in the region, the African dock-labourers' deputation was told, the government was "following the policy of gradually lessening the natives, so that those who do not find work here will be slowly absorbed in other places and other directions". The mining and agricultural sectors were both said to be short of African labour, which would also be required to build a new railway line in the "Native territories"(56).

The issue was taken up by the local African political leadership,

which protested to Hertzog in March. This will be more fully discussed in the following chapter, but it seems appropriate to quote here the Prime Minister's response to the arguments advanced at this meeting. He told the African leaders that Cape Town was

a place par excellence, the home of the white man in South Africa, the birth place of the coloured man in South Africa. In the first place all the industries, all the life going on in Cape Town is the creation of the white man.... the coloured person was born and bred here. The native has vast stretches of country assigned to him as his own.... The section which must look elsewhere is the native - the imported plant.... if natives in Cape Town are prepared to go to farms, cotton fields or mines there are openings enough.

The remaining seven hundred or so Africans could continue working in the docks for the meantime, and the government was prepared to begin work on the railway line from Imvani to St Marks in the Transkei sooner than had been planned, if sufficient Africans from Cape Town applied for work on the project(57).

The Native Affairs Department's local officer in charge, Mr Tandy, reported two weeks later that 127 Africans had registered for work on the Imvani line(58). This figure had increased to two hundred in the next few days, despite the fact that "the so-called leaders of the natives informed me that there would be no

applications for work at Imvani: the actual response clearly indicates the value of their opinion". He noted that almost all those who had registered were unemployed and without means, and emphasized that

there seems to be an excellent opportunity now of shepherding away some hundreds of natives and if something is not done soon the natives may scatter and become less inclined to avail themselves of the Government's offer.

They should, he said, either be temporarily set to work in the docks, or repatriated to their homes, "from where they could be given facilities to proceed to the new railway construction as soon as they were required"(59).

The scheme disappointed its planners. The Native Affairs Department assured the City Council, in response to a hopeful enquiry(60), that a "large number" of men who had registered for work on the Imvani Line had been despatched to their places of origin, and the local officer in charge of Native Affairs expressed the conviction that many more would follow, in view of the "very limited" work-opportunities for Africans in Cape Town. By the beginning of June, however, two weeks after the magistrates in the reserves had been requested to despatch the 175 men who had been sent home to await the call to the works, only 35 had turned up at Imvani. An additional 19 had been sent there directly from Cape Town(61). The engineer in charge of the Imvani works had to

be permitted to employ locals(62), who had at first been turned away(63). It seems that the authorities were able to "repatriate" a mere 266 men, 14 women and nine children at this time. All except 16 Ciskeians were sent to the Transkei, 192 of the men being sent directly or indirectly to Imvani(64). A lengthy altercation ensued between the departments of Railways and Native Affairs over responsibility for the cost of repatriating the men who were sent to Imvani(65).

The failure of the Imvani scheme necessitated a change of emphasis as far as repatriation was concerned, and the local Assistant Native Commissioner reported towards the end of 1928 that "This office is not now repatriating unemployed able-bodied natives and has not done so for a long time"(66). Local "native administrators" in the employ of the City Council and the Native Affairs Department concentrated then on "the repatriation of sick natives"(67) and as the then ex-Assistant Commissioner Tandy later recalled, Superintendent

Cook used to telephone or write and ask if we would help repatriate certain Natives, and I used to reply by saying Government would go fifty-fifty with the Council. This resulted in the removal of quite a number of families; Cook rarely applied in respect of individual males, his cases were generally man and wife or families, and their removal suited the city and also the policy of the Government(68).

While this process of repatriation (for which figures have unfortunately proved unobtainable) continued, the accelerating influx from the Reserves simply could not be stemmed. The Coloured Labour Preference policy remained in operation at least up to 1930, and probably also thereafter(69), but the legislative framework necessary for its implementation had not yet been erected.

The Secretary of Native Affairs optimistically informed the Chief Magistrate at Umtata and the Chief Native Commissioner at King William's Town in early May 1926 that since the recent promulgation of Proclamation No 60 and the local application of the Urban Areas Act, Africans arriving in Cape Town without permission would find it impossible to remain for any length of time. He requested that Africans be made aware of this fact through their local District Officers(70). These officials in turn informed their subordinates of the situation(71), and the news presumably filtered down to at least some people in the Transkei and Ciskei. Notices in African newspapers such as Imvo helped to disseminate the warning(72), but early in 1927 it was reported that the influx continued unabated(73). The City Council, at the instigation of the Superintendent of Ndabeni, suggested that the Railway authorities should co-operate by refusing to issue tickets to Africans wishing to travel to Cape Town and that "a Native Affairs official should inspect all passes at De Aar as natives pass through"(74) but the Native Affairs Department replied that

No pass is necessary for natives to travel from any place in the Cape Province (including the Transkeian Territories) to Cape Town and in the Cape Province the railway authorities have no power to refuse a native a ticket provided he tenders the requisite fare. Magistrates in the Territories have been instructed to do their utmost to dissuade natives from proceeding to Cape Town and it is regretted that the Department is unable to do anything further than this(75).

The Labour Department expressed its concern at the deteriorating situation(76), and was informed by the Native Affairs Department that "All we can do is by way of moral persuasion"(77). When the Stedelike Behuisings Bond (of which Archdeacon Lavis was the chairman of the Management Committee) urged Prime Minister Hertzog to see that action was taken to halt the influx of Africans to Cape Town, which was alleged to be the cause of the bad housing conditions of the "white and coloured poor working classes", it was told by the Native Affairs Department that Africans from the Transkei and elsewhere in the Cape could not (under existing laws) be prohibited from coming to Cape Town(78). Towards the end of the following year, it was reported that the influx was still continuing(79), and the Native Affairs Department informed the Labour Department that "this Department has done, and is doing, everything possible, in the absence of a pass law in the Cape Province, to prevent the influx of Natives into Cape Town"(80).

The ineffectual 1923 version of the Urban Areas Act was amended in 1930. Early that year, while the Amendment Bill was being debated in Parliament, the City Council requested that the amended Act should include provisions empowering municipal officers to enter and search premises and to arrest without warrant Africans who contravened its terms(81). These powers were granted in terms of Section 3 and 5 of the amended Act(82) which was brought into operation in Cape Town by Proclamation No 231 of 30 December 1932(83). Registration regulations requiring adult male Africans not in possession of valid service-contracts to register every month as "togt" or casual labourers were issued under Government Notice No 1700 of the same date(84), and Superintendent Cook was appointed as the local registering officer(85).

Those adult male Africans who were not contracted to employers or in possession of casual labourer (togt) licences were required in terms of these Regulations to leave the proclaimed urban area of Cape Town, but when the City Council began attempting to enforce these regulations, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of a man who had been fined two shillings and sixpence for failing to renew his "togt" licence. The regulations were found to be defectively worded(86). The approximately two hundred and fifty casual dock-labourers housed in the Docks Location (or barracks) thereupon "not only refused to renew but (have) also declined absolutely even to apply for togt certificates", and the Railways authorities (who administered the barracks) refused to intervene in the matter(87). Difficulties of this nature made the establishment of control as elusive as ever, and "In the first months of 1936 there were again complaints of an influx of

Africans into the city and suburbs"(88).

Squatter Control

The attempts to implement the policy of residential segregation outlined in the previous chapter gave rise to an increasing incidence of illegal occupation of land by Africans in the Peninsula. This section discusses the growing "squatter problem", which not only threatened the policy of segregation but also that of influx control, for the burgeoning squatter settlements provided a refuge for the steadily-increasing "illegal" population.

African squatters seem first to have been perceived as a problem in the early 1890's, when the Cape Register called for legislation to prevent "Kaffirs or any other representatives of the native tribes" from erecting "shanties and pondokkies where'er their sweet will, and funds, allow them"(89). Van Heyningen notes that by 1901 squatter communities including substantial numbers of Africans had developed on the Cape Flats beyond Rondebosch, Mowbray and Claremont, at Elsies River and elsewhere. Thirty to forty Africans were ejected from rented cottages on the Mowbray Flats in March of that year(90). Saunders suggests that the establishment of Ndabeni in March 1901 led to an increase in the African squatter population(91), but concrete evidence of this is hard to come by. The location was certainly unpopular, and in 1912 the Assistant Medical Officer of Health reported that settlements of African squatters had developed at such places as West London, Ysterplaat and Maitland(92).

The "problem" seems only to have assumed significant proportions in early 1922, after Ndabeni's population had been frozen at a maximum of 3,000(93). Part of the overflow from Ndabeni settled in self-built pondoks at Vasco, but prompt action by the local authority there resulted in an exodus of African squatters to Elsie's River(94). The "unauthorized location at Elsie's River" was soon closed by the police, and its inhabitants moved to the Kensington Estate near Maitland(95). Here they were subjected to raids for illicit liquor, large quantities of which were confiscated in September after the police had been attacked by "hundreds of hostile natives" and had been obliged to use their revolvers(96). Three such raids had taken place by the following month(97), by which stage there were reported to be up to two thousand African squatters in the area(98). Eviction notices had apparently been issued, and a number of huts occupied by "single" men were demolished, only to be re-erected by their recalcitrant inhabitants(99). Landowners were being prosecuted for allowing squatting on their properties, while the "white" residents of Maitland threatened to form vigilante groups and attack their unwelcome new neighbours(100).

The local magistrate expressed his concern that the ongoing prosecution of landlords would render growing numbers of African squatters homeless, but the police insisted that it was better to scatter these people than to allow them to congregate in any numbers(101). The raids continued, and in August 1924 the Deputy Police Commissioner reported 70 arrests in a "roundup" the previous week, and called for the immediate enforcement of the repatriation

provisions of the Urban Areas Act in order to "drive a considerable number of [squatters] back to their kraals"(102).

The municipality of Wynberg and the Cape Divisional Council appear to have taken the lead in acting against the growing "squatter problem". African squatters in Grassy Park, which was within the Wynberg municipal area, and in the Divisional Council's Parkwood Estate were ordered to leave early in 1925. The plight of one particular group of people who were living on land belonging to a Mr William MacGregor at Grassy Park is dramatically highlighted in the available documentation. In February 1925 MacGregor was fined three pounds for contravening Wynberg Municipal Regulations by allowing unauthorized "natives" to live on his property(103). He then ordered these people to leave and refused to accept their rent at the end of that month. There was, however, nowhere in Cape Town where they could legally reside, as there were no vacancies for married people at Ndabeni. When they had still not moved by the beginning of April, they were visited by MacGregor and two policemen, who told them (in the words of their leader, railway worker Mr Jackson K Sifumba), that "if you not remove here after seven days the governor shall send the policemen to come to burnt you".

The squatters approached a lawyer, who told them that they had no legal defence. They thereupon wrote to the authorities, beseeching the "governor" for "the place to stay any where" and explaining that "we don't know where we go to when the Governor our Father expel us in this country"(104). As there was then "a

glut of Kafir labour in Cape Town"(105), they were advised to "remove to a centre which offers labour and accommodation for natives, or to return to the district or location of your home"(106).

These people then moved to Rylands Estate, where a squatter settlement which included people "removed last year from Cedarvlei-Grassy Park, Wynberg district" was inspected by Superintendent Cook in February 1926. Cook reported that the Rylands squatters had invalid contracts of sale for the land they occupied, and he gratuitously added that "they are not a desirable type of native, although the majority work"(107). African squatters were also reported at this time to be a problem in Churchill Estate, Parow(108), and the local Management Board was advised to draw up building and health regulations that would outlaw this development(109).

Langa was being built at that time, and the Town Clerk warned the Native Affairs Department that "natives" acquiring land on the Cape Flats would not easily be moved into the new location(110). The Department's local officer in charge urged that "we should do all in our power to prevent [squatters] increasing in numbers"(111), and after representations by the City Council(112), a Proclamation was issued in June 1926 extending from three to five miles the area beyond the municipal boundary within which Africans were prohibited from residing(113).

Saunders shows that many of the Africans forced out of the city by the police and the City Council's special constables (see the

previous chapter) ended up not at Langa, as the authorities intended, but in the squatter settlements of the Cape Flats(114). This was true also of a substantial proportion of the people evicted from Ndabeni(115). The largest of these settlements was on the Kensington Estate Reserve, which seems first to have been occupied (from about 1920) by "Coloureds" evading the payment of rates and compliance with building regulations by settling just beyond the municipal boundary. In August 1928 the Kensington Estate Reserve Ratepayers Association voted to do away with the "Kafir location connotations" of the area's previous name and to call their settlement Windermere(116).

Towards the end of 1928, this Ratepayers Association was complaining of an influx of Africans to Windermere(117) and a Vigilance Committee was established to deal with the proliferating shebeens which were said to be attracting growing numbers of Africans to the area(118). The chairman of the Cape Divisional Council, which was the responsible local authority, reported in 1930 that despite a number of prosecutions unemployed Africans continued to erect "mushroom huts" among the bushes of Windermere. The Divisional Council was not in a position to clear the area, and called on the City Council to assume control(119). The City Council, however, felt that the quarter million pounds that the City Engineer estimated would be necessary to "put Windermere in order" was prohibitive, and it decided in 1931 not to include Windermere within the municipal boundary(120).

Windermere was by no means the only expanding settlement where

African squatters in increasing numbers found shelter during this period. The 1932 Native Economic Commission specifically mentioned the particularly "disagreeable" conditions at Windermere and Elsie's River(121), but there were also concentrations of Africans illegally occupying ground at Vrygrond, Blaauvlei and elsewhere. The 1937 Cape Coloured Commission found gross overcrowding in the shanty towns of the Cape Flats(122) and by 1939 there were an estimated 50,000 squatters in the Cape Town area(123). The 1939 census showed 18,500 Africans officially in Cape Town(124), of whom a mere 5,260 were living in Langa(125).

The local "squatter problem" simply could not be tackled under existing laws and administrative procedures, and it was only in the 1950's that a determined effort was made by the new National Party Government to establish control over the situation, which had assumed monumental proportions by that stage(126).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

- (1) Davenport, 1971: 16.
- (2) *ibid*: 18.
- (3) Saunders, 1979(b): 169.
- (4) Cape Times 24/2/1921.
- (5) *ibid*; see also NTS 2438 23/290, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/3/1921 and Cape Times 5/7/1921.
- (6) NTS 2439 23/290, Report of Location Site Committee, 13/7/1921.
- (7) Cape Times 5/7/1921; Cape Argus 6/7/1921.
- (8) TES 3826 19/106/10, telegram dated 10/8/1921.
- (9) *ibid*, Provincial Secretary telegram to Acting Prime Minister, 11/8/1921.
- (10) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Provincial Secretary, 19/8/1921.
- (11) *ibid*, Provincial Secretary to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/8/1921.
- (12) Cape Times 22/9/1921, editorial.

- (13) Cape Times 3/4/1922, editorial.
- (14) Cape Argus 2/8/1921, letter from R.G. Ross of the Social Reform Association.
- (15) NTS 2439 23/290, Reverend Whyte of the Cape Peninsula Evangelical Church Council to Acting Prime Minister's private secretary, August 1921 (n.d.).
- (16) *ibid*, Acting Prime Minister's private secretary to Reverend Whyte, 1/9/1921.
- (17) Cape Times 12/12/1921.
- (18) Cape Argus 2/2/1922.
- (19) Cape Argus 21/9/1922.
- (20) Cape Times 10/4/1923, letter from Reverend Savage. In 1932, the Reverend Savage called on the Government to discriminate between "natives born and bred here and those who come from the territories" (Cape Times 24/3/1932). He explained that "There are thousands of men, mostly young men, who flock to Cape Town only to seek work for a time, intending then to return to their far-off homes" (Savage, 1932: 10). The local labour-market had collapsed by that stage (due to the effects of the Great Depression), and the Reverend Savage argued that these people should be prevented from leaving the "territories" (Cape Times 24/3/1932).

- (21) Cape Times 25/4/1923.
- (22) Cape Times 27/3/1923.
- (23) Cape Argus 23/4/1923.
- (24) NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Minister of Railways, 6/11/1922;
ibid, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/11/1922.
- (25) Saunders, 1979(b): 200, footnote 17, quoting City
Council's Native Township Committee report for 1924.
- (26) ibid: 171, quoting the Native Township Committee reports
for 1923 and 1924.
- (27) NTS 2439 23/290, Secretary of Native Affairs to Commissioner
of Police, 2/11/1922.
- (28) reported in Cape Argus 26/9/1922.
- (29) Rich, 1980: 148. The 1911 census had, however, enumerated a
mere 284 "Bantu females" in Cape Town and its surrounding
suburbs (UG 32-1912: clxxxii).
- (30) Cape Times 28/2/1923.
- (31) Cape Argus 8/3/1923.
- (32) Cape Argus 26/4/1923, editorial; Cape Argus 8/5/1923,
citing Prime Minister Smuts.

- (33) Cape Argus 7/2/1923.
- (34) NTS 2439 23/290, Acting Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 21/8/1923.
- (35) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Minister of Mines and Industries and of Native Affairs, 7/5/1924.
- (36) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 16/5/1924.
- (37) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Prime Minister, 27/8/1924.
- (38) *ibid*, memorandum of meeting, 8/10/1924.
- (39) *ibid*, Deputy Police Commissioner of the Western Division to Secretary of Justice, 27/8/1924.
- (40) NTS 958 10/141, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Finance, 1/7/1926.
- (41) Saunders, 1979(b): 181.
- (42) NTS 958 10/141, Officer in Charge of Native Affairs to Secretary of Native Affairs, 14/6/1927.
- (43) Saunders, 1979(b): 184.
- (44) *ibid*.

- (45) Davenport, 1971: 23.
- (46) Cape Times 29/8/1906, letter from "One of Them".
- (47) Cape Argus 7/2/1923.
- (48) Davenport, 1978: 196.
- (49) Ziervogel, n.d.: 57.
- (50) Walker, 1962: 621.
- (51) Cape Argus 8/3/1923.
- (52) e.g. Cape Times 10/4/1923, letter from Reverend Savage.
- (53) e.g. NTS 2439 23/290, Town Clerk to Prime Minister, 27/8/1924.
- (54) *ibid*, Acting Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 21/8/1923.
- (55) NTS 958 10/141, Minutes of Meeting, 9/2/1926.
- (56) *ibid*.
- (57) *ibid*, Minutes of Meeting, 8/3/1926.
- (58) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 24/3/1926.

- (59) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs,
29/3/1926.
- (60) *ibid*, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 7/4/1926.
- (61) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary for Native Affairs,
18/6/1926.
- (62) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to General Manager of South African
Railways, 4/6/1926.
- (63) *ibid*, General Manager of S.A.R. to Officer in Charge, 15/5/1926.
- (64) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs,
26/5/1926.
- (65) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs,
26/5/1926 and 18/6/1926; Secretary of Native Affairs to
Officer in Charge, 27/5/1926; Secretary of Railways to
Officer in Charge, 29/5/1926 and 9/6/1926; Secretary of
Native Affairs to Secretary of Finance, 1/7/1926; Secretary
of Railways to Secretary of Native Affairs, 30/12/1926;
Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Railways 8/1/1927;
Secretary of Finance to Secretary of Native Affairs, 12/4/1927.
- (66) *ibid*, Assistant Native Commissioner to Secretary of Native
Affairs, 8/11/1928.

- (67) NTS 960 10/141 A(2), Superintendent Cook to Mr Kernick, Pass Office, NAD, Johannesburg 30/4/1934.
- (68) *ibid*, Tandy to Secretary for Native Affairs, 4/5/1934.
- (69) NTS 958 10/141, Officer in Charge to Magistrates, 12/4/1926; NTS 2440 23/290(B), Loram Report, 25/4/1927: 13; NTS 958 10/141, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/11/1928; NTS 2440 23/290(V5), Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 28/2/1930: 2.
- (70) NTS 958 10/141, Secretary of Native Affairs to Chief Magistrate, Umtata and Chief Native Commissioner, King William's Town, 5/5/1926.
- (71) *ibid*, Chief Native Commissioner, King William's Town to Ciskeian Magistrates, 10/5/1926; Chief Magistrate, Umtata to Transkeian Magistrates, 11/5/1926.
- (72) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs telegram to Native Affairs Department local office, 6/5/1926.
- (73) *ibid*, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, n.d., received 28/2/1927; Director of Native Labour to Secretary of Native Affairs, 1/5/1927 reveals an influx of approximately 1000 per month (according to "native labour train" conductors) for the first four months of 1927.
- (74) *ibid*, Superintendent Cook to Town Clerk, 10/3/1927; Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 14/3/1927.

- (75) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, 18/3/1927.
- (76) *ibid*, Secretary of Labour to Secretary of Native Affairs, 2/6/1927.
- (77) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Labour, 24/6/1927.
- (78) *ibid*, Secretary of Stedelike Behuisings Bond to Prime Minister, 28/10/1927; Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of the Stedelike Behuisings Bond, 10/11/1927.
- (79) *ibid*, Assistant Native Commissioner to Secretary of Native Affairs, 8/11/1928.
- (80) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary of Labour, 21/11/1928.
- (81) NTS 2440 23/290 (v4), Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 3/2/1930.
- (82) *ibid*(v5), Assistant Native Commissioner to Secretary of Native Affairs, 28/2/1930.
- (83) Government Gazette No. 2082 of 30/12/1932.
- (84) *ibid*.

- (85) NTS 4232 77/313, Secretary of Native Affairs to Town Clerk, n.d. (June-July 1933).
- (86) NTS 4232 77/313, Copy of judgement in the Case of Rex v Solomon Mgibantaka, 5/1/1934.
- (87) NTS 4232 77/313, Town Clerk to Minister of Railways' Private Secretary, 27/9/1934; Minister of Railways' Private Secretary to Town Clerk, 27/11/1934.
- (88) Saunders, 1979(b): 199.
- (89) Cape Register 16/7/1892.
- (90) van Heyningen, 1981: 88-9.
- (91) Saunders, 1979(a): 159.
- (92) GES 816 F585/13, Assistant MOH to Secretary of Interior, 21/10/1912.
- (93) see above, p 122
- (94) NTS 2435 14/290, Ndabeni Advisory Board Minutes, 9/5/1922.
- (95) Cape Argus 13/9/1922.
- (96) Cape Argus 13/9/1922; see also Cape Times 13/9/1922.

- (97) Cape Argus 16/10/1922, letter from Mr Ross of the Social Reform Association.
- (98) NTS 2440 26/290, Superintendent of Natives to Secretary of Native Affairs, 11/10/1922.
- (99) Cape Argus 16/10/1922, Mr Ross' letter.
- (100) NTS 2439 23/290, Deputy Police Commissioner to Secretary of the South African Police, 16/10/1922.
- (101) *ibid*, Magistrate to Secretary of Native Affairs, 6/11/1922.
- (102) *ibid*, Deputy Police Commissioner to Secretary of Justice, 27/8/1924.
- (103) NTS 958 10/141, Wynberg Magistrate to Secretary of Native Affairs, 22/4/1925.
- (104) *ibid*, Jackson K. Sifumba to "Superintendent, Native Affairs Department", 18/4/1925.
- (105) *ibid*, Secretary for Native Affairs to Wynberg Magistrate, 25/4/1925.
- (106) *ibid*, Secretary of Native Affairs to Sifumba, 25/4/1925.
- (107) NTS 5314 77/313E, Superintendent of Natives to Town Clerk, 19/2/1926.

- (108) NTS 958 10/141, Secretary of Glenlily, Fairfield and Parow Village Management Board to Secretary of Native Affairs, 18/2/1926.
- (109) NTS 958 10/141, Secretary of Native Affairs to Secretary Parow Village Management Board, 25/2/1926.
- (110) NTS 5314 77/313E, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 25/2/1926.
- (111) NTS 958 10/141, Officer in Charge to Secretary of Native Affairs, 29/3/1926.
- (112) NTS 5314 77/313E, Town Clerk to Secretary of Native Affairs, 31/3/1926.
- (113) Saunders, 1979(b): 180.
- (114) Saunders, 1979(b): 185-6 and 190.
- (115) Saunders, 1979(b): 194.
- (116) Cape Times 17/8/1928 and 22/10/1928.
- (117) Cape Times 22/11/1928.
- (118) Cape Times 29/11/1928.
- (119) Cape Times 6/8/1930.

(120) Cape Times 22/8/1931.

(121) Budow, 1976: 31.

(122) UG 54-1937: 123 and 125.

(123) Budow, 1976: 58, quoting Oscar Wollheim.

(124) Saunders, 1978: 33.

(125) Budow, 1976: 32.

(126) see Kinkead-Weekes, 1983.

CHAPTER 6: RESISTANCE

This chapter discusses the development of popular resistance to the crystallizing state policies examined in the previous three chapters. The focus here is on the struggle, waged locally by Africans, for housing and urban rights. This is a largely neglected topic, although admirably pioneered by Saunders(1).

A somewhat arbitrary starting-point coincides with the establishment of Ndabeni, as little evidence of organized political activity among Africans in Cape Town prior to that date has yet come to light. Africans resisted removal to the new location (see chapter 3) and once there, their resistance intensified and assumed increasingly organized forms.

Early Resistance at Ndabeni

This resistance found expression initially in a stay-away which was seemingly spontaneous. The Reverend James Jolobe (the first African to be ordained by the Dutch Reformed Church(2)), undoubtedly expressed the feeling of many residents of the new location when he wrote that

the Natives who are unfortunate enough to be compelled to live at Maitland Location themselves say it would have been better for the Government to have destroyed them and their families at once, rather than to have sent them to so terrible a

spot to die of fever, consumption or other diseases, which are certain to afflict them.

During the recent rains, said the black dominee, "nearly all the so-called huts were submerged in pools of water, as the place is a swamp or marsh"(3).

General discontent with these conditions gave rise to a widely-supported withdrawal of labour. Although popular grievances were initially disregarded by the authorities and the white population, within two months of the location's establishment the ensuing labour-shortage forced the Town Council to send a deputation to the Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Secretary assured the deputation in essence that the "Natives" had no real alternative but to return to work(4). There were said to be

over 6,000 Kafirs in the location who were for various reasons unavailable, chiefly.... because they either had not settled down to work after their transference from the.... slums, or else had their hearts in their huts beyond the Kei(5).

A month later the situation remained unchanged: "The Kafirs were dissatisfied and were disorganizing the labour market"(6). This strike seems in fact to have continued at least until the end of September, when the Reverend Elijah Mdolomba (who had supported the establishment of the location and had accused Jolobe of exaggerating the foulness of the place(7)), defended the residents of

Ndabeni against charges of laziness levelled in the local press. The labour shortage, he said, was due to ill-treatment and not to laziness(8).

While the stay-away began to collapse, a rent-strike was gathering momentum. Saunders has provided a detailed account of this strike. It began in June 1901, when rents of ten shillings per month (including train-fare into Cape Town) first became due in the new location after three months of rent-free residence(9). By that stage the location residents had already split into two opposing factions, one of which (led by William Sipika) was pressing for freehold title, while the other more radical group "queried the continued existence of the location now that the plague threat seemed to have passed"(10).

However, Saunders did not attempt to explore this division within the local African community. Furthermore, he concluded that

the chief spokesman for the resistance and, it would seem, the main organiser, was Alfred Mangena, who was in 1912 to be a founder member of the South African Native National Congress.

He immediately qualified this assertion with the observation that

Although not a resident of the location, then, he (Mangena) both advised Sipika and others and acted himself as 'champion of their cause', becoming in

the eyes of the Location Inspector a 'mischievous irresponsible Native'(11).

In fact Mangena seems to have been less of an organizer than an advisor and translator, a link between the authorities and the then largely illiterate African workers of Cape Town. He clearly played such a role among the dock-workers who appointed him as their secretary in October 1901(12). Mrs Edith Davies, who provided Mangena with accommodation, clothing and tuition for his legal studies in return for his services as interpreter and teacher at the "Natives Night School", said in evidence before a Special Examiner of the British High Court (who had been sent to Cape Town in 1907 to collect evidence for a case in which Mangena appeared as the plaintiff) that "he often advised the Dock Natives, and they often paid him". He was completely honest and reliable, and as many as one hundred dock labourers at a time came to consult him(13).

This was the man who (according to another witness who gave evidence before the Special Examiner), the location residents turned to when they "needed a competent man to represent them to the Whites"(14). It was, however, the more radical faction (of which this witness was a leader) and not the more conservative section of the population (led by Sipika and Mji and supported by the Reverend Mdolomba) that Mangena acted for.

The Vigilance Committee that was formed to liase with the authorities was within a year being challenged by an alternative and more militant committee. Mdolomba maintained that the

Vigilance Committee represented the "educated natives" while their opponents were supported mainly by the "raw natives"(15). It seems that people like Mdolomba, Sipika and Mji can be categorized as members of a small but vociferous aspirant petty bourgeois class. Saunders shows for example that Sipika supported the establishment of the location as he "hoped to be able to give up his job as a dock labourer and start a business in the location"(16). The members and supporters of the alternative committee seem to have harboured no such aspirations, which were in any event unlikely to be fulfilled during this era of "class levelling"(17).

Both factions advocated the non-payment of rent; the Vigilance Committee in order to compel the authorities to provide adequate shelter from the elements, and their opponents in protest against being forced to live in the location at all(18). Feelings were obviously running high when the Prime Minister visited Ndabeni in an attempt to resolve the problem in July 1901, for he "said afterwards that he had never before been spoken to as he had by Africans that day"(19).

Saunders has outlined the ensuing development of this rent struggle. In August, rentals were reduced from ten shillings to eight shillings per month (and to four shillings per month for those who did not make use of the "Maitland Express"). But soon afterwards the non-payment of rent was criminalized, and this was made retrospective to June. Early in 1902 the location was divided into six wards (each under a paid African wardsman) in order to establish more effective control over the residents. Then in

February 1902 a more efficient rent-collection system was introduced, leading to the arrest and conviction of approximately two hundred people who had not paid rent. Nine leading "agitators" were included among the convicted, and the case of one of these leaders, Arthur Radasi (who was described as a "well-known agitator") was taken on appeal to the Cape Supreme Court, where his conviction and sentence were overruled on a technicality. The Chief Justice, however, declined to pronounce on the validity of the argument put forward in his defence that the location regulations issued in terms of the Health Act were no longer legally binding. He suggested in fact that a new case should be brought to court to settle this matter(20).

Saunders observed that "these remarks prompted Mangena to organize a series of meetings in the location"(21), but this does not seem entirely accurate. In fact, it seems to have been at this stage that the opponents of the Vigilance Committee formed an alternative committee of which Machine Wakani was chairman and treasurer(22). He was assisted in the latter capacity (as he was illiterate) by John Zwayi(23) who was appointed joint treasurer with Wakani at a public meeting. The surnames of the other members of this committee were Melani, Potswana, Bloem, Koboka, Nzikani, Booi, Ngquati, Sizani and Mtati. None of these community representatives were fluent in English and it was decided to invite Mangena to help in the campaign against the payment of rent(24). Mangena had already demonstrated his support of the location's "radical" faction by means of a number of letters published in the local press(25).

Regular mass meetings were held in Ndabeni in the six weeks between Radasi's successful appeal in mid-May and the one-day strike or "riot" at the end of June, which marked the climax of the anti-rent campaign(26). A few of these meetings were addressed by Radasi's legal representatives, the attorney Mr Karie and the advocate Mr Wilkinson, and also by Dr Alfred Sellar (or Seller) of District Six(27). Dr Sellar had (as was mentioned in chapter 3), been one of the most outspoken proponents of the location's establishment, but conditions in Ndabeni were so appalling that he felt obliged to speak out for their amelioration(28). Mangena proved his worth as an interpreter at these meetings, where the three "white" advisors (who appear to have been well paid for their services) repeatedly stressed that the Africans' campaign should remain within the bounds of legality. This was, however, not to be.

According to Saunders, "As the rent could not be collected, the Native Affairs Department advised the Railways to collect rail fares on its own, and it decided to do so from 30 June 1902". No fares were collected on that day however, and few of the residents left the location by train or by any other means. There were allegations of widespread intimidation by the Wakani faction(29) and stones were thrown during a stormy meeting called outside the Magistrate's Office by the Assistant Resident Magistrate, who recalled afterwards that the "Natives" had been "masters of the situation and the police could do nothing"(30). The following day one hundred police reinforcements were sent into the location, and the residents returned to work(31).

The upshot of all this was that Wakani and his entire committee (except for Koboka) were each sentenced to three month's hard labour and 14 residents were fined two pounds each for travelling on the train without tickets(32). The latter case provided the testing of the location regulations that the Chief Justice had recommended at the Radasi appeal; and although the Magistrate found the regulations valid, it was felt necessary to "put beyond legal doubt the powers the government was already exercising" at Ndabeni and to make provision for the establishment of similar segregated locations elsewhere(33).

A Town Council deputation urged the Prime Minister not to delay the introduction of legislation dealing with the "Native Location Question" and the councillors were assured that the necessary Bill had already been drafted(34). This was promulgated as the Native Reserve Location Act (No. 40 of 1902), which "gave the Governor the power to proclaim locations in municipal areas and compel blacks who could not claim exemption to live in them"(35). Uitvlugt was renamed Ndabeni by this Act, which also stipulated that residents who failed to pay their rent-arrears would be liable to a fine of five pounds or one month's imprisonment and that those who continued not to pay rent would be summarily ejected from the location(36).

This ended the 1901-2 Ndabeni rent strike which (unless it can be proved that the earlier withdrawal of labour was in fact organized) seems to have been the first organized workers' community struggle in Cape Town. After this lengthy campaign, the

location remained quiescent during the bitter years of depression between 1903 and 1909, and the slow period of recovery leading up to the Great War of 1914-18. It was only in 1918, after years of wartime inflation and at the beginning of the short boom ushered in by the war, that organized resistance re-emerged in Ndabeni.

The Period of Quiescence, 1903-18

Conditions in the location deteriorated steadily throughout this period (as shown in chapter 3), but the political economy and the prevailing social climate seem not to have permitted the development of a grass-roots organization that could articulate the residents' interests and complaints. On the contrary, it was the conservative elements at Ndabeni, centred around the Advisory Board, who were strengthened during this period. The Reverend Mdolomba went so far (in his evidence to the 1903 Select Committee on Native Locations) as to stress the benefits that the residents had derived from the establishment of the location. They now had, he said, no liquor, better discipline, and their own schools and churches(37).

The 1905 Native Locations Amendment Act (No. 8 of 1905) provided for the establishment of "Native Advisory Boards" in locations(38) in order to facilitate control. In 1908 the Assistant Resident Magistrate of Ndabeni informed the Native Affairs Department that an Advisory Board comprising the "leading men of the location" had been established there in terms of Proclamation 297 of 1908. The Advisory Board was not, he admitted, fully representative of all sections of the community; and many residents objected to the

ruling whereby those residents who were in arrears with their rents were excluded from participating in Advisory Board elections(39). Nevertheless, even this tame and unrepresentative body could not remain completely silent about the deteriorating conditions in the location. Eventually the Board was told in 1911 by its chairman, the Location Superintendent Mr Nicholls, that the Native Affairs Department was making arrangements to procure railway sleepers which could be used for flooring purposes(40). The Acting Secretary for Native Affairs thereupon wrote to the Public Works Department in this regard(41).

In an effort to win popular support, the Advisory Board in December 1911 resolved to press for a compulsory education system in the location. It urged that this should be financed by a tax on all residents rather than by the parents, many of whom could not afford to pay for their children's education(42). The government's immediate response was to inform the Board that its resolution could not be implemented as a decision regarding pending legislation was awaited(43).

This was one of the matters discussed in mid-1913 with the Secretary for Native Affairs (Mr Dower) by a deputation of "Native Ministers" from Cape Town led by the white Reverend Father Wallis and apparently accompanied by Mr Nicholls(44). The Education Department, however, pointed out that the existing educational legislation did not provide for compulsory education for Africans(45) and the Justice Department ruled that education at Ndabeni could not be made compulsory under the Locations Act, but

had to be dealt with under the laws on education(46). The Finance Department was asked whether it would be in order for rentals at Ndabeni to be increased by thruppence monthly to pay for education(47), and replied that this was a matter for the Provincial Administration, which was responsible for all education except at the higher levels(48). It remains unclear how this education issue was resolved.

Another question raised with Mr Dower was the proposed subdivision of the location's four wards and the appointment of sub-headmen in each ward. This, said Mr Nicholls, "would very materially strengthen the hands of present police and ensure better administration". The deputation further requested the outlawing of "Danti" and its substitution by "Kafir Beer", and the provision of a railway platform at the halt which served the approximately seven hundred location residents who travelled into town to work each day(49).

A Peninsula Natives' Association existed by that stage, but it has proved impossible to discover evidence of its activities (if any) at Ndabeni. This Association was by late 1911 holding regular political-education meetings in District Six, where such topics as immigration and taxation were discussed(50). The organization's president, Mr Thomas Zini, told a meeting convened in District Six during the following year to protest against the "White Labour Policy" and the proposed issuing of passes to African women in the Orange Free State that "all that had been done in the past to uplift South Africa had been achieved by means of native labour"(51).

Protest meetings against the Natives Land Bill then before Parliament were held by the Peninsula Natives Association on the Grand Parade during 1913(52), but no subsequent mention of the organization's activities has yet been unearthed. It seems reasonable to assume that it merged with the South African Native National Congress (formed in 1912), and that the reason for its apparent failure to organize and agitate within Ndabeni was the strict policing and control then exercised within the location.

The next open stirring of defiance among the residents of Ndabeni apparently occurred in 1917, when a number of residents refused to move into already occupied huts in order to make room for newcomers driven out of town into the location. A test case resulted in the conviction of certain Africans for disobeying lawful commands, but the case went on appeal to the Supreme Court, where the judges ruled, on the grounds of public decency and health, that people could not reasonably be expected to obey such orders. After all, the judges noted, Ndabeni's population had quadrupled since 1911, but no additional accommodation had been provided(53). Legal victory could not however prevent the further deterioration of living conditions in Ndabeni.

As the already grim conditions steadily deteriorated towards the end of the First World War, the Advisory Board raised the first timid voice of protest, which was soon drowned by a more militant chorus. The question of overcrowding was discussed at an Advisory Board meeting early in December 1917. This was followed by a mass meeting of more than four hundred residents, which

called on the Government to "make additional accommodation [available] at an early date". Two members of the original Advisory Board of 1908(54), apparently still in office, were among the three men authorized by the meeting to convey this resolution to Mr Nicholls(55).

The Re-emergence of Militancy

It was around the ever-explosive issue of education, however, that resistance of a more militant nature crystallized. Maylam has claimed that education was an issue dear to Durban's African petty bourgeoisie(56), but in Cape Town during this period of transition its perceived significance seems to have been more general. For people who had become inextricably enmeshed in the social matrix of a developing city, traditional mechanisms for the socialization of the young were obviously inadequate. Concern for education can be seen as a corollary of permanent urbanization, and when Mr Nicholls arbitrarily dismissed the headmaster of the United Mission School in Ndabeni in May 1918, the permanent residents of all classes saw this as a threat to the future of their children.

A meeting of parents and other residents protested against the "disgraceful dismissal" of "a very good teacher" who had not been given the opportunity of a hearing(57). The Reverend Z.R. Mahabane took the lead in the campaign against this high-handed measure on the part of the unpopular location superintendent. Mahabane had been prominent at a combined mass meeting of African political organizations held at Ndabeni in March 1918 at which representatives

from all over the country protested against an early draft of the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill which was then before Parliament(58). He became provincial leader of the South African Native National Congress in 1918 and the "moderate" president of the renamed African National Congress in 1924(59).

A letter from Nicholls to the Secretary for Native Affairs reveals that the Mission School lost almost all of its pupils, most of whom enrolled at schools in Salt River. A petition of residents was drawn up and handed to the Superintendent General of Education by a concerned member of the Provincial Council. Nicholls rejected this petition with the claim that it included the signatures of people who had never shown an interest in educational matters. He attributed the agitation over his dismissal of the headmaster to his continuing attempts to suppress the illegal liquor trade, which supported a large number of women residents. This contention was backed up by the written testimony of Advisory Board stalwart the Reverend Patwell Matshikwe(60).

The Department of Public Education endorsed Nicholls' action in dismissing the headmaster, but a further protest meeting in early July passed a vote of no confidence in Nicholls as the manager of the school. Mahabane called on the Native Affairs Department to intervene, asserting that the continued existence of the school was threatened(61). He was told that the matter rested with the Education Department(62), which held that decisions, once taken in cases of this nature, should not lightly be reversed(63).

A protest meeting at the beginning of August called for Nicholls' resignation as school manager and for the substitution of individual management of African and "Coloured" schools by school committees elected by parents, as was the case with "white" schools(64). The Superintendent General of Education (to whom this resolution was forwarded), replied that its tone was regrettable and that he was satisfied that the residents' grievances were groundless(65). The following month Mahabane chaired a South African Natives National Congress mass meeting in Ndabeni that denounced the

fatal and increasing discrimination between black and white.... [which] had divided the South African family at a time when the people of the so-called Union should be presenting a united front to the world

and called for African representation on the peace delegation that was then preparing to go overseas(66).

This rising tide of local African militancy ebbed temporarily as the "Black October" influenza epidemic of 1918 literally brought the people of Ndabeni to their knees. An open-air thanksgiving, humiliation and prayer service held in the location as the epidemic was on the wane adopted Mahabane's resolution thanking the Municipality for its "kindly thoughtfulness in bringing timely relief to a stricken and helpless people.... a people that was dying partly from the effects of the dread malady and partly from starvation and neglect"(67).

The Reverend Turner of St Cyprian's Mission in Ndabeni drew attention to the sterling work carried out there by philanthropic relief workers who had "given the Natives a new outlook towards Europeans" and stated that the government locations at Ndabeni and New Brighton in Port Elizabeth were far better than municipal locations elsewhere(68). This latter assertion was roundly challenged by Mr James M. Molebaloa of Ndabeni who maintained that "to my knowledge there is no location under the municipality in any town which is a disgrace as Ndabeni to Cape Town"(69).

The influenza epidemic disturbed the local supply of African unskilled labour sufficiently for representations by a "native deputation" to the Mayor and representatives of the Railways Administration, the Chamber of Commerce and other employers' organizations to result in the raising of minimum wages to four shillings per day. The Ndabeni branch of the South African Natives National Congress thanked the Mayor for arranging the meeting, and the employers for recommending the increase(70). But even as this wage increase temporarily helped offset the effects of post-war inflation, so the accelerated pace of industrial development fostered the proliferation of various forms of propaganda and organization among the workers. The ferment among Cape Town's workers during this period cannot be discussed here(71), but it is interesting to note that a meeting of the Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU), Cape Town Harbour branch, on 14 February 1919 discussed the need to organize the residents of Ndabeni and Mr Batty, a member of the Democratic Labour Party who was described by a police informer as "a leading light in Native and Coloured

walks and [a] most dangerous factor as a European agitator"(72), announced that he would be addressing a meeting in the location that weekend(73).

This meeting (at which Batty does not seem to have played a very large role) resolved unanimously

that the government be respectfully urged to take immediate measures to relieve the state of overcrowding in this location, and further to provide housing accommodation for the many 'homeless' who are at present without homes in the Peninsula,

and called for the provision of tents as a temporary measure. In moderate tones, the meeting requested

a temporary suspension of the law prohibiting Natives, other than registered Parliamentary voters, from residing outside the location area, so as to enable those of the people who cannot find accommodation in the Location to be at liberty to find same elsewhere in the area of the Municipality of Cape Town.

A deputation comprising the Reverends Z.R. Mahabane and W.W. Olifan, together with Messrs Simon Ntisa and Alfred Ngaleka, was appointed to interview the Minister of Native Affairs(74). The call for an

audience with the Minister was repeated at another mass meeting in early April. The gathering noted that it had been decided to hand the location over to the Municipality and resolved to "humbly beg" for consultation with the residents. The Reverends Mahabane and Matshikwe, with S. Ntisa and S. Jordan, were delegated to present this resolution to the Minister(75) who does not seem to have deigned to meet either of these proposed deputations.

The location had by then become so overcrowded that when Nicholls reported that the dismissed headmaster (who was teaching at the A.M.E. Church School which had been established in opposition to the two official location schools) was living outside the location, he was told that no action could be taken "in the existing circumstances when twenty men are being squeezed into space barely sufficient for four". Negotiations between the municipality and the Native Affairs Department continued(76).

Tents were eventually procured, and the "bachelors" occupying certain huts that were designated as married quarters were ordered to move out into the tents to make way for homeless families. They refused to do so until the tents were provided with wooden floors, and their attitude was strongly condemned by Nicholls and his proteges on the Advisory Board(77). When the "bachelors" had still not moved at the beginning of September, an Advisory Board member was reportedly

of opinion that there was some evil influence at work in this location and their object appeared to be to defy anything official and endeavour to point

out that anything coming from the office was wrong and against the natives' interests. The law should be invoked, otherwise they will try to rule the location(78).

The day after "the Council thought better of assuming the burden of the location when the government would offer no more than £20,000 for improvements there"(79), the Reverend Matshikwe of the Advisory Board wrote in his personal capacity to the Acting Secretary for Native Affairs to express the bitter disappointment of the residents at this turn of events (which was discussed in chapter 4). Further delay in providing accommodation could, he said, only lead to the further deterioration of living conditions. There were already three to four families or up to twenty "bachelors" in each hut, while the second-hand huts that had been provided were "giving way". He appealed to the Acting Secretary "in the name of God and humanity to stop this kind of living"(80), and was told simply that the matter was receiving attention(81). The Reverend Matshikwe again called on the Government to provide sufficient accommodation for the location's residents at an Advisory Board meeting in December at which Nicholls thanked the Board for its valuable assistance in persuading the "bachelors" to move into tents(82).

A number of "bachelors" who refused to move into tents without flooring had been convicted in the magistrates court of disobeying a lawful order, but the Supreme Court quashed the convictions, finding that the removal order was unlawful. Despite this ruling,

Nicholls continued to insist that they should move into the tents, and seven men (presumably "ringleaders") were expelled from the location when they continued to refuse to do so. A meeting was held, and it was decided to enlist the aid of Advocate Upington, M.P., whose Liesbeek constituency included Ndabeni. A deputation, comprising James Molebaloa, Benjamin Ntia, William Olifan, Simon Jordan, John Geduka and Robert Songelwa, accompanied Mr Upington on 24 November to protest to the magistrate of Cape Town against this injustice. The magistrate was told "that the older men had a great deal of trouble in keeping the younger men quiet" and he wrote to the Secretary for Justice, recommending "an inquiry into the conditions and state of affairs in [the] location. Unless this is done promptly, and the natives given an opportunity of stating their alleged grievances, serious trouble may arise"(83).

On 2 December 1919 a public meeting in Ndabeni protested against the lack of consultation with the residents that characterized the ongoing negotiations regarding the location's future. It was resolved that "the proposed removal of the location from its present site [is] an unjust and unfair proposition" and that responsibility for the control of Ndabeni should be transferred to "some local authority, say, the City Council of Cape Town". A deputation comprising Reverend Mahabane, George Solundwana, Edward Ntwana and Alfred Ngaleka was appointed to transmit these resolutions to the Minister of Native Affairs(84). The Minister's private secretary was approached personally by Mahabane and in writing by Molebaloa (the "Secretary to the location committee") to arrange the desired interview(85) which took place on 5 December.

On 4 December, however, the Minister received a deputation from the City Council, and agreed to appoint a "small commission", including three Council representatives, "to enquire and report on: (a)the suitability of Ndabeni as a site for a permanent location; and (b)alternative or additional sites"(86). The Ndabeni deputation told the Minister the following day

that the human feelings of the people of the location were not considered, for they had not been consulted by either the Government or the municipal authorities with a view to ascertaining their views and wishes in regard to the several questions raised in the course of the negotiations.

The people, continued the speaker, had been waiting for months to know what was to become of the location, and at last they heard with keen disappointment that the City Council was not prepared to take over the location unless a suitable and adequate site was provided by the Government elsewhere than at Ndabeni for the establishment of a new location. The Minister was reminded that Africans had been removed from town to Ndabeni two decades previously. It was, he was told, intolerable that they should be shifted again. It would appear, said the residents' spokesmen, that Africans were not wanted in Cape Town,

that only their hands were needed at work, and that if some mysterious arrangement could be devised whereby only their hands could be daily brought to town for purposes of labour and their persons and

faces not seen at all, that would perhaps suit their white masters better.

The deputation suggested that the creation of an additional location would be more economical and less traumatic than the removal of Ndabeni, and that local authority control would facilitate the redress of grievances and complaints. The Minister was apparently sympathetic, and agreed that the location's residents could submit three names from which he would select a "native representative" for the proposed Location Site Committee(87). It had however already been agreed at the previous day's meeting with the City Council representatives that this position would be filled by Reverend Matshikwe(88).

A public meeting in the location duly voted to submit the names of Mahabane, Jordan and Molebaloa for the Minister's consideration, with the rider that

the meeting would respectfully yet strongly recommend the selection of the first mentioned gentleman as the one man who commands the fullest confidence of an overwhelming majority of the Native people in this location(89).

News reports of Matshikwe's prior appointment (he in fact filled the role of an advisor to the commission together with his friend Nicholls) spread swiftly through the location; and a mass meeting registered its "humble yet emphatic protest", at Matshikwe's

appointment, which was said not to be "in accordance with the wishes of the Ndabeni residents". The people protested against Nicholls' attitude and called for Matshikwe's withdrawal and the substitution in his stead of a popular representative on the commission(90). These representations were predictably ignored, and the commission (chaired by Mr A.H. Stanford, the brother of Sir Walter Stanford) included Nicholls and Matshikwe as advisors.

Disunity and Further Deputations

The transcript of verbal evidence given under cross-examination by prominent residents of Ndabeni to this commission reveals that the location residents and the local branch of the South African Native National Congress were deeply divided. Branch secretary Simon Jordan seems (for the transcripts are painfully stilted) to have sided with Matshikwe against his provincial president Mahabane on the question of the desirability of the proposed removal. Jordan and Matshikwe were against the retention of Ndabeni as the site of an improved location. Jordan argued that the ground was marshy and was in any case too close to the proposed Pinelands Garden City, while Matshikwe stressed the permanent inhabitants' need for gardens which could not flourish at Ndabeni. Mahabane, on the other hand, was opposed in principle to "constant removal from one place to another, first from Cape Town to Ndabeni and now the proposed removal to another site". He made it clear though that he was speaking on behalf of the permanent residents only (including the 20% of migrant labourers who were on long contracts and regularly returned to Ndabeni after their annual holidays with their families in the reserves). He conceded that even the

permanent residents would accept another site as long as gardens and other facilities were provided. James Molebaloa (whose name is given in the transcripts as Molibwa and Molebama) declared that "the people as a whole object to the removal" and wanted "more ground" at the present site. Unlike Mahabane, he opposed the separation of "bachelors" from married people.

Jordan, Mahabane and Molebaloa could not even agree on the size and nature of a mass meeting that had been held in the location the evening before they gave their evidence. Jordan said that the meeting had been attended by about one hundred people, most of whom favoured the removal of Ndabeni, while Mahabane maintained that a resolution emphatically protesting against the proposed removal had been supported by all eight hundred people present. Molebaloa agreed with Mahabane on the outcome of the meeting, but estimated the turn-out to have been approximately three hundred(91). It is clearly impossible to explain these interesting contradictions without more evidence regarding political currents in the location.

The Ndabeni branch of the Cape Province Native Congress called a meeting of "Bantu residents of the Cape Peninsula" in March 1920 to protest against the shooting down of striking African mineworkers on the Rand. The meeting called for the establishment of wage boards and the institution of a judicial enquiry into this instance of

intimidation of the worst Prussian type,....

calculated to seriously disturb the peaceful

relations subsisting between White and Black in this country, to undermine the loyalty of the subject to the ruling race, and ultimately to encourage and foster the spirit of Bolshevism in this land.

These resolutions were conveyed to the Secretary for Native Affairs by Branch Secretary Jordan(92).

No information is immediately available on political developments in Ndabeni in the ensuing six months, but early in September Mahabane and the Reverend Hlate (of the A.M.E. Church at West London) reportedly addressed a large crowd in the location. Here Mahabane apparently spoke out against Superintendent Nicholls' maltreatment of the residents, as evidenced in the dismissal of the headmaster and in the more recent arrests of rent defaulters and brewers of illicit liquor(93). This meeting seems to have been part of an ICU campaign for higher wages which included further meetings in October and November at West London(94). The Reverend Matshikwe spoke out at an Advisory Board meeting against "the practice of using Sundays as a day of holding political strike or agitation meetings which were to the detriment of the people and the churches"(95).

There seems to have been little political development in Ndabeni during 1921. This is hardly surprising, as the short post-war boom had ended in Cape Town by then, throwing the city's workers more and more on the defensive. ICU president: Selby Msimang,

whose leadership had been challenged by Cape delegates at the organization's 1920 annual conference in Bloemfontein(96), urged moderation and denounced confrontation at the 1921 annual conference at Ndabeni(97). The local Communist Party became increasingly involved in the activities of an "Unemployment Committee" that seems to have been founded in mid-1921 with the aim of securing productive work for the growing number of unemployed(98). The Party's regular street meetings, apparently started in 1919 by its predecessor, the syndicalist(99) Industrial Socialist League, were banned by the municipality (on the recommendation of the police) in 1922(100). A large crowd rallied behind the slogan of "work or full maintenance" at an Unemployment Committee demonstration on May Day 1923 on the Grand Parade. Speakers from the Communist Party (which was reportedly working with the Unemployment Committee) declared that socialist revolution was the only cure for the unemployment problem and emphasized that "workers are workers, irrespective of race, nationality or colour". The capitalist strategy of dividing the workers along colour lines was particularly deplored(101).

This style of rhetoric and agitation was certainly a far cry from the deprecating aspirant petty-bourgeois attitude of the African Political Organization's local Anti Colour-Bar petition-campaign of 1922(102), but it failed to find effective organizational expression. Cape Town's workers remained divided, and those unfortunate enough to be confined to Ndabeni or living as semi-fugitives in the slums and shanty towns because they belonged to the most exploited and oppressed group of local workers, the

Africans, remained apparently isolated from these revolutionary local currents and proved malleable to the developing designs of the omnipotent segregationist state.

In Ndabeni, Mahabane joined the Advisory Board, but this did not make unity among the residents any less elusive. "Faction fighting" broke out in the first quarter of 1921(103), and in June the location residents were reported to be dissatisfied and discontented, while conditions were becoming increasingly overcrowded and their future remained uncertain(104). In April 1922 the Secretary for Native Affairs was informed by J. Malangabi, the secretary of a meeting held in the location, that

the residents of Ndabeni location have decided that there should be a Standing Committee to discuss anything connected with the removal of the location with the Authorities when there is occasion to do so. To prevent any unauthorized person or persons coming to you saying that they have been sent by the residents of Ndabeni, they are sending the following names. Standing Committee: W. Masiza, S. Hoyi, W. Mgabadeli, S. Jordan, J. Dude, J. Dlwati, J. Malangabi, J. Tomeli, A. Coto(105).

The secretary for Native Affairs asked Mr Nicholls whether the Advisory Board had approved of this committee(106), and on being told that it had not(107), he informed Malangabi that the Standing Committee would not be recognized by the Government, as

the Location Advisory Board - the members of which are appointed by the Government - and as such are the recognized channel of communication between the Ndabeni residents and the Government, is the body to submit matters to the Department in connection with the location(108).

Meanwhile City Councillor Dr Abdurahman, the leader of the ineptly-named, exclusively - "Coloured" African Political Organization, had arranged for the Mayor to receive a deputation from this committee. Dr Abdurahman apparently told the very accommodating Mayor at this meeting that all that was required to allay the fears of the "Natives" was consultation with them before the completed scheme for their removal was finally approved. Simon Jordan, on the other hand (his name is given in the press report as "Mr Jordaan") "raised several points, such as the right to trade, sale of land to Natives, the style of house and the police control"(109).

The questions of land rights, trading rights and police control (insofar as they affected the growing urban African population) were central to the wide-ranging debate then being conducted in Parliament and in the press as the Urban Areas Act gradually took shape. The government, however, was simply not prepared to discuss such fundamental issues with representative bodies of Africans. Too much was at stake (economically, politically and culturally) for such a debate to be sanctioned. Even straightforward and concrete complaints were characteristically dismissed as groundless.

Thus when the unpopular Mr Nicholls was finally brought to book after ruling Ndabeni as his personal petty fiefdom since 1910, he was dismissed from his post for non-compliance with departmental procedures and for using government property for his own purposes. The Public Service Commission enquiry into his maladministration of the location dismissed "the charge of negligence in failing to take action on the complaints made by natives", apparently on the basis that a complaints book had been kept(110).

Nicholls' replacement, Mr Harrison, found the location in an "indescribably filthy" state, and reported that "the attitude of the Residents appeared to be a mixture of thinly veiled disgust and suspicion of the local administration. Unrest was brewing and being openly discussed among the natives". Official warnings were issued that as from 1 September measures would be taken against people who contravened the sanitation regulations and the regulations governing the payment of rent. Believing that "the essence of control [is] the Registration and reporting of arrivals and departures as a preliminary to any further administration", Superintendent Harrison began acting against the large number of unregistered and unreported residents(111).

A mass meeting was held early in September, and a deputation led by Reverend Mtimkulu (who had replaced Mahabane in the Wesleyan Mission and on the Advisory Board) was elected to protest to the new Superintendent against these evictions. The deputation also called on the government to provide additional accommodation at Ndabeni. Mr Harrison assured the community representatives that

he was merely carrying out instructions in enforcing the regulations, and he promised to inform his department of the urgent need for additional accommodation(112).

This reply was obviously unsatisfactory, and a week later the Secretary for Native Affairs received a telegram from J. Dlwati (whose name is given in the transcript as Dlwali) saying

Am instructed by Joint Executive of local Congress and Vigilance Association Ndabeni to beg you to instruct Inspector Harrison to suspend drastic and uncalled for measures taken in location STOP Grievances memorial following STOP Great deal of unrest prevails.

Dlwati was told by telegram that the proper channel for communications of this nature was the Advisory Board(113), and the matter was dropped after Harrison submitted that

the grievances alluded to.... were caused firstly by the fact that they saw amongst them an official new to them. They saw the Regulations being given effect to apparently for the first time for some years, and they resented any attempt to restore Administrative control(114).

At the beginning of 1923, the Ndabeni branch of the Cape Native National Congress organized a well-attended meeting in the

location's Brothers Hall to discuss the problem of housing for Africans in Cape Town. Here it was decided to formally call on "the Native Affairs Department to provide dwelling houses for the homeless people coming from different places in want of work"(115). The Department replied that

The Government has decided as a policy that responsibility for the Native population in urban areas should devolve upon the local authority, this being the principle underlying the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill now before Parliament.

The Government planned to hand Ndabeni over to the City Council, and was therefore not prepared to spend money on additional accommodation(116).

The passage of the Urban Areas Act met with little local resistance, but in 1924

'Professor' James S. Thaele, who had recently returned from the United States and who now 'injected his own strain of Garveyism into Cape Town politics', told the new Superintendent Mr Cook that the Cape SANNC would resort to 'passive resistance' were 'pass laws' introduced(117).

In 1925, the ANC mouthpiece the African World called for the adoption by the ANC and the ICU of a "two-stream policy" of

passive resistance and "a strike within a given time, say six months after the Pass Laws have become an established fact"(118). The ICU, however, was already in decline, making the organized withdrawal of labour impossible, while widespread passive resistance only became a reality in the changed conditions brought about by the Second World War.

In response to the initial implementation of the Coloured Labour Preference policy (which was discussed in the previous chapter), the Cape ANC and the Bantu Union convened a mass meeting at Ndabeni on Sunday 7 March 1926. This meeting unanimously condemned the government's "industrial segregation policy" and resolved that

while natives were recruited and induced by the Government to come to Cape Town to build the Docks and the City, and are now being dismissed, Meeting feels it impossible to place its confidence in the Government's word of honour that natives replaced here would be found work elsewhere. Further, Meeting wishes to assure the Government of its expressed opinion of not accepting the Government's offer of Farm work, and recommends to the Government the policy in the Cape of 'Free Market' in labour matters.

The meeting further resolved that if these grievances were not immediately redressed, the "challenge of the Government both in State and Church matters" would, as a last resort, be accepted(119).

These resolutions were conveyed to Prime Minister Hertzog the following day, by a deputation from Ndabeni that included James Ngojo of the ANC and the Reverend Mtinkulu. Members of the deputation referred to a letter explaining the Coloured Labour Preference policy that had apparently been sent by the Native Affairs Department to local African leaders through the Member of Parliament Mr Payn, who introduced both the Ndabeni deputation and the previous month's dock-labourers deputation (see chapter 5) to the Prime Minister.

Mr J.Z. Fuku was among the Ndabeni representatives who addressed Hertzog on this occasion. He said that

As far as we can see we see nothing that will help us unless perhaps that the door of Parliament be opened. You say no one can be taxed without being represented, but we are being taxed from pillar to post because we have no representative.

Emphasizing that Africans had no quarrel with "Coloureds", he submitted that there had never been any trouble in the docks until the recent substitution of African labourers, and called for the abandonment of the Coloured Labour Preference policy, declaring that "We claim Cape Town as our home just as we claim Idutywa. In fact we claim the whole of Africa". The Reverend Matshiqi noted that the Coloured Labour Preference policy was simply a refinement of Hertzog's "Civilized Labour" policy which had resulted in the replacement of African labourers by "whites" on for example the Rand. He warned the Prime Minister that

If you dont consider the future of your children things may happen. In course of time the natives will find their power and ability and will use it. It would be very unfortunate if it were said during coming years that it started in your time.

In his dismissive reply (quoted in the previous chapter), Hertzog remarked that the deputation's tone was hardly calculated to elicit sympathy and assistance. He told the African representatives that "If you come with resolutions of this kind then you must not be surprised if you are not as successful as the seriousness of your complaint would lead you to think you should be"(120).

The Increasing Complexities of Local Resistance-Politics

The introduction of Hertzog's "Native Bills" during the 1926 session of Parliament, and registration under the Urban Areas Act (see chapter 4) stimulated more militant forms of resistance, which in turn polarized the local African community still further. This section discusses these broader political currents among local Africans, while the following section returns to developments within the locations.

The Cape African Congress held a meeting on the Grand Parade in mid-February 1926 to protest against the "Colour-Bar Bills" and their underlying principle of segregation(121). The local ANC was

however increasingly troubled by a growing contradiction between its "old guard" and a more militant and radical tendency. This gave rise in August to an eruption of violence in the ANC hall in Waterkant Street at a meeting which was chaired by Thaele and addressed by Superintendent Cook(122). Then in November, national President-General Mahabane issued a Proclamation from Ndabeni, saying that a recent meeting there of the Western District branch of the Cape ANC had been unable to elect a new Chairman because of the split within its ranks. Using his powers as national leader of the organization, Mahabane therefore appointed Thaele as Acting Chairman of the local branch(123). This was hardly a popular move, and when the new branch leader "attempted to address a crowd of one thousand in the location on 21 November, he was heckled and mobbed, and had to take refuge at the police station"(124).

Within the ICU, the other major popular organization locally active at that time, internal contradictions had by the beginning of 1927 led to the expulsion of communists. The expelled members agitated(125), but they do not seem to have had much support(126). Crowds flocked to ICU mass-meetings on the Grand Parade, to protest against the "Native Bills", which national secretary Kadalie said were "permeated with a spirit of hatred and savagery"(127). Towards the end of March, the ICU organized a demonstration in which at least 1,200 Africans marched to Parliament to protest against the "Native Bills"(128).

Wracked by internal dissention, both the ANC and the ICU seem then to have lapsed into inactivity until (perhaps stimulated by the

inflammatory rhetoric of the Communist Party(129)), a young and militant faction rose to prominence within the local ANC. The two factions began to agitate separately, with rival meetings being held simultaneously on the Parade(130). At meetings there in mid-1929, militant ANC speakers declared that "we preach here a black South Africa"(131) and urged the people to organize and overthrow the government(132). In February 1930, it was reported that

Following the example recently set in Johannesburg, where a committee representative of political and industrial organizations has been formed for the purpose of conducting a campaign against the Native Bills which the government intends to introduce, a similar committee of action was formed this week in Cape Town.

Among the organizations represented on this committee were the ANC, the ICU and the Communist Party(133). A march on Parliament organized by this action committee to protest against the proposed amendment of the Riotous Assemblies Act was baton-charged early the following month(134), but within a week an even larger procession objecting to the enfranchisement of "white" women managed to reach the House, only for Hertzog to refuse its leaders an audience(135).

The two factions of the ANC continued to hold rival meetings on the Grand Parade, and Thaele's supporters began attacking communist meetings(136). Eventually in November 1930 the militants broke

away to form the Independent ANC, which aimed to establish a "Black Republic" by means of agitation and mass demonstrations leading up to "a general stoppage of work and civil disobedience"(137). ANC supporters marched behind their brass band through a meeting of their rivals during the following month(138).

Overt political activity among local Africans seems then to have declined dramatically until early 1932, presumably due to the harsh effects of the Great Depression. Then in January 1932, a meeting of the apparently communist-inspired Unemployed and Unskilled Workers Union on the Parade was attacked by ANC members, leading to a pitched battle involving 200-300 men armed with stones, sticks and knobkerries(139).

The publication shortly thereafter of the draft "togg" registration regulations which were eventually promulgated under Government Notice No 1700 at the end of 1932 united the warring factions of local resistance. The City Council's Native Affairs Committee held a special meeting in February 1932 to hear protests against the proposed regulations from inter alia the Vigilance Committees of Langa and Ndabeni; the ANC; the Independent ANC; the ANC (women's section); the Communist Party; the Teachers' Association; and such labour organizations as the Cape Town Stevedoring and Dock Workers Union; the Laundry, Dyers' and Cleaners' Union and the African Unemployed Workers' Union. A "deputation of Natives" protested against the draft regulations to the Mayor in June, and a Cape Town Native Grievances Committee seems to have been formed in 1932, and to have submitted objections to the regulations to

the Council early in November, as did the local ANC(140).

After the new registration regulations had been issued and were beginning to be implemented, the Cape Town Native Grievances Committee held a public meeting at which it was decided to petition the Minister of Native Affairs. The resulting "statement from Native Citizens of Cape Town" reminded the Minister that the Native Reserves were inadequate to support their growing population, and that Africans were forced by this circumstance, together with the imposition of interalia hut-taxes, poll taxes, road taxes, dog taxes, stock-rate taxes, customs duty taxes, quitrent, dipping fees and other indirect taxes "to migrate to the towns to seek employment". The statement declared that "this registration is nothing else but introduction of Pass System in Cape Town", and discriminated against Africans in favour of "other communities not falling under these regulations", while also imposing an additional direct tax on poverty-stricken casual labourers(141).

A Native Affairs Department official who interviewed representatives of this committee in February 1933 "with a view to ascertaining in detail their objections to the regulations" was told that employers who had not simply replaced their African workers with "Coloureds" had in many cases reduced employees with long service-records to the status of casual labourers in order to escape the monthly fee payable by employers for the registration of service-contracts. (The casual-labourers' registration fee was, as shown in the previous chapter, payable by the labourers themselves and not by their employers(142)). Superintendent Cook denied that many Africans had lost their jobs as a result of the regulations, but

he conceded that a large-scale change from waged to casual status had in all probability taken place(143). The detailed objections to the registration regulations raised by the Grievances Committee in its petition and in its interview with the departmental officer were nevertheless dismissed out of hand by the authorities(144).

Severe repression on a national scale under Minister of Justice Pirow had by that stage rendered sustained resistance impossible, and the Grievances Committee (unable to obtain redress for its constituents) apparently dissolved shortly thereafter. Organized local opposition to Government policy seems then only to have re-emerged during the second half of 1935, with the resurrection in Parliament of Hertzog's "Native Bills". The further development of local resistance politics is beyond the scope of this thesis, but the fact that the renewed resistance was apparently divided at its inception must be noted. The Cape Peninsula African Rights Protection Association (to which no previous reference has yet been located) held a public meeting, for Africans only, in the City Hall in December 1935, to popularize alternative "Native Bills" envisaging a colour-blind franchise restricted to those who had attained Matriculation or higher educational qualifications. The fact that these "alternative bills" had been drafted by advocates D.B. Molteno and D.M. Buchanan shows that this Association was not averse to co-operation with "whites" per se. One can only presume that the racial exclusivity of this meeting was designed to exclude as many communists as possible from the discussion of its proposals(145). A mass meeting that had been convened by the Langa Vigilance Committee in that

location during August had, on the other hand, heard at least one communist speaker condemn the "Native Bills" from a presumably very different perspective(146).

The remaining section concludes this chapter with a discussion of political developments in the local locations during the decade after 1926, when the Urban Areas Act was first applied to Cape Town.

Further Political Developments Within the Local Locations

The introduction of the "Native Bills" and of registration under the Urban Areas Act stimulated increased militancy and polarization within Ndabeni, in keeping with the broader political currents among local Africans discussed in the previous section.

Condemnation was heaped on the Bills at a Bantu Union meeting in the location in June 1926, at which Mgabadeli and Fuku were prominent speakers(147), while registration was denounced at meetings convened by the Vigilance Committee(148).

Superintendent Cook was apparently quoted in the local press in June 1926 as saying of the Ndabeni Advisory Board that

it was only through the moderate thinking and attitude of these people that we were able to get the [registration] regulations through. They deserve all the credit. Of course there is a certain section against it, but the Native

Advisory Board has given expression to the view of the majority of the Natives(149).

The latter contention was denied by all present at a meeting called by the Vigilance Committee (or Association) at Ndabeni in mid-July, which rejected registration and denounced the Superintendent(150). The split between the Advisory Board and the Vigilance Committee widened with the passage of time, reflecting the growing contradiction within the local ANC between the "old guard" and the younger, more militant tendency.

Despite the fact that ANC leader James Thaele sent a letter to the City Council expressing his complete confidence in the location Superintendent(151), the Vigilance Committee called a further meeting at which a vote of no confidence in Superintendent Cook was passed. This was communicated to the City Council, and the Committee complained to the Native Affairs Department about Cook's harsh administration of the location. The complaints were backed up by the submission to the Department of a petition signed by 1,276 Ndabeni residents, alleging that they suffered from unsympathetic general treatment at the hands of the Superintendent and his staff, who showed partiality (particularly with regard to the payment of rent and the settlement of disputes and complaints) and misrepresented the views of the residents on the question of the "Pass Regulations". The location's "Native Police" force was moreover accused of committing "brutal assaults" on residents and of treating women in a degrading way, especially during body-searches. x

The petitioners called for a commission of enquiry, and although the Department's senior local representative reported that the dissatisfaction at Ndabeni was due to the Superintendent's suppression of the illicit liquor trade, as well as to overcrowding and political factionalism, the Department decided to hold the requested inquiry in order to clear Mr Cook's name. The consent of the City Council was secured in December, and the inquiry was conducted during January 1927 by a single commissioner. This was the same Dr Loram who had originally suggested Cook's appointment by the Council(152).

Although the Vigilance Committee expressed its "appreciation and extreme gratification for so readily granting our humble request" in arranging the inquiry, and looked forward to Ndabeni becoming a "comfortable happy home"(153), Loram on the whole cleared the Superintendent of the charges against him and attributed the opposition in large part to his having been more active than his predecessors, especially in the collection of rent, and his having to introduce the unpopular Urban Areas Act(154). The only real criticism that Loram levelled against Cook in his twenty-four page report concerned the Superintendent's too-cordial relationship with the location's "old guard" ANC faction, whereby he had "laid himself open to the charge of partiality"(155), and the only real recommendations were that the Advisory Board, the location police and the Superintendent's staff should be strengthened(156). It was also suggested "That 'raids' either for liquor or for non-payment of rent be carried out at reasonable hours and always under the direction of a European constable"(157). The City

Council undertook to follow this suggestion "as far as practicable" and also decided as a result of this inquiry "to discontinue the practice of summary arrest, and henceforth rent defaulters will be served with a summons to appear at court"(158).

Administration of the location in a more humane manner seems to have temporarily pacified its residents, and there is apparently no evidence of overt resistance at Ndabeni until 1929, when the City Council (having removed all the "bachelors" from the city slums to Langa) turned its attention on the residents of Ndabeni, and increased their rentals in order to persuade them to move to the new location. The Ndabeni Vigilance Committee informed the City Council that the people of Ndabeni had no confidence in the location administration and could see no justification for increasing their rents in view of the deplorable conditions under which they were forced to live. Superintendent Cook, who was accused of "openly flouting the wishes of the people and (their) accredited representatives" was requested at a meeting of the Advisory Board (which by that stage was composed entirely of Vigilance Committee members) to resign from his position as chairman(159). Legal advice was taken and "After a great deal of discussion.... with the Responsible Committee and the Town Clerk, it (was) agreed that a chairman other than the superintendent should in future control the Advisory Board". The Vigilance Committee nominated Mr William MacGregor, the landowner who was shown in the previous chapter to have allowed Africans to live on his property at Grassy Park, for this position(160). This was not, however, acceptable to the Council, which decided during the following year

"to reintroduce nominated members as before 1926, hoping in this way to obtain a more compliant body. Cook was now replaced as chairman by W.G. Bennie, a veteran African educationalist"(161).

Hundreds of Ndabeni residents, led by the Vigilance Committee, refused to pay more than their normal rent for April and May of 1929, resulting in a test case which was won by the Council but lost on appeal, as the rent increase was found to be retrospective and hence ultra vires(162). The courts also ruled in favour of the occupants of the 100 most dilapidated huts for married people and 92 of the Nissen huts housing "bachelors", when they chose in mid-1929 to defy notices ordering them to move to Langa(163), Towards the end of June, before this matter had come before the courts, the Vigilance Committee's legal representative wrote to the Town Clerk demanding an inquiry into the "chaotic state" of affairs at Ndabeni, where Superintendent Cook was said to have "by his actions and attitude, wholly alienated himself from the good feelings and the sympathy of the residents of the location"(164). The Mayor, Mr Lewis, was appointed to conduct this inquiry, which was held in January 1930. Mayor Lewis' inquiry into Cook's administration of Ndabeni predictably exonerated the Superintendent of all the charges against him(165).

Prior to this inquiry, a second petition of Ndabeni residents, this time addressed to the Governor-General, had been drawn up by the Vigilance Committee and signed by over 1,400 residents. Its despatch was however delayed until April, on the advice of the committee's legal advisor and of William McGregor (or MacGregor).

By that stage new eviction notices had been issued ordering the occupants of the Nissen huts to move to Langa by the end of April(166). The petition called on the Governor-General "to help us righten the injustices we are suffering at the hands of our Superintendent and the City Council of Cape Town"(167).

The authorities had already received a petition drawn up by the Langa Vigilance Committee dated February 1930 and signed by hundreds of Africans from Langa and from the back-streets of town calling on the Minister of Native Affairs to institute a "full enquiry" into the position of Africans in Cape Town. The high rents at Langa, which were said to be beyond the means of the vast majority of the people, were identified as a central issue, which had not only resulted in "tremendous numbers of prosecutions" for non-payment, but had also given rise to

the fact that there are approximately 5,000 Natives.... unlawfully residing in and about the area surrounding the Locations who will not under any circumstances occupy Langa because of the prohibitive rentals and train-fares(168).

The Assistant Native Commissioner, commenting on this petition, advised his department that

complaints originate chiefly from natives who have their wives here; the economic conditions fall hard on them; the women come here because their

men folk remain away for long periods and fail to send money home; they are also attracted by the town life and gradually become detribalized(169).

The Langa Vigilance Committee's legal representative complained the following month that a new scale of rentals had been promulgated which the residents of Langa were unable to pay(170). Asked to comment on the two most recent petitions(171), the Town Clerk explained that the Council's efforts to implement Government policy by closing down Ndabeni and concentrating the local African population at Langa was being stubbornly resisted by the residents of both locations, who were being encouraged by legal advisors to resist law and order. The Council denied having any "desire to treat the native community with harshness or undue severity"(172).

The "native community" clearly thought otherwise, and the Langa Vigilance Committee set out in July 1930 to prove by means of a test case that the residents of the new location could not afford to pay the stipulated rentals(173). The outcome of this case remains unclear, but (as was shown in chapter 4) rentals at Langa were eventually reduced quite substantially towards the end of that year. This was, however, clearly more the result of official representations than of legal pressure from the residents.

The residents of Ndabeni again resorted to the courts in December of that year, to challenge eviction orders that had been served on the "bachelors" living in that location. The Supreme Court

ruled towards the end of the following year that the orders were valid, paving the way for the final clearance of Africans from Ndabeni(174). Despite their failure to secure protection from the courts, Superintendent Cook reported as late as 1934 that "The natives at Ndabeni are still scrapping us, another appeal case coming on"(175).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

- (1) Saunders 1979(a) and 1979(b).
- (2) South African Spectator 13/7/1901, Advertisement for "Dr William's Pills for Pale People".
- (3) Cape Times 18/5/1901, letter from Reverend J. Jolobe.
- (4) Cape Times 16/5/1901.
- (5) Cape Argus 18/5/1901.
- (6) Cape Times 14/6/1901.
- (7) Saunders, 1979(a): 146; South African Spectator 29/6/1901.
- (8) South African Spectator 5/10/1901, letter from Reverend E. Mdolomba.
- (9) Saunders, 1979(a): 148.
- (10) *ibid*: 149.
- (11) *ibid*: 149-150.
- (12) Dubow, 1981: 122-3.

- (13) British Public Records Office, J17 487 X/L 08055, evidence of Mrs Davies. (Copy in African Studies Library, UCT).
- (14) *ibid*, evidence of John Zwayi.
- (15) *ibid*, evidence of Reverend Mdolomba.
- (16) Saunders, 1979(a): 146.
- (17) *see above*, p 20.
- (18) British Public Records Office J17 487 X/L 08055, evidence of Coke Mji.
- (19) Saunders, 1979(a): 149.
- (20) *ibid*: 151-2.
- (21) *ibid*: 152.
- (22) British Public Records Office J17 487 X/L, evidence of Coke Mji and "Kleinbooy".
- (23) *ibid*, evidence of Klaas Mfene.
- (24) *ibid*, evidence of John Zwayi.
- (25) Saunders, 1979(a): 150.

- (26) British Public Records Office J17 487 X/L, evidence of Zwayi and Mfene.
- (27) *ibid*, evidence of James Bobbie and Dr Sellar.
- (28) *ibid*, evidence of Dr Sellar.
- (29) Saunders, 1979(a): 154.
- (30) British Public Records Office J17 487 X/L 08055, evidence of Assistant Resident Magistrate Mr W. Wright.
- (31) Saunders, 1979(a): 155.
- (32) *ibid*: 155-6.
- (33) *ibid*: 156-7.
- (34) Cape Times 4/8/1902.
- (35) Morris, 1981: 8.
- (36) Saunders, 1979(a): 157.
- (37) Cape Times 27/8/1903.
- (38) Elias, 1983: 7.
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- (123) Cape Times 18/11/1926; Cape Argus 18/11/1926.
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CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This thesis has indicated the extent to which early capitalist development in Cape Town was dependent on predominantly Xhosa-speaking migrant labour. It has traced the development of state policy towards Africans in Cape Town, and has outlined the ways in which local Africans attempted to resist these policies.

By systematically working through the available archival and secondary material, the thesis has provided some insight into the material conditions under which these people were forced to live, and into the complexities of the social problems and political conflicts which originated and developed locally and nationally during this crucial period of South African history. On the whole, these material conditions have hardly improved. The social problems and political conflicts discussed here have likewise never been resolved, but have (on the contrary) intensified with the passage of time.

A primary motivation for embarking on this historical analysis is the conviction that the present situation cannot be understood without taking account of its aetiology. This is hopefully borne out in the thesis, which suggests (particularly in terms of state policy) that local politics has hardly moved beyond the parameters laid down during this period.

The conceptual implications of the thesis are clear. If work of this nature is accepted as sufficient demonstration of the significance of the historical process, the a-historical or structuralist approaches

characteristic of different variants of functionalism must be rejected. The centrality of conflict made evident in this thesis is a further argument against functionalism(1).

Chapter 1 noted functionalism's replacement by a "conflict pluralism", with its emphasis on racial domination, as the prevailing academic orthodoxy within South Africa's English-speaking universities, and discussed a number of "conflict pluralist" analyses of the position of Africans in Cape Town. But the political, social, cultural and economic conflict characteristic of this formative period were shown in this thesis not to have been simply a matter of "black" versus "white". A more nuanced approach is employed here. Chapter 6 hinted at some of the class-based divisions within the local African community(2), while Chapters 3 and 4 outlined the important role played in the segregation-process by "white" workers(3) and "white" women(4). At least one "white" women's organization supported the implementation of influx control, as documented in Chapter 5(5).

Chapters 4 and 5 also highlight the leading role of a third group of "whites", the liberal religious leaders and philanthropists, in the crystallization of the policies of segregation and influx control(6). This account supports Legassick's contention that "liberals both acted as "agents of social control" as well as precursors of the apartheid state"(7).

The thesis thus begins to uncover some of the real complexities of the developing situation, and in so doing it casts doubt not

only on the functionalist and "conflict pluralist" perspectives, but also on the more simplistic Marxist formulations that have been propounded within the field of South African urban studies. It is difficult to discern within the contradictory process portrayed here "fractions of capital" neatly dominant at different levels of the state apparatus(8). Neither does it seem justified to dismiss the determined struggles of local Africans against the developing policies of the state as being of a uniformly petty-bourgeois nature. What is suggested here, rather, is the necessity for a conceptual disaggregation of the state and for sensitivity towards different class-based tendencies within the resistance.

As for the more sophisticated "culturalist" orientation within Marxism(9), which has strongly influenced the work of Koch(10) and La Hausse(11), one can only stress at the outset that the strengths of the contributions made by these two scholars are obvious. Their work embodies a significant disaggregation of monolithic conceptions of the state and racial capitalism. They emphasize the specificity of regional experience and the depth of local popular struggles. But at the same time, these two studies do contain a number of weaknesses. The ongoing theoretical debate between for example the Oxford-based History Workshop group and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham should perhaps have alerted these pioneering South Africans to the difficulties of cultural analysis in a context in which political factors played such a significant role. Koch and La Hausse both tend to trivialize the concept of "culture" by restricting it for the most part to escapist leisure-pursuits, such as drinking

and dancing. They fail to explore the realms of religious, educational and political ideology, and seem largely oblivious of culture as the "common-sense" of classes and social groups.

The present preliminary investigation of the early complexities of the African urbanization process in Cape Town builds on the key contributions of Koch and La Hausse, but in contrast to their work it emphasizes the material and political rather than the cultural dimension of the uneven process of struggle. As Bozzoli has pointed out, however, South African urban historiography must incorporate a more rounded conception of "class", moving from economic identification to "the political, social, cultural and ideological character of classes that renders them real and recognisable social categories"(12) in order to achieve "the synthesis of materialist, cultural and regional understanding that is needed"(13).

Future research could usefully build on such foundations, by combining the factors and issues identified in this thesis with those emphasized by Koch and La Hausse. More specifically, there is clearly much scope in the local context for a more contemporary focus. The methods of oral history (while difficult to apply in such an early period) would certainly enhance the account of resistance provided in Chapter 6, and should not be neglected by scholars covering the more recent local past.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

- 1 Wilson and Mafeje's focus on the adaptation of in-migrants (see p2), Swanson's early "sanitation syndrome" (p6), and Wilkinson's initial concern with the abstract requirements of the capitalist system (p25ff) are examples of functionalist perspectives.
- 2 see particularly pp192, 194, 212 and 228.
- 3 pp75-6 and 79.
- 4 pp 126-8.
- 5 p 157.
- 6 pp 123-6, 128, 155 - 7.
- 7 Rich, 1980:9, citing Legassick, 1974.
- 8 This is exemplified in the conflict (discussed in Chapters 4 and 5) within and between the different levels and branches of the state over the implementation of the Urban Areas Act. Such evidence as exists fails to specify the precise interests involved, and one is left with the present tentative account.
- 9 The programme of this school in the South African context is most usefully seen in Bozzoli (1983).

(10) Koch, 1984.

(11) La Hausse, 1984.

(12) Bozzoli, 1979:5.

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