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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF URBAN APARTHEID ON THE EAST RAND, 1948 – 1973: THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL RESISTANCE

Mohamed Noor Nieftagodien

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

The overarching theme of the thesis is the urban 'racial' restructuring of the East Rand during the first twenty-five years of apartheid. The thesis examines the adoption and implementation of apartheid state's *social engineering* strategy, especially its strict racial segregation of the urban areas. In this context, the creation of 'modern' African townships and group areas is emphasised. The thesis focuses attention on the implementation of urban apartheid in Benoni, particularly the establishment of the 'model' township, Daveyton. Benoni's experiences in implementing apartheid policies are compared to that of its municipal neighbours. The thesis contends that local authorities were important role players in the implementation of apartheid. Thus, the ways in which the changing relations between the local and central tiers of the state influenced the making of apartheid at regional and local levels are foregrounded throughout this study. The impact of apartheid policies on the 'multi-racial' populations of the urban 'black spots' and their responses to these policies are primary concerns in the narrative provided here. The diverse reactions of people affected by forced removals – from acquiescence to militant resistance – in the 1950s and 1960s are analysed. A central focus of this study is the making of apartheid in the 1960s, the so-called golden age of apartheid. Finally, the thesis discusses the introduction and effects of 'separate development' and 'community development' as principal interventions by the state to politicise ethnicity and 'race' during the period of 'high apartheid'.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree in any other university.

Mohamed Noor Nieftagodien

31 day of March, 2001

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When I decided some years ago to embark on a postgraduate course I envisaged spending no more than a year at university. Viewing myself as only a temporary sojourner passing swiftly through the corridors of the academy I stayed aloof and spent as little time as possible at the university. Since then the passion for history that was first inculcated in me as a high school activist has been re-ignited. The journey from those first tentative and even reluctant steps to the completion of this study has sometimes been arduous, but always invigorating. During the course of my studies I have been privileged to work and interact with a diverse range of scholars, comrades and friends who have shaped my ideas in profound ways.

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INTRODUCTION

The creation of group areas and 'modern' African townships were a central feature of the 'making of apartheid' in the 1950s and 1960s. They combined the government's principal aims of stabilising and controlling the urban black population, while simultaneously imposing strict 'racial' segregation. Historians and other social scientists have interrogated and debated these issues since the 1970s.[1] Early writings which addressed themselves to the issues of the making and character of apartheid were dominated by debates between revisionists and liberals over the relationship between apartheid and capitalism.[2] Revisionist historians, who wrote from a marxist perspective, were concerned mainly to counter the liberal view that apartheid was dysfunctional to capitalism.[3] Although neither the revisionist nor the liberal views were uniform,[4] the former emphasised the imperatives of capital accumulation and dominant class interests in the shaping of apartheid. For the revisionists apartheid was an attempt by the white state to address the mounting contradictions and crises that faced capitalism during the 1940s. They highlighted the role played by cheap labour and coercion to maximise capital accumulation. One of the main foci in this debate was the analytical primacy of either race or class in analysing and understanding apartheid.[5] Radical scholars insisted on the primacy of class as *the* analytical tool with which to comprehend the meaning of apartheid.[6]

While acknowledging the pioneering work of these early revisionist scholars, social historians have criticised the reductionism of their analyses,[7] arguing that "the dynamics which moulded apartheid were far more broad-ranging and intractable than the early revisionist writers allowed, and that apartheid, as a consequence, is much more complex and contradictory."[8] Social historians have challenged the notion of apartheid as having issued from a preconceived master plan (the Sauer Report) that was simply imposed on the black population after 1948. They contended that the meaning of apartheid was hotly contested within the state and the Afrikaner establishment. Thus no single view, let alone a 'blue-

print', of apartheid existed. These writers have also stressed the role of popular struggles, which they maintain "both shaped the terrain traversed by political movements and played a decisive role in the rise and fall of apartheid."[9] Social actors, especially the African working class, are accorded a primary role in this narrative. The part playeded migrancy, culture, gender and ethnicity in shaping the *process* of proletarianisation is also foregrounded in these accounts.

This thesis takes its cue from the radical historiography and particularly from the work of social historians. It builds on the analyses of these writers and also attempts to fill significant gaps in their work. The overall theme of the thesis is the urban transformation of the East Rand during the first twenty-five years of Nationalist rule. It focuses on the implementation of urban apartheid in the 1960s, a period that has been grossly neglected by historians and other social scientists alike. The influential role played by local authorities in the implementation of apartheid policies is another important theme in the analysis presented here. The popular struggles by black urban dwellers are also emphasised throughout the thesis. In particular, the impact of apartheid policies on the 'multi-racial' populations of the urban 'black spots' and their responses to these policies are considered.

The East Rand and Benoni

Social historians only began to give serious attention to East Rand from the 1980s despite its economic and political importance. Since then a number of path-breaking studies have been conducted on various aspects of the region's history.[10] Even so, the scholarly literature on this region still pales into insignificance when compared to the mountain of research that has been conducted on Johannesburg, its more famous and dominant neighbour. This neglect is unfortunate. The East Rand was one of the country's leading gold producing regions and by the 1960s had established itself as the heartland of the country's engineering industry. The region consists of a large number of major urban centres and a dense concentration of population that played a central role in the struggles against white domination and apartheid. At various points since the

1940s, political and civic organisations and trade unions on the East Rand have been in the forefront of black popular struggles.[11]

The existing literature on the East Rand concentrates on particular events or on the history of individual towns. None has yet attempted to generalise its analysis to encompass the entire region. This thesis begins to address this shortcoming. It provides an overview of the region's economic development from the end of the 19th century through to the 1970s. The popular struggles that flared up in the 1940s in virtually every 'black spot' in the region are highlighted to show the prominent role played by the East Rand's urban black population in challenging white domination and in campaigning for social improvements. In the 1950s the locations of the East Rand, especially in Benoni and Germiston, established themselves as strongholds of the black liberation movements. However, the region's importance extends beyond its pivotal role in the anti-apartheid struggles. From the 1950s the government identified the East Rand as one of the main centres where its urban social engineering schemes had to be implemented. In 1951 the black population of the region numbered over 400 000, most of whom lived in 'black spots', white suburbs and peri-urban areas. Over the course of the following two decades the majority of these people were forcibly relocated from these areas to townships and group areas. This represented a huge intra-regional displacement of people. The process of the disestablishment of at least eight urban 'black spots' and the creation of three large African township conglomerations (Kathorus, Kwatsaduza and Daveyton), as well as the establishment of two regional group areas (Actonville and Reiger Park, for Indians and coloureds respectively) was a was a central component of the national urban social engineering schemes of the government.

Within this regional focus, the thesis pays special attention to the 'racial' restructuring of Benoni and particularly the building of Daveyton. In the 1950s the Benoni Council emerged as a leading implementer of urban apartheid. Its creation of Daveyton, which was praised as *the* 'model' African township, is especially remarkable and worthy of detailed analysis. A central focus of the thesis is therefore on Daveyton's exceptional development. Two major official publications address themselves to these subjects. J.E. Mathewson's (Benoni's

Director of Non-European Affairs), published doctoral thesis on the establishment of Daveyton[12] was for long regarded by many as the pre-eminent description of township development, and received praise from political friends and foes alike. Mathewson's thesis which concentrated on the planning, layout and infrastructural development of Daveyton, in which he played a central role, was unambiguously situated within the broad political framework established by the government. Although the book is about the creation of an African township, the inhabitants of the township appear only as part of the general statistics produced to demonstrate and laud the Council's success in creating it. The second publication was an official history of Benoni.[13] This text was mainly concerned with the history of the white inhabitants of the town from the turn of the century to the mid-sixties. However, the brief chapter on 'The Bantu and other Non-Whites in Benoni' provides a limited and flawed overview of the history of the town's black residents as well as some discussion on the disestablishment of Benoni Old Location and of the establishment of Daveyton. Among the numerous shortcomings in these publications, the marginalisation of the major role played by the black population in shaping the town history is the most serious.

Bonner's series of seminal articles on popular struggles among Benoni's African population has contributed considerably to redressing this imbalance.[14] These articles place the town's African population at the centre of the struggles that enveloped the entire Rand from the mid-1940s. They reveal the complex process of urbanisation and the diverse character and dynamic lives of the urban African population. This thesis draws its inspiration from Bonner's research and attempts to build on it in a number of respects. First, it includes more centrally in its analysis the other black people of Benoni, namely coloureds and Indians, than Bonner has done. Second, an analysis is provided of black popular struggles in the 1950s and 1960s, which complement's Bonner's focus on the 1940s and early 1950s. Third, urban restructuring and its impact on Benoni's entire black population from the early 1950s to the early 1970s are central considerations in the thesis.

Local government-central government relations

Posel has argued that especially from the late 1950s, as the Native Affairs Department consolidated its position in the state, the government mounted a 'major offensive against local authorities'. This process began in the early 1950s. The promulgation of the Native Resettlement Act in 1954 was designed specifically to circumvent the Johannesburg City Council's objections to the implementation of the Western Areas Removal Scheme.[15] Throughout the 1950s the government engaged in a number of public disputes with leading municipalities (including Johannesburg, Durban, Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth) over its urban apartheid policies.[16] The Bantu in European Areas Bill of 1960, in Posel's view, represented a 'singularly aggressive attack on the powers of local authorities'.[17] In 1973 the government finally wrested control of the management of urban African townships from white local authorities when it established the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards.[18] These new bodies, one of which was established on the East Rand, were directly accountable to the central government. The implications of these issues on the local government-central government relations have not been explored.

Mabin and Parnell have recently alluded to the absence of historical research on local government.[19] They have challenged some of the underlying assumptions that inform the existing literature on the role of local government in implementing apartheid policies. In particular, they have questioned the notion that municipalities were merely 'watchdogs' of the central government.[20] The thesis takes up this challenge by analysing the varied relations that existed between municipalities on the East Rand, especially Benoni, and the Nationalist government. It rejects the notion that the relationship between United Party-dominated local authorities and the government was mainly adversarial, as the existing literature implies. Thus Bekker and Humphries have argued that "Disagreement and conflict between the municipalities and the Department became much more marked as the newly elected National Party government began to implement wide-ranging changes in policy."[21] This thesis contends that on the East Rand in the 1950s the conservative wing of the United Party, which

dominated the municipalities of Benoni, Germiston and Springs, developed unusually co-operative relations with the Nationalist government, which at the time was dominated by the proponents of *practical* apartheid. By contrast, the *purist*-inclined Nationalist sympathisers who dominated the municipalities of Boksburg and Brakpan were reluctant to implement *practical* apartheid policies, which emphasised the **stabilisation**[22] of the urban African population. The consequence of this unusual political alignment was that United Party-dominated councils were able to establish their African townships relatively quickly, while Boksburg and Brakpan lagged behind.

Benoni especially developed a remarkably close relationship with the government in the 1950s. J.E. Mathewson's role as the main link between these two tiers of the state significantly facilitated the development of their co-operative relationship. Mathewson was a critic of the Nationalist government, but endorsed its *practical* apartheid policies. As the local official responsible for the establishment of Daveyton, his views largely shaped the development of the township. The Benoni Council's enthusiasm for *practical* apartheid urban policies won it the government's support, which resulted in resources (especially finance) being made available to it relatively easily. Under the direction of Mathewson, Daveyton became the first African township to utilise the site-and service scheme and to implement ethnic divisions. Its rapid development also resolved the serious squatter problem that had arisen in Benoni in the early 1950s. For all these reasons, Daveyton was praised as *the* 'model' African township.

By focusing on the role of local authorities in the implementation of apartheid, the thesis reveals a more complex set of relations between the local and central tiers of the state than has hitherto been perceived in the literature. It especially examines how these varied relations affected the implementation of urban apartheid regionally and locally.

The emergence of 'modernist apartheid': the Group Areas Act and 'proper planning'

One of Posel's main criticisms of some of the early writings on apartheid is that they implicitly posited the notion of the "development of apartheid as having been fundamentally linear and cumulative, each step building on the success of the other."[23] She and other social historians have rejected the argument that the Nationalist Party came to power with a 'blue-print' or 'grand plan'. Posel does, however, agree that apartheid was characterised by more planning.[24] This thesis concurs with these views and places specific emphasis on the emergence of a modernist planning discourse in the pre- and post-1948 state. The arguments presented are based on the recent work of Mabin and Wilkinson, as well as other geographers and town planners, who have shown how the state drew on international planning policies to address the urban crisis of the 1940s and 1950s.[25]

Mabin and Wilkinson have concentrated their research on the period prior to 1950. This thesis extends their arguments into the early 1950s and discusses the flurry of activities initiated by the state to produce detailed plans for the 'racial' restructuring of the urban areas. In the process, 'proper planning' became a *leitmotif* of the state's urban policies. The GAA was a cornerstone of apartheid. The consequences of the GAA, namely, forced removals and the creation of group areas have been well documented. The voluminous Surplus People's Project estimated that up to three and a half million people were subjected to forced removals.[26] Numerous other scholarly and popular works have highlighted the hardships experienced by blacks as a result of the implementation of the GAA.[27] Undoubtedly, the disruption of established communities and their displacement were black people's primary experiences of the GAA. However, the emphasis on these issues has resulted in a limited and one-sided understanding of the origins of the GAA, of black people's varied responses to it and of the complex processes involved in its implementation.

Mabin's recent exposition on the 'roots' of the GAA argues that it had a 'complex genesis'.[28] The most common view of the GAA is that its primary aim was to enforce compulsory 'racial' segregation. This is indisputable. However, there were two other crucial objectives of the GAA. Firstly, the GAA was based to a large extent on the Pegging Acts that were promulgated by the Smuts government in the mid-1940s. The main aims of these Acts were to curtail the burgeoning Indian trade (especially in Durban) and to protect white small businesses. Thus, Maharaj has argued that this objective was the main influence on the GAA.[29] Mabin also locates the origins of the GAA in the broader context of the state's emphasis on 'proper planning' as a central means to assert control over the black population in general.[30] It is argued that these three imperatives were inextricably linked in the production of the GAA, which included each of their objectives. This became clearer from the late 1950s when group areas were implemented more systematically.

One of the main shortcomings in the literature on the GAA is the one-sided view of black people's responses. Existing studies suggest that the overwhelming majority of black people opposed the GAA. This was far from true on East Rand where a number of groups came out in support. Their reasons were various. Poor coloured and Indian people some times requested the establishment of group areas because they saw it as a way of gaining access to houses. Likewise African lodgers and squatters willingly moved to the new townships because it provided them with an escape from the overcrowding in the locations where unscrupulous landlords often exploited them. This thesis explores these multifaceted reactions.

A major question also addressed in this thesis is why it often took so long for group areas to be implemented. With the notable exception of Meshtrie's[31] work none has explored the problems associated with the implementation of the GAA in the 1950s, let alone in the 1960s. Meshtrie concentrates on the administrative difficulties confronted by the Group Areas Board in the 1950s. Many of these were however resolved by the mid-1950s. Subsequently, the authorities faced further problems in its attempts to create group areas.

In general, all the East Rand's municipalities supported the GAA. However, they differed over where these group areas should be located and over whether their respective coloured and Indian populations should be removed. The varying approaches adopted by the local authorities were shaped by their local economic and political interests, which did not always accord with the government's 'grand plan' for the creation of regional group areas on the East Rand. The emergence of opposition from a host of local white institutions, especially in Benoni, to the government's group areas scheme is explored here. Especially noteworthy was the opposition, albeit ephemeral, from the local National Party branch and Afrikaner organisations. As a result group areas could only be proclaimed in the 1960s. After this the government succeeded in implementing most of its regional and group areas plans. However, it took until the 1970s for this to be effected and even then the government was forced to abandon its regional 'grand plan'. The reasons behind this are discussed in some detail.

Resistance and identity in the East Rand's 'black spots'

The history of popular struggles from the late 1930s to 1960 has been extensively discussed.[32] The inhabitants of the 'urban black' spots have featured prominently in many of these struggles. This research provides an overview of the struggles that occurred in the leading 'black spots' on the East Rand from the early 1940s until their disestablishment in the late 1950s and early 1960s. One of the main concerns here is the impact of urban restructuring on the urban black population, and their reactions to it. The analysis provided here proceeds from a discussion on the 'lived experiences' of the population of the 'black spots' – Africans, coloureds and Indians. The objective is to scrutinise the opposing notions that these areas were characterised either by 'racial' tension (the official view) or by 'racial' harmony (the view expressed by many former inhabitants). The social and political relations between the 'racial' groups and classes of Benoni Old Location are discussed in detail. Class interests and 'racial' perceptions intersected to produce a complex set of relations that defy simplistic

characterisation. Numerous points of tension existed in the location: between unscrupulous landlords and lodgers, between location youth and migrants, between different gangs and between aspirant African entrepreneurs and Indian traders – all of which were aggravated by pervasive poverty and overcrowding. At times these tensions flared into open conflict. Most often they were counter-balanced by a generally harmonious and peaceful set up in the location.

The thesis analyses the influence of these varied relations on the politics of the locations, especially on the Congress Movement. It discusses the impact of open conflict between sections of the African community and Indian traders on the political alliance between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC). In contrast to the close political relations between the ANC and TIC, the coloured community of the East Rand generally remained aloof from all politics, including the resistance movements until the late 1950s. It is suggested here that any explanation of this phenomenon requires an analysis of the complicated issues of 'coloured identity'.

This has been one of the most vexing issues in South African history and consequently has received considerable scholarly attention.[33] Goldin argues that a distinct coloured political identity has been the outcome of 'divide-and-rule tactics'.[34] Goldin's analysis focuses on the state's attempts to promote a coloured identity. However, he acknowledges the role of "resistance of sections of the [coloured] population to the erosion of their position" in the promotion of this identity.[35] Dugmore also emphasises this point and argues that 'being coloured' meant exemption "from lower wages, pass laws, certain taxes, residential restrictions and, at some levels, particular types of social and police abuse and harassment."[36] Goldin and Lewis's research is based mainly on the coloured population of the Western Cape, which they too readily assume to be representative of coloureds from other parts of the country. Dugmore's analysis of the construction of coloured identity in Johannesburg's Malay location provides a valuable correction but is limited to one small section of the Rand and to the period prior to the Second World War. This thesis extends Dugmore's analysis in both directions.

Both Goldin and Dugmore, while admitting to the complexities of a coloured identity, conclude that such an identity was indeed constructed. That is, they tend to reify the notion of a coloured identity. The experience of coloureds on the East Rand in the 1950s and 1960s reveals that the construction of a discreet coloured identity was difficult to achieve and was also subject to challenge. The construction of a 'coloured identity' in the urban areas of the Witwatersrand was more diverse and fluid than is allowed for in the existing literature. This had much to do with their close 'lived experiences' with Africans, a phenomenon that was almost entirely absent in the Western Cape. In the 'black spots' of the East Rand the 'racial' demarcations between coloureds and Africans were often very blurred. In these instances other social divisions assumed greater significance. Even in the 'racially' exclusive coloured group area of Reiger Park in the 1960s, the government found it difficult to engender support for a common coloured identity. Nevertheless, there were groups of coloureds who promoted the idea of a distinct coloured identity and who petitioned the government to separate them from 'uncivilised natives'. These instances however confirm the extreme divergences among coloureds about their supposed 'racial' identity. This contributed to the difficulties in mobilising coloureds for political purposes. Only when radical organisations began campaigning on social issues, especially housing, did they succeed in drawing coloureds closer to the Congress Movement.

The importance of the 1960s

The 1960s, the decade of 'high apartheid', is among the most under-researched areas in the history of apartheid.[37] Even Lodge's work,[38] which covers the period from 1945 to the late 1970s, deals only with the struggles that occurred in the immediate aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre. The rest of the decade is dealt with as part of chapters on the guerilla struggle and exile politics. The causes of this neglect might be ascribed mainly to two issues. First, until recently researchers have not readily had access to the archives covering this period. A large part of this thesis is based on primary sources that have hitherto not been used. Second, the absence of mass struggles during this period has made it an

unattractive area of research compared to the decades that preceded and succeeded it.

Nearly two decades ago Bloch questioned the view of the 1960s as being a 'time of silence and defeat, almost without history'. He argued that such a perception 'gives too straight and untextured a view of the decade'.[39] By contrast he claimed the 1960s as having been 'dialectically rich'. Bloch's own attempt to find the 'sounds in the silence' fell some distance short of substantiating this claim. Since then the decade has continued to languish in virtual obscurity and, as a result, our collective understanding of the making of apartheid remains limited. Bonner and Segal's study on Soweto provides excellent insight into the 1960s, but their account is based primarily on secondary sources.[40]

This research attempts to prove that the 1960s were indeed a 'dialectically rich' period in our history. It shows that struggles continued well into the mid-1960s despite the harsh repression. Resistance might not have occurred on a mass scale comparable to that of the 1950s, but it did not disappear completely. The resistance that did materialise mainly took the form of local struggles, such as against forced removals in Benoni Old Location, and ultimately failed. Opposition to state-created institutions in group areas was also a frequent occurrence. In the coloured group areas, including Reiger Park, politics experienced an early rebirth in the mid 1960s with the formation of various political parties which contested the 1969 Coloured Representative Council elections. Many old coloured activists, as well as new militants rallied behind the newly-formed Labour Party because of its explicitly oppositional policies. From the early 1970s many of these militants began to gravitate towards the emerging Black Consciousness Movement.

A new breed of conservative politicians also emerged in the 1960s. They were given the opportunity to establish themselves as leading local figures because of the repression of radicals. Furthermore, the government created pseudo local government structures in the African townships and group areas in accordance with its policies of 'separate development' and 'community development'. These were intended to politicise ethnicity and 'race' and provided vehicles for the political advancement of conservative politicians.

A key proposition posited about the 1960s is that the state failed to win significant support for its 'racial' policies, despite its dominance over the black population. Coercion proved insufficient to engender compliance to the state's group area policies. The reasons for this are discussed and located primarily in the context of black people's deep resentment of forced removals and the lack of social development in the group areas. Nevertheless, until the mid-1960s the government largely succeeded in stabilising the urban African population. In many townships, the African population even experienced some improvement in their living conditions and especially in employment. However, these gains were undermined by the policies of 'high apartheid' which promoted the development of 'homelands' and neglected the urban townships. As a result the few 'rights' enjoyed by urban Africans came under attack. Equally serious was that the living conditions in all the East Rand's townships began to decline rapidly from the late 1960s. The ensuing social deterioration contributed significantly to the uprising that gripped the country from the mid-1970s.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One provides an overview of the dramatic economic transformation experienced by the East Rand from the time when the first coal mines were opened at the end of the 19th century through to the manufacturing revolution in the 1940s, which laid the basis for the region's emergence as the country's leading engineering centre. The East Rand's emergence as a centre of industrial development made it a primary destination for workseekers, especially Africans. As a result, by the 1940s most towns in the region had experienced a demographic revolution, as the urban-based African population came to outnumber the white population. The chapter shows that local authorities were woefully incapable of dealing with this multi-faceted transformation, which caused overcrowding and poverty to become pervasive in the locations. In response black communities mounted struggles to improve their lives. The ensuing crisis posed a serious threat to the local authorities and the government in general.

Chapter Two discusses the ways in which the state responded to this urban crisis. It is argued that the Smuts government laid much of the ground work of the state's strategy to deal with the urban crisis. For example, the research and reports of the Social and Economic Planning Committee and the promulgation of the Pegging Acts introduced a modernist discourse of 'proper planning' and strict 'racial' segregation that formed the basis of the Nationalist Party's GAA and African township development. There were thus important continuities between the policies of the United Party and Nationalist Party, especially in relation to the critical objective of asserting control over the urban black population. The chapter finally focuses attention on two key initiatives introduced by the apartheid government to formulate and elaborate detailed plans for its urban restructuring schemes, namely, the Mentz and Subsidiary Planning Committees. The recommendations of these committees produced the regional 'grand plan' for restructuring of the East Rand.

Chapter Three traces the implementation of the GAA and the regional 'grand plan' from their inception to the early 1970s. It shows how the government initially enjoyed little success in implementing group areas because of numerous administrative impediments and the resistance of the South African Indian Congress. However, by the late 1950s the government had introduced a number of new laws and amendments to the GAA to take account of these obstacles. When it seemed that the regional plan for group areas would be implemented, further opposition emerged from local authorities and other white institutions. It took the government until the early 1960s to deal with this opposition, after which it was able to implement most of its regional 'grand plan'. The chapter finally discusses how this regional plan came unstuck because the areas identified as the regional group areas for coloureds and Indians proved too small to accommodate all these people in the region. As a result the 'grand plan' was abandoned in the 1970s.

Chapter Four concentrates on the establishment of Daveyton and addresses the question of why this township came to be regarded as *the* 'model' African township. It is argued that the close relationship between the United Party-

dominated local authority and the Nationalist government created the conditions that allowed for the rapid development of Daveyton according to the principles set out by H.F. Verwoerd. The chapter then discusses how Daveyton was developed first as a site-and-service settlement and then how it benefited from a huge financial injection to build more than 8000 houses in only a few years. In addition, Daveyton was the first township to be divided along ethnic lines. The role of J.E. Mathewson as an intermediary between the government and municipality is highlighted. The experience of Daveyton's development is compared with that of its neighbours. It is argued that in the early 1960s the government succeeded in **stabilising** the African working class through repression, the provision of housing and as a result of better employment opportunities being available to them.

Chapter Five continues to trace the evolution of Daveyton and focuses mainly on the 1960s. It discusses how the government's shift towards promoting ethnic 'homelands' from the late 1950s adversely affected urban townships. Throughout the 1960s black urban 'rights' came under concerted attack and African women especially were marginalised. Even the compliant UBCs found the government reluctant to confer additional powers on it. In the government's view Africans could only exercise 'rights' in the 'homelands'. Furthermore social conditions entered a steep decline as finances and other resources were diverted to the 'homelands'. By the early 1970s African townships on the East Rand began to suffer from overcrowding and deteriorating social conditions. Even Daveyton could not escape this downward spiral and thus rapidly lost its reputation as *the* 'model' township.

Chapter Six discusses the introduction of the concept of community development, the coloured and Indian version of 'separate development'. These policies were initiated because the government realised that its emphasis on forced removals had alienated the majority of coloureds and Indians. As a result its racial policies engendered little support among these people. In the early 1960s Indians were formally recognised as 'citizens' of the country, albeit without political rights. The chapter deals in detail with the government's policy changes

towards the Indian population. It discusses the various proposals mooted to deal differently with the question of the future of Indian traders, who were among the most severely affected by group areas. However, the government's early gestures towards a more developmental programme for coloured and Indians failed to materialise in the 1960s. On the contrary, as the chapter demonstrates, they experienced further declines in their standard of living in the new group areas. Finally, the government introduced 'racialised' local government structures in an attempt to add some legitimacy to its segregationist policies.

Chapter Seven discusses the social and political life in the urban 'black spots'. It considers the relations between various groups in these locations and especially Benoni Old Location. The chapter pays some attention to the causes and impact of 1952 'race riots' in Benoni Old Location. It shows how the political elite of the African National Congress and Transvaal Indian Congress reacted to this violence and how they managed in the succeeding period to build a reasonably successful political alliance. The coloured residents of the location entered this alliance much later because of their reluctance to become involved in political struggles. In the late 1950s the Congress Movement had established itself as the dominant political voice of the majority of the old location's residents and became a stronghold of the anti-apartheid movement.

Chapter Eight looks at the struggles conducted by residents of Benoni's Old Location against forced removals. It shows how the campaigns by Africans, coloureds and Indians coalesced in the late 1950s, but were torn asunder by the repression of the 1960s and the internecine squabbles in the organisations leading these struggles. The chapter discusses the reconstitution of politics in the group areas. The demise of the TIC paved the way for the emergence of conservative politicians in Actonville. The rise to prominence of personalities such as Abram-Mayet was facilitated by the introduction of the Indian Consultative Committee (ICC). However, this committee was wracked by controversy from the outset. A few former TIC members organised opposition to the ICC in the hope of replacing the allegedly corrupt leaders. The situation in the coloured group areas, Reiger

Park, developed along very different lines. The government's attempt to construct or impose a coloured identity was largely unsuccessful because of the numerous social divisions that existed among residents and because of the almost universal objection to group areas. As a result the Coloured Consultative Committee failed to make an impression on the area. However, in the late 1960s politics in Reiger Park came alive as various parties contested for seats on the CRC. Most of these parties were pro-government, but the Labour Party openly criticised the government's policies. As a result it became a focal point of opposition politics in the area.

ENDNOTES

[1] Among the most important works are the collection of articles in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds), *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935-1962*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1993; D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991; D. O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, Capital and Ideology in the development of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1934-1948*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1983; S. Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid*, Macmillan, London, 1987; H. Sapire, African Urbanisation and Struggles against Municipal Controls in Brakpan, 1920-1958', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988; P. Bonner, 'African Urbanisation on the Rand between the 1930s and 1960s: Its social character and political consequences', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21, 1, 1995; P. Bonner and L. Segal, *Soweto - A History*, Maskew Miller Longman, Cape Town, 1998. Most of the literature on urban apartheid has concentrated on the on the origins and process of urban segregation. A. Mabin, 'Labour, Capital, Class Struggle and the Origins of Residential Segregation in Kimberley', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 12, 1986, A. Mabin, 'Comprehensive Segregation: The Origins of the Group Areas Act and its Planning Apparatuses', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 2, 1992, A. Lemon (ed), *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, Cape Town, 1991, P. Maylam, 'The Rise and Decline of Urban Apartheid in South Africa', *African Affairs*, 89, 1990

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CHAPTER ONE

Urban Transformation and Crisis on the East Rand

South Africa's urban centres experienced fundamental transformation during the 1940s and 1950s, the principal manifestations of which were the extraordinary industrialisation of the economy and the ensuing large influx of blacks to the towns. The huge urban-bound migration of African people was also a consequence of the progressive impoverishment in the rural areas which drove thousands of destitute people off the land to the towns where the prospects of work and survival seemed more promising. It was during this period that urban centres stamped their indisputable domination on the economic and socio-political landscape of the country.

Until the late 1930s the majority of Africans on the Witwatersrand were single male migrants working in the mines and living in compounds. This situation reflected the dominance of mining in the national economy, as well as the relative success of influx control measures. As a result, the ratio between permanently urbanised blacks and whites remained finely balanced and stable for most of this period. This was remarkable considering the overwhelming preponderance of the African population nationally. The state was thus able to preserve the towns as centres of white privilege and power partly by keeping the vast majority of Africans confined to the rural areas through measures such as the influx control system.

However, the massive influx of black people into the urban centres during the 1940s confronted the authorities with a range of new and serious social and political challenges which they proved, at least initially, incapable of resolving. The response of the state (especially at a local level) was characterised by ineptitude, neglect, and poor judgement as well as being primarily reactive. It would take another decade, and

a new government, before the state would begin to regain control of the towns. The East Rand, with its unparalleled concentration of seven of the country's leading towns, was a crucial arena in which these processes unfolded. This chapter surveys the industrialisation of the East Rand and its effects on the different towns and their populations. It reveals not only the rapid transformation of the region, but also the extent to which it became a centre of intense political contestation in the 1940s and early 1950s. For all these reasons the East Rand emerged during this period as a region of strategic national importance. The regional scope of the crisis (albeit with important differences between the towns) in the years after the Second World War also placed the East Rand in a unique position that earned it unprecedented attention from the state, especially after the Nationalist Party assumed power in 1948. This chapter draws on some of the most important research conducted previously on the crises and struggles on the East Rand during the forties and early fifties. These studies have mainly focused on popular struggles in specific towns.[1] Here the aim is to paint a picture of how these various processes unfolded on a regional basis.

Industrialisation and urbanisation

The East Rand's economic history conformed closely with the trajectory of the national economy from the opening of the first coal and gold mines at the end of the nineteenth century to the period of intense industrialisation during the Second World War. Because the East Rand has existed so much in the shadow of Johannesburg, its economic transformation has received far less attention than it deserves.[2] Yet, by the mid-1960s the region had emerged as the country's engineering heartland and in the process the towns of Germiston, Benoni, Alberton, Boksburg and Springs became pivotal cogs in the national manufacture-dominated economy.

Until the 1930s the South African economy was dominated by mining and agriculture, with only limited manufacturing development having taken place in the preceding decades. Even then the emerging industrial sector was mainly linked to mining and was concentrated in only a few centres, with Johannesburg

overshadowing everything else. All of the East Rand's major towns originated as mining settlements at the end of the nineteenth century. A year after the discovery of gold at Langlaagte in Johannesburg, mining operations commenced in Nigel and Benoni. In the case of the latter the farms Vlakfontein, Kleinfontein and Modderfontein were among the most prominent digging sites.[3] In Brakpan and Springs coal mining dominated early mining activities, but was superseded in the 1910s by gold mining.[4] The fortunes of gold mining fluctuated from its inception, influenced both by the vagaries of the international economy and the problems associated with deep level mining on the Witwatersrand. Gold mining on the East Rand proceeded tentatively in its formative years compared to the more dynamic progress in Johannesburg. However, after overcoming this rather unspectacular genesis the East Rand became the primary centre of gold mining in the country from the mid-twenties to the early fifties.[5] Between 1924 and 1949 the region produced more than half of the country's gold, surpassing the dominant role played by Johannesburg's gold mines in the early decades of the century.[6] At different times mines in Brakpan (the State Mines in the 1930s) and in Springs (Daggafontein in the late 1940s) were leading gold producers in the country.[7] In Benoni gold mining boomed between 1912 and 1930, then declined for four years, and was later rescued by the hike in the price of gold in 1935, which rendered operations profitable for the subsequent fifteen years and allowed it to stutter along thereafter until the early sixties. Although a couple of mines (New Van Ryn and New Kleinfontein) operated profitably throughout the fifties, gold mining had by this time entered a period of terminal decline and by the mid-1960s the industry ceased to exist in the town.[8] The history of gold mining in the other East Rand towns followed a similar pattern of highs and lows, and finally experienced long term decline in terms of its relative contribution to the region's economy. Notwithstanding its ultimate fate, gold mining contributed hugely to the initial transformation of the East Rand from a sparsely populated and undeveloped region into one the country's leading economic zones. It also shaped the unique urban conurbation of the region, comprising six or seven of

the country's leading towns. But perhaps its most significant legacy was to lay the basis for the later industrial revolution of the region.

The outbreak of the Second World War provided the initial critical impetus to the country's relatively undeveloped manufacturing sector, resulting in a massive expansion of secondary industry. The disruption caused to the world economy, especially to the leading industrial nations, and the concomitant increase in demand for consumer goods by the embattled Allied countries spurred the South African government to adopt a more aggressive import substitution policy.[9] As a result manufacturing output grew by an impressive 5,1% per annum between 1936/7 and 1946/7.[10] The relative importance of secondary industry soared during this period reaching a crucial milestone in 1943 when it overtook mining as the single largest contributor to the gross national product.[11] By the end of the war the national economy had undergone a veritable revolution and established South Africa as the leading industrial economy on the African continent.

The Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) complex led the way in the processes of industrialisation and modernisation. The strength of this region's industrial economy was graphically illustrated by the presence in 1948/49 of a third of the country's industrial establishments (and 44% of industrial employees) in this area.[12] Although Johannesburg remained the dominant economic centre throughout the period, the East Rand benefited tremendously from its proximity to the country's industrial hub and rapidly asserted itself as a key emerging manufacturing centre. By the end of the 1940s the East Rand already employed approximately one third of industrial employees on the Witwatersrand (82 954 out of 243 007), while the East Rand's industrial employee population easily outstripped the combined total of Pretoria and Vereeniging, the two other important industrial centres of the PWV region.[13]

Germiston experienced industrial expansion earlier than other East Rand towns mainly because of its proximity to Johannesburg. From the early 1920s, light industries (especially in the clothing sector) began to establish themselves in the town. An important consequence of this development was the establishment of one of

the country's major railway junctions in Germiston.[14] As a result of these factors, the town was ideally placed to benefit from the country's economic growth during the Second World War. Benoni and Boksburg experienced particularly rapid manufacturing development during the war, to such an extent that by the mid-1940s these two areas combined had the highest density of industrialisation in the country.[15] Spurred on by wartime military requirements, Benoni's existing heavy industries massively increased output. For example, Dunswart Iron and Steel produced a staggering 1½ million mortars and 60 000 bombs to augment the arsenal of the Allied forces. Other companies such as Head Wrightson & Co., Standard Brass, Burmco and Delfos also reaped spectacular benefits from gearing their production to the war effort.[16] Benoni's reputation as a burgeoning centre of manufacturing attracted substantial new investment. During the war a number of important new enterprises were established in the town, including United Cotton and Textile Company (Amato Textiles) and Cape Asbestos Insulations. In the immediate aftermath of the war new investment into Benoni was even more impressive as a number of heavy industrial companies such as General Electric relocated their main operations to the town. The transformation of the town's economy was undoubtedly spectacular and in 1947 Benoni was widely recognised as a leading centre of heavy industry in the country.[17] In 1951 the metal and engineering sectors accounted for 57,2% and 65,9% of the total number of industrial employees in Benoni and Boksburg respectively [18], which vividly demonstrates the growing dominance of manufacturing in those towns and the region as a whole. Germiston[19] established itself as an important manufacturing centre before the rest of the region and Springs did not lag far behind. The industrial expansion of Benoni and Springs was hugely aided by their respective council's aggressive campaigns to attract new investment. For example, Morris Nestadt of Benoni was a prominent figure in promoting industrialisation of his town and the East Rand.[20]

Further evidence of the robust expansion of industry on the East Rand was the growing demand for industrial land in the fifties. In 1954 most of the major industrial towns in the region had each used 70% or more of the industrial land available for

this purpose. Especially in Benoni, the rapidly expanding industries quickly gobbled up most available industrial land. Only Springs had utilised less industrial land (60%).[21] The apparently insatiable demand for industrial land often placed the region's leading industrial towns at loggerheads with the central government because of the latter's determination to control industrial growth in order to curb the influx of Africans into the towns. Collectively these developments represented an important qualitative shift in the character of these local economies and were symptomatic of the region's industrial transformation.

The East Rand's dynamic economic development made it an important destination for work-seekers. From the time the first mines started operating and the first mining villages developed, prospective miners and labourers and entrepreneurs streamed to the region in search of work or fortune. By the turn of the twentieth century thousands of black and white miners had congregated in the nascent mining towns. During the first three decades of the twentieth century the region's population grew relatively consistently. Where dramatic growth spurts occurred, as was the case in Benoni and Brakpan between 1921 and 1936, they were usually associated with the changing fortunes in the gold mining industry in those towns. This applied to both the African and white populations. In Benoni and Brakpan the white population registered substantial increases of 45% and 144% respectively. The African population grew by large but slightly different proportions. (see Table One). In contrast the coloured and Indian populations increased only modestly, growing only by virtue of the low natural increase in their numbers. Only negligible migration of these populations took place from Natal and the Cape, where their numbers were concentrated.

In general the expansion of the towns of the East Rand mirrored the broader national process of urbanisation. The increase in the proportion of each population group residing in the urban areas between 1921 and 1936 reveal a steady flow of people to the urban centres. Thus the percentage of whites in the main urban centres increased from 44,5% to 55,5%, coloureds from 34,4% to 41,6%, Asiatics from 45,4% to 58,6% and Africans from 9,9% to 14,5%.[22] As these figures indicate the

African population in the mid-1930s resided overwhelmingly in the rural areas: two million stayed in the Reserves, 2,2 million on farms (mainly white owned farms) and only one and a half million in towns.[23] Furthermore, the urban-based African population was also mainly migrant and male. The relatively low figure for urban coloureds reflected the high rural coloured population in the Cape, in contrast to the Transvaal where the relatively small coloured population mostly lived in the towns.

A profound shift in the character of the urban population profile was to occur from the later 1930s as the number of Africans settling permanently in the towns increased rapidly. Nationally, in the decade between 1936 and 1946 the African urban population increased by a huge 50% from 1 141 642 to 1 794 212. Women featured especially prominently in the new wave of urban migration, resulting in a near doubling in the numbers of African women in the urban areas from about 350 000 to 650 000. Notwithstanding a plethora of measures instituted by the government to stem the tide of urbanisation, the African urban population soared even higher in the late forties and fifties, reaching a total of 3,5 million in 1960.[24]

What these bare statistics do not reveal adequately is the pronounced shift that occurred in the character of the urban-based African population in the 1940s from being primarily a mine-based and migrant population to being a more permanently settled urban proletariat.[25] The almost insatiable demand for labour by the rapidly expanding secondary industry attracted hundreds of thousands of African workers. Between 1936 and 1951 the number of African male workers employed in industry increased by more than 100% from 272 641 to 590 929, a phenomenal increase by any measure.[26]

An important milestone was reached in 1946 when the number of African industrial employees for the first time outnumbered the number of African miners (448 687 to 425 884). Five years later the gap between the two had widened even further as the number of African industrial employees surged ahead to reach 590 929, whereas mining employment registered an insignificant increase of less than 13 000.[27] Of equal importance was the ever-widening chasm between the proportion of black and white industrial employees as part of the total work force.

TABLE ONE

East Rand population per magisterial district, 1921 - 1936[28]

	African		Coloured		Indian		White		Total	
	1921	**1936**	**1921**	**1936**	**1921**	**1936**	**1921**	**1936**	**1921**	**1936**
Benoni	31629	53854	1049	1876	570	959	14483	21071	47731	77760
Boksburg	24318	32405	625	1051	620	754	12416	15916	37979	50126
Brakpan	17331	37106	186	319	39	31	7108	17355	28664	54811
Springs	14518	67190	187	606	207	642	4488	18436	19400	86874
Germiston	25623	40442	565	1199	470	722	15697	25779	42355	68142
Total	113419	230997	2612	5051	1906	3108	54192	98557	172129	337713

TABLE TWO

Total Population and Industrial Employees on the East Rand, 1951[29]

	Benoni	**Boksburg**	**Brakpan**	**Germiston**	**Nigel**	**Springs**
Population	113 025	65 397	85 040	177 034	46 698	152 283
Industrial Employees	15 034	7 702	3 966	41 907	1 624	12 721

TABLE THREE

East Rand population per magisterial district, 1946 –1951[30]

	African		Coloured		Indian		White		Total	
	1946	**1951**	**1946**	**1951**	**1946**	**1951**	**1946**	**1951**	**1946**	**1951**
Benoni	50811	67147	2997	3917	1289	1683	30193	36738	85290	109481
Boksburg	32547	36931	1218	1599	838	1161	22028	24625	56631	64316
Brakpan	55678	54939	363	415	47	45	27368	29703	83456	85102
Springs	84387	85849	687	978	744	997	25323	31558	111141	119382
Germiston	87804	99946	2075	2509	1260	1915	57507	74384	148646	178754
Total	311227	344812	7430	9418	4178	5801	162419	197008	336488	378281

Prior to the war, African male industrial employees outnumbered their white counterparts by 102 746. In 1946 this difference more than doubled to 237 882 and by 1951 it stood at 347 635, which amounted to more than double the number of white industrial employees.[31] Of the 819 658 industrial employees listed nationally in 1952/3 nearly two-thirds (512 782) were black.[32] Since the PWV was the indisputable centre of industrialization, it was here where African industrial employment was most pronounced. Between 1936 and 1951 African industrial employment rocketed by 270% (from 80 378 to 217 022).[33]

The declining importance of mining and the growth of the industrial sector had the combined effect of substantially reducing the proportion of migrant labour within the total African urban population. From the 1940s the number of African people deciding to settle permanently in the urban centres increased substantially. An important manifestation of this trend on the East Rand in the late 1940s was that the number of Africans residing in locations exceeded those living in compounds. In Benoni, for example, in the late 1930s there were 32 278 African mineworkers compared to 23 200 non-miners. In 1950 a reversal of these proportions had taken place as the number of African miners declined by nearly half to 17 927 and the non-mining sector increased to 28593.[34] Springs was a notable exception to this trend due to the continued importance of gold mining. Although the town's urban-based population experienced a similar explosive growth as other East Rand centres (to 33 000 in 1952), the number of African miners remained exceptionally high at 53 321 (1560 women) all of whom lived in compounds.[35] It should also be noted that the official figures tended to underestimate the population of the locations. For example, a survey by the Benoni municipality conducted in 1948 found that the African urban population was 40% higher than the official statistics.[36] Similar discrepancies occurred in the recording of Payneville's population by various official bodies.[37]

Thus at the start of the 1950s the East Rand's urban centres looked substantially different from their appearance before the outbreak of the war. The social and political consequences of this relatively rapid and radical transformation are the subjects of the following section.

Urban socio-economic decay

South Africa's impressive industrialisation and urban expansion in the 1940s signified the country's integration into the modern (capitalist) world economy. This process of modernization had differential effects on the country's population. The ruling class experienced an accelerated accumulation of wealth and the white population generally attained substantial improvements in their standard of living. In contrast, the living conditions of the majority of blacks either stagnated or declined. Although some sections of the African industrial workforce benefited from wage increases, they were unable to escape the physical degradation that pervaded the locations. These opposing trends were most glaringly obvious in the towns, which were both symbols of modernity and simultaneously centres of deprivation.

The East Rand's municipalities enthusiastically endorsed and promoted their respective town's economic progress. However, they proved far less zealous about providing for the social and material needs of the black workforce congregating in large numbers within their municipal boundaries, on whom the prosperity of local industries so heavily depended. In particular, the local authorities failed to provide adequate accommodation and other social services, which resulted in rapid deterioration in the living conditions of most urban blacks. The locations, which were the primary places of destination for urban-bound black migrants, suffered especially severely under the strain of rapid population growth and utter neglect by the municipalities.

Most of these locations were established in the early part of the century and from the outset were characterised by the absence of planning, and by squalor and overcrowding. Some improvements were effected to the locations in the 1920s following the promulgation of the Native (Urban) Areas Act and the ensuing formalisation of location management.[38] Even then, however, the housing and services provided for blacks were rudimentary and limited to meeting only a bare minimum of their immediate needs. Many the houses built in the urban locations were owned by the municipalities and were rented or leased to residents. These

houses were usually small and invariably lacked basic amenities such as running water, electricity and sanitation. Residents in some locations were able to build their own houses on leased land. Such stand-holders, as they were termed, generally rented rooms in their houses or their in the backyards to tenants. For these landlords, rack-renting was lucrative, especially as there was a huge demand for such accommodation because of the lack of housing provided by the municipalities. As a result a familiar tale of overcrowding, impoverishment and unhealthy conditions developed. These were the conditions that pertained to varying degrees in every location on the East Rand.

Payneville in Springs was a case in point. The location was designed from the outset to accommodate only 8000 people. Until the early 1930s the location's population remained well under this limit (eg. in 1933 the population was 5441). However, by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the African population had nearly doubled to 10 000.[39] Even this huge leap paled into insignificance compared to the rapid population growth experienced during the 1940s. In 1952 the official figure for the African population of Payneville stood at 33 000.[40] This figure represented a staggering overpopulation rate of 400%. A further 800 coloured people were squeezed into a section of the location known as Cape Stands and approximately 1000 Indians lived in the Asiatic Bazaar, which was separated from the location by a street.[41] The Springs Council, which vociferously promoted the town's industrialisation (and thus consciously solicited an influx of African labour) responded to this exceptionally rapid growth of the town's urban black population by doing absolutely nothing. Most seriously it failed to erect a single house for blacks between 1939 and 1951.[42] As a result overcrowding became ubiquitous and the location experienced a mushrooming of backyard shanties. A survey of black Council employees revealed the average number of people living in a room was 6.1, but it also admitted that there were instances of up to ten people occupying a single room.[43] The situation was even worse than suggested by the official statistics. In 1950 the Council indicated there were only 1000 lodgers in the location.[44] But this was clearly a gross underestimate. In 1953 the town clerk calculated the number of lodgers to be 8000, some while *after* hundreds of mainly lodgers had been removed

to the new townships, KwaThema.[45] Banzi Bangani, renowned jazz trumpeter (for the African Inkspots) of the fifties and sixties recalls the conditions on his father's stand:

> My father had a stand in Payneville, which he bought from a previous owner. The main stand had four rooms and at the back we had three rooms. So you could say we had a seven-roomed house. In the main stand we had nine people and at the back there was a man with his wife and also a single man in one room. There were about 16 to 18 people on our stand. There was not very much space left on the stand. Maybe just enough to hang up the washing.[46]

The conditions in other locations across the East Rand were equally deplorable. Sapire has painted a vivid picture of the misery that afflicted residents of the Brakpan Location where "unemployment and pauperdom was rife".[47] The lack of housing in this location forced over 10 000 inhabitants to cram into housing facilities designed to accommodate only 6000 people. Germiston was much the same. Its rapid economic expansion in the late thirties and especially during the war made it a favourite destination for workseekers. As a result the town's location, Dukathole, experienced a population explosion earlier than other East Rand towns and by 1938 already had a population of 15 000. The continued influx into the area and the lack of housing provision resulted in massive subletting (about 85% of the location's standholders sublet in 1940). By the end of 1942 approximately 18 000 people were crammed into a location designed for only 6000.[48] Stirtonville experienced its population explosion only in the forties when Boksburg's industrial expansion gathered pace. Until then the location was perceived as a 'model location' boasting amenities such as water-borne sewerage not found in any other location. But the demand for labour boosted the location's population to ten thousand by 1946 and despite the opening of a new section to the location that year, overcrowding rapidly became the norm.[49] Alberton Location was seemingly the only location in the region that managed to escape a similar steep decline in its living conditions. This was a consequence of the lack of industrial

development and consequently a slower rate of growth of its black population in the 1940s, which meant that less pressure was exerted on the limited resources of the location.[50]

Possibly the worst affected areas on the East Rand were Benoni Old Location and the adjacent Asiatic Section. The extent of overcrowding in the old location was evidenced by the presence of about 1900 lodger families living in backyard shacks on the stands of most of the 1 179 houses there. Usually 3 to 4 families occupied yards and often a single 50 x 50 feet plot housed between eight to twelve families. It was not uncommon to find up to twelve people squashed into a single room.[51] The overcrowding in the old location soon spilled over to the neighbouring Asiatic Section as homeless African residents desperately sought any available accommodation, which was mostly readily supplied by landlords in that area. Rack-renting became a relatively lucrative source of income for landlords from the location and the Asiatic section. In 1945 an official report lamented the fact that the desperate lack of accommodation in the 'location proper' caused the Asiatic section to be transformed into a location in its own right.[52] A report by the Native Social Worker described the Asiatic Section as 'the most undesirable place to live in by the law-abiding person, both Native and European ways of living are being violated to extremes.'[53] In 1945 it was estimated that more than 2500 African and 1000 Indian residents were crammed onto the 120 50 x 50 feet stands in the area.[54] By 1950 the African population in the section had doubled to 5003 causing unimaginable overcrowding, including in one case a stand being occupied by 111 people.[55] Such conditions were not confined to the African section of the location. A not entirely dissimilar situation prevailed in Parktown, a small area set aside for coloured residents of Benoni. In 1946 residents complained that in the 25 years of the area's existence the only improvement effected there was the connection of water pipes. Houses in the area were falling apart and were as overcrowded as those in the African section. They accordingly demanded that the Council provide electricity and proper sanitation so that they could enjoy a decent living.[56]

Overcrowding, poverty, the lack of adequate sanitation and proper medical services consigned the locations to being cesspools of disease. In the late 1940s the Medical Officer of Springs regularly complained of the dangers of outbreaks of poverty-related diseases in Payneville. His fears were confirmed in 1950 when there was an outbreak of diphtheria[57] and over 800 tuberculosis cases were reported,[58] which by any account should have constituted an epidemic. The alarmingly high rate of infant mortality was particularly chilling. In 1952/53 the infant mortality rate among Africans and coloureds was 383.77 and 166.66 per thousand live births respectively, compared to only 41.01 for whites.[59] In the mid-1940s Benoni's Medical Officer of Health also warned of the serious danger of epidemics as tuberculosis, pneumonia and intestinal diseases constantly threatened to become uncontrollable. Infant mortality among Africans was as high as in Payneville, with 33% of new-borns not living beyond their first birthdays.[60] In Brakpan where houses lacked bathrooms and even taps in the yards infant diarrhoea and enteric fever was widespread. It was also estimated that more than 75% of the population suffered from malnutrition.[61] The experience of black residents on the East Rand, like their counterparts elsewhere in the country, was thus characterised by poverty, deprivation and disease.

Locales beyond control

One of the principal features of the 1940s and early 1950s was the state's diminishing ability to exercise effective control over the urban black working class, which was becoming increasingly oppositional and combative. Previously the combination of influx control, segregation and a battery of coercive laws proved reasonably successful in maintaining stability and order. But an increasingly large and refractory urban black population gradually punched holes in this structure. The diminution, and often break-down, of state control occurred at multiple levels: influx control was habitually flouted, urban segregation was increasingly transgressed and a host of location regulations aimed at controlling inhabitants were brazenly and regularly violated. Most seriously, perhaps, was the growing political militancy that

engulfed locations in which radical organisations such as the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and later a more militant African National Congress (ANC) played crucial roles. The East Rand's locations featured prominently in the proliferation of these 'subversive' activities especially in the immediate aftermath of the war.

The state's ability to maintain urban centres as domains of white privilege and power depended in large measure on the effectiveness of its influx control policies. Until the late 1930s the state succeeded in keeping a relatively stable balance between the urban black population and local labour requirements. This was in large part due to the preponderance of the mining sector, which relied very heavily on migrant African labour. The influx control system was however thrown into disarray by the burgeoning manufacturing sector. Municipalities increasingly concentrated on meeting the labour requirement of their local industries at the expense of influx control, which was the responsibility of the central government (particularly the Department of Native Affairs). For local authorities the provision of an adequate supply of cheap black labour was crucial to their ability to attract industry to their respective towns. On the East Rand where towns also competed against each other for the status of being the region's pre-eminent industrial centre, influx control virtually collapsed prompting considerable tension between the central government and local authorities. A formal complaint by the Native Commissioner in the late 1940s over the conduct of the Benoni Council reflected a common perception among state officials that local authorities were responsible for the failure of influx control: "Ever since my arrival in Benoni", he lamented to his superiors in the Department of Native Affairs, "I availed myself of every opportunity of warning the Council of the seriousness of the position and that it was deteriorating rapidly as a result of the Industrial expansion of Benoni and the apparent reluctance on the part of the Council to control the influx of natives into the area. After three years in Benoni I can only say that conditions are as bad as ever..."[62] The East Rand more broadly mirrored this trend.

The mass entry of black people into the towns generated fear and anxiety among the authorities and the white population in general.[63] In Springs in 1946 the death of a number of white youth during a gang fight with black youth caused a major panic among white residents, who convened a 'black peril' public meeting to demand that the authorities assert control over the black population.[64] Although the fear over the so-called *swart gevaar* did not reach the same intensity elsewhere in the region, there was nonetheless widespread concern among whites that Africans were swamping the towns. The Nationalist Party successfully manipulated these concerns during the 1948 election campaign.

Pass laws were routinely flouted by those whose movements they aimed to control. African males in search of work regularly circumvented the system. Those entering towns 'illegally' invariably sought refuge in the locations where the likelihood of detection by the state were less than elsewhere. Sometimes they could not secure 'legal' employment and were forced to enter one of the many 'illegal' trades of the township in order to survive. Those who were caught in one of the regular pass raids and who were jailed or deported (to the rural area of their origin), invariably returned to the urban area as soon as it became possible, entering 'illegally' and living on the margins of society to avoid detection. The government's insistence on imposing highly restrictive influx control measures forced many people to employ a variety of evasive strategies to avoid deportation to the impoverished rural areas.

The more general absence of control over the urban black population living in the locations caused even greater consternation. A number of writers have drawn attention to the myriad experiences of the newly urbanised (or urbanising) black population.[65] These contributions have highlighted the multi-faceted nature of urban life and have revealed often in vivid detail the trials and tribulations, the poverty, the struggle for survival and rebellion that characterised the lives of black urban dwellers. A common thread running through these accounts is the extent to which the urban existence of a large number of blacks, especially Africans, was characterised by opposition to attempts by the authorities to assert control over them. Overt political

resistance under the auspices of national or local political organisations and unions punctuated the entire period, but a far more persistent challenge to the authorities came from the range of daily 'illegal' and 'anti-social' activities. The ubiquitous socio-economic deprivation in the locations coupled with the restrictive laws that controlled virtually every aspect of the lives of African urban dwellers produced a culture of opposition as residents sought ways to survive and overcome the oppressive and impoverishing conditions of life.

'Illegal' beer brewing by African women was perhaps the quintessential and most pervasive example of such unplanned 'subversive' and 'anti-social' activities. In every location scores of women daily defied the law in this way and in so doing presented the authorities with one of their most serious and persistent problems of control. Employment options for African women in the formal economy were very limited and the sectors where they were employed, mainly as domestic workers, were notoriously exploitative. Wages for African men were only marginally better which meant the majority of urban African families were constantly engaged in a struggle to survive. Under these conditions many women were forced to engage in alternative activities to supplement their inadequate family incomes. These pressures, together with the high demand for the various concoctions brewed in the backyards of the locations, made domestic brewing a highly popular and relatively lucrative enterprise. Despite continuous harassment by the authorities shebeens sprang up in backyards all over the locations and they became the meccas of social life in the locations. Over weekends location residents, migrants from the compounds and workers living in the white parts of the towns would flock to their favourite shebeen for drinks, music, dancing and sex. Some shebeen queens would sell 'white liquor' to their patrons, another deliberate but also lucrative act of defiance.[66] Little wonder then that the authorities blamed shebeens and beer brewing for being the principal causes of the high incidence of 'anti-social' behaviour in the locations. Shebeen queens and beer-brewers suffered constantly at the hands of authorities who were determined to stamp out 'illegal' brewing. Beer-raids were so common they became part of the life of the townships and all brewers expected discovery and even prosecution at some point.

During these raids the police would often confiscate thousands of gallons of beer, destroy brewing utensils and arrest brewers. But they rarely succeeded in terminating the activity and brewing normally continued unabated until the next raid. Beer brewers also devised various measures to avoid detection, including most commonly digging underground caverns in which to hide their beer and employing youth as look-outs to warn them of raids. The regular confrontations between beer brewers and the authorities contributed to the growth of a culture of resistance in the locations.

Crime also flourished in many locations on the East Rand, which were home to an array of gangs, which primarily consisted of urban youth. These gangs usually adopted colourful names such as the Mau Mau from Stirtonville, Ringo Stars and Mashalashala from Payneville and the DMGs, Vultures and Fast 11s from Dukathole.[67] *Tsotsis* roamed the locations preying on locals and regularly fought with each other. One of the most feared gangs that emerged on the East Rand was the notorious *Ma-Rashea* (Russians) a mainly migrant Basotho gang which fought among themselves and especially against location *tsotsis*. Benoni was one of the main centres where the Russians were to be found in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Formed there in 1947, they often fought bloody pitched battles in the location and Asiatic Section.[68] The existence of these gangs reflected the propensity among location and other youth to be anti-authoritarian and 'anti-social'. The authorities were unable to assert any effective control over these youth and especially failed to draft them into menial, low-paying industrial labour. Although these gangs were mainly apolitical (a source of tension between them and the local political leadership) they represented a significant informal and largely uncontrollable force of opposition.

The 1945 report of Benoni's Native Social Worker vividly depicted the squalor in the location as well as white officialdom's utter despair about the 'social evils' so pervasive in the Asiatic Section:

> Each room is occupied by 3 so-called families together with children of about 10 to 16 years of age; the result of this delinquency. Female children soon take up their own rooms conditionally with any Mine

> labourer who will be in a position to pay rent whilst she is getting established to be independent by means of persuading other young women to share the room with her for easy rent. The rooms at the Indian Section are not all occupied for living, some are used for gambling, stocking of stolen property, liquor and various ways of immorality. Some natives occupying these rooms are the unruly daughters and sons of location residents... Nothing whatsoever is considered about the laws of health.... this place is a disgrace to the Bantu race, what prevails is not accepted by any society.[69]

This kind of near-hysterical perception of the locations was common at all levels of the government. White officialdom's attitude was succinctly and graphically captured in the description of the locations as 'black spots', a pejorative label alluding to their 'racial' make-up, politically 'troublesome' character and the widespread poverty and disease that plagued them. In short the locations were regarded as blemishes on the white and modern urban landscape. Urban 'black spots' had clearly become the antithesis of what the authorities intended them to be. Instead of places where the authorities could exert tight control over the African population, they were sites of defiance, subversion and resistance. Within the locations the backyards or rounds were effectively beyond the control of the authorities. More often they were under the sway of a shebeen queen, gang or a landlord. A particularly salient feature of these spaces in the location was the important role played by women in their socio-economic life, which in turn often placed them in the forefront of resistance against attempts by the authorities to intrude on and control the activities occurring in the backyards.

Segregation undermined

Another crucial area of concern for the authorities was the extent to which the carefully constructed segregation of the towns was being broken down by the mass influx of blacks. Residential segregation was the norm in all towns on the East Rand

(as well as nationally) from the time of their inception. In the 1920s the government intervened (through the passage of the Native (Urban) Areas Act of 1923) to reinforce residential segregation between black and whites, and to tighten municipal control over the black population. The success of these measures always varied between towns and within towns the boundaries of control and segregation also varied over time. The existence of compounds, where the majority of Africans resided until the late thirties, also reinforced segregation. The main emphasis of the authorities during the early years was to ensure segregation between whites and blacks, with much less consideration being given to segregation between black people.[70] For example, in locations such as Payneville and Stirtonville coloureds lived in the same location as Africans. In the former they were housed in a separate section right in the middle of the location in an area known as 'Cape Stands'. But these were not very serious attempts to impose segregation and under the circumstances where there was a serious shortage of houses people lived wherever they could find accommodation. The East Rand was also interesting because of the existence of a relatively high number of the so-called Asiatic Bazaars, which were formally governed by a different set of regulations (the Asiatic Bazaar regulations). These Bazaars were normally located adjacent to the municipal locations and became important trading centres. The relationship between these areas varied across the East Rand. In Springs, a relative stricter segregation was maintained between Bakerton (the Asiatic Bazaar) and Payneville. The opposite occurred in Benoni where the two areas virtually blended into one large location.

The lack of housing development in the locations forced many people to seek accommodation elsewhere. The result was that urban segregation was flouted, first in the broader locations (namely, the municipal locations and adjacent Asiatic Bazaars) but the also in the white sections of the towns. Traditionally, the authorities accepted the occupation of backrooms by domestic workers but tried to keep a tight rein on this form of 'mixed' occupation of properties in white areas. The extreme housing shortage prevailing at the end of the war affected not only the African location but also the coloured area, to such an extent that numerous coloured families began occupying

rooms and shacks in the white areas of Benoni. The council was deeply concerned by this influx of coloured people into white suburbs and even considered invoking the Volksraad Besluit of 1871, a piece of legislation promulgated by the old Transvaal Republic, to prevent coloureds and whites occupying the same place. It decided against this course of action because the removal of these families would have obliged it to provide alternative accommodation. Moreover, when families were removed others desperate for any form of housing immediately took their places.[71]

Peri-urban areas also became important sites of occupation especially for new arrivals who used the farms adjacent to the urban areas as safe haven from where they would regularly attempt to find permanent accommodation in the location. People endorsed out of an urban area would often also relocate to a peri-urban site instead of returning to the rural areas or reserves, waiting for an opportunity to return to the location.

The 1936 census figures for the East Rand give some indications of the dilemmas and problems that were about to unfold before the authorities. The preponderance of the African population still living in the compounds (Benoni – 40 591, Brakpan – 28 594, Boksburg – 22 324) seemed to confirm the success of urban segregation. The place of residence for the majority of non-mining Africans was also in the locations. However, an increasing number of blacks were already living outside these designated segregation zones. In Benoni the number of Africans living outside the location (excluding the hostels) nearly equalled the number officially residing in the location. At the time the location's population stood at 11 375, the number of Africans residing in the town itself amounted to a substantial 6 489 and those living in the rural (peri-urban) areas adjacent to the town numbered nearly four thousand.[72] In the late 1930s the municipality pressured white farmers to evict black families from their properties. In many of these cases the farmers allowed and even encouraged these illegal occupations because of the income they derived from charging rent. In Boksburg, Germiston and Brakpan the non-location African population actually exceeded the official location population.

Thus by the 1940s the authorities exercised less control over where black people resided. Moreover, once a family had occupied a particular place, it was not easy for the authorities simply to remove them. Under the existing legislation the authorities were obliged to provide alternative accommodation to all residents legally employed in a particular municipality. Even where black people were employed in towns other than the place where they lived, it became nearly impossible for an individual municipality to eject them because of the fear that such action would result in retaliatory ejections from neighbouring towns.

As the numbers of the emerging black working class soared and the authorities failed to provide the requisite accommodation, areas outside the designated segregated locations were increasingly occupied by black people. Moreover, these areas were in varying degrees converted into centres of rebellion against the authorities. Although the overall segregation of the towns was not threatened, the carefully crafted racial zoning of the previous decades was routinely being transgressed. This considerably heightened the fear among whites that they were being swamped by an unstoppable wave of African migration. Of even greater concern however was the central role played by this urban black working class in the struggles that engulfed towns all over the country, and especially those in the East Rand.

Radicalisation and struggles in the 1940s

The Second World War not only acted as a major catalyst for the country's industrial development: it also marked the end of a decade of relative political quiescence.[73] War-time conditions favoured black workers who used the opportunity to struggle for higher wages and against the oppressive regimes in the work-places. The establishment in 1941 of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) was symptomatic of the growing confidence of the urban black working class. The struggle for socio-economic improvements in the factories spilled over into the locations. Among the most renowned struggles of the forties were the Alexandra bus

boycotts, the squatter movements in Soweto, the miners strike of 1946 – all of which confirmed the salience of 'bread-and-butter' issues - and the anti-pass campaigns of the early 1940s. The struggles on the East Rand might have been less well-known but were no less significant politically. During the 1940s every location in the region was drawn into one form of resistance or another.

Struggles against control were usually most intense in those locations where conservative local officials attempted to enforce municipal regulations strictly. In the old Alberton location the new superintendent, Van Coller, who was appointed to his position after the war, immediately enforced stricter permit controls. This step caused outrage in a community not known for its political activism. Women were in the forefront of the ensuing struggle that quickly turned violent and resulted in the replacement of Van Coller.[74] However, it was in Brakpan where the 'inflexible' regime of the Manager of Non-European Affairs, Dr Language, caused the greatest outcry. From the mid-1930s the authorities of Brakpan had imposed strict control over the location, including erecting a fence around it. Resistance to these measures arose from the outset, but failed to overturn the authoritarian local regime. In 1944, the hard-line approach that characterised the administration of the new location superintendent, Dr F.J. Language, ignited an already tense situation in the location when a community and Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) leader, David Bopape, was dismissed from his teaching post. The obvious persecution of a key political figure in the location and the leading role played by Language in that decision unleashed a period of unprecedented and intense struggle, including a one day stay-away that involved the entire location population and a highly successful school boycott. Although Language was not replaced, the community underwent a rapid radicalisation and over the next period routinely challenged the oppressive conditions in the location.[75]

As mentioned previously, a prime source of conflict between the authorities and location residents was the former's attempts to stamp out domestic beer brewing. Raids against brewers were almost daily occurrences and were often met by resistance from outraged victims. In the main such opposition was isolated and

confined to individual brewers. On occasion, however, whole communities were mobilised against what they perceived as fundamentally unfair harassment by the authorities. A case in point was the struggle in Payneville in the mid-1940s. In 1937, the Springs municipality established a municipal beer hall in an attempt to monopolise the lucrative beer drinking market in the location.[76] The beerhall instantly became a derided symbol in the location provoking regular calls for its closure. Women bore the brunt of the municipality's actions and it was therefore not surprising that they were in the forefront of the struggles against municipal control. Many of the struggles in Payneville during this time were led by the dynamic communist stalwart, Dinah Maile. Maile had emerged as a prominent figure in the struggles against municipal controls in the late 1930s and was the head of the influential African Protection League, which, according to Bonner, 'became the vehicle for a new kind of organised political consciousness that began to be distilled in the Payneville community.'[77] She was also one of the few female Advisory Board members on the Rand and is remembered by former Payneville residents as the principal political organiser in the location. In 1945 the women of the location, led by Dinah Maile, called for a boycott of the beerhall. On July 8 of that year the CPSA called a public meeting where Maile's defiant speech and support for domestic brewing received 'rapturous' applause.[78] Seemingly oblivious of the growing anti-beerhall mood in the location, an unknown male decided to frequent the beerhall the day after the public meeting. Whether this was a deliberate act of defiance against the boycott or not, it nevertheless set in motion a series of events that culminated in the most violent riot in the location's history. Women were understandably incensed by the man's action and stoned him as he left the beerhall. The police intervened and arrested three women. That night Dinah Maile led five hundred women in a march to the police station to demand the release of their imprisoned comrades. Over the following two weeks the location was a hive of protest activities: demonstrations, marches and meetings took place regularly as the pressure to close the beerhall mounted.[79] On July 22 matters reached a bloody climax. On that day two thousand women demonstrated in front of the beerhall to prevent men from entering. The

typically violent dispersal of the demonstrators by the police immediately sparked a riot that quickly engulfed the whole location.[80] What started out as a relatively peaceful demonstration against the beerhall was thus rapidly transformed into a location-wide uprising against municipal control. The local police were unable to control the situation and reinforcements were rushed from all over the East Rand to quell the uprising. In the ensuing battle between police and residents, which lasted most of the day, four residents were killed, eleven hospitalised and scores were injured, including twenty policemen.[81] The main demand of the protestors for the closure of the beerhall was not acceded to. As a result protests continued throughout the 1940s, albeit on a smaller scale. In 1949 the Residents Protest Committee was formed to campaign against the 'indirect method of taxation' represented by the beerhall[82] but failed to convince the local authority to compromise on the matter. At the same time the authorities were also not able to stop domestic brewing which continued unabated. The rising militancy of the residents, especially women, made it far more difficult for the authorities to impose their restrictions.

The intensifying housing shortage in the locations was another primary source of conflict in the 1940s. Everywhere the demand for proper accommodation became a rallying cry of thousands of residents. Although the Springs Council in 1939 already acknowledged the 'dire necessity of having to provide additional accommodation for natives in the area', little was done in practice to alleviate overcrowding. Notwithstanding constant demands by residents for more houses and the growing concern among industrialists about the possible deleterious effects the absence of accommodation would have on a much needed workforce, the municipality proved impotent throughout the forties to address this key crisis. In March 1950 a protest meeting was held in the location to highlight the desperate housing shortage. It was decided to march to the centre of Springs to demand houses from the authorities. Fifty people left the meeting place to embark on the march. By the time they reached the police station on the outskirts of the town their ranks had swelled to over a thousand, illustrating the political volatility around the question of housing.[83] The

residents of Payneville were clearly no longer willing to tolerate the congestion and squalor in which they were living.

For the Springs municipality, as for local authorities generally and the central government, the housing problem constantly threatened to spiral out of control. As early as the 1930s it was becoming apparent that the housing crisis on the East Rand required urgent attention from the authorities. But their unwillingness or inability to address the mounting crisis in any fundamental way contributed substantially to the extremely volatile situation that prevailed in most locations. An early sign of the impending political struggles around housing shortages occurred in Dukathole, where lodgers organised themselves against the exploitation by stand holders. Raphael Palime organised a Lodgers' Association to lobby the government to peg or reduce rents. The Association also campaigned for the creation of a site on which lodgers could build houses. Palime and his followers succeeded in convincing the authorities to give them preference in the allocation of houses in the new township at Natalspruit.[84] This was no better illustrated than in the events that rocked Benoni in the aftermath of the war.

In the years following the war Benoni experienced a particularly intense crisis over housing. The municipality's half-hearted attempt to address the housing shortage for black residents in 1939/40 combined with its political ineptitude thrust the town into the forefront of the urban crisis engulfing the region. A key consequence of these factors was the eruption of one of the largest and most significant squatter movements on the Witwatersrand at the time. Bonner has provided the most detailed and vivid account of the struggles that consumed Benoni in the forties and which placed the town at the centre of the political storm that swept across the East Rand in the aftermath of the war.[85] Here it is only possible to provide a schematic overview of these events which not only transformed politics in Benoni but also impacted significantly on the government's post-1948 urban restructuring policies.

The Benoni local authority, like its Brakpan counterpart, enjoyed a measure of success in imposing some control in the location during the thirties. 'Illegal' residents and shebeen queens bore the brunt of the disciplinarian actions of the authorities. But,

as Bonner explains, the municipality's success in this regard had the effect of displacing these problems to the Asiatic Section rather than solving them. Harassed residents of the African location (Twatwa) simply moved across the road to live in the rooms and backyards of Indian landlords, where their lives were unfettered by the strict municipal regulations applicable in the location. As a result the African population of the Indian Bazaar more than trebled from 600 to 2139 and the two areas became virtually indistinguishable from each other.[86]

The Asiatic Section very soon also displaced the old location as the most troublesome thorn in the side of the local authority. The authorities were particularly perturbed that the situation in the Asiatic Section would adversely affect their ability to maintain control of the African population in the old location. Thus in 1945 the Council's Native Affairs Committee declared that conditions in the Asiatic Section "have a strong reactionary effect upon the natives resident in the Location proper, which renders the maintenance of law and order, and the proper administration of native laws and regulations a matter of extreme difficulty... Any disciplinary trouble arising in the location proper would be greatly aggravated by the prevalence of undesirable conditions in the Asiatic Area, and in fact there would be a greater tendency for trouble to arise, particularly if it originated in the Asiatic Area."[87] The Manager of Non-European Affairs agreed that 'the Asiatic Section constitutes a menace to the Native Section and to law-abiding native in general' and argued the problem would persist until the Asiatic Section 'is finally liquidated.'[88]

Towards the end of the 1940s the Council attempted to address the housing crisis by beginning the construction of a 123 sub-economic housing scheme in an area later to be known as Wattville. This was a paltry number considering the huge overcrowding in the town and confirmed the inability of the municipality to resolve the housing crisis. Having failed to provide enough houses, the council then proceeded to compound its own problems by bungling the allocation of these houses. The council had previously made a deal with Indian landowners that the new houses would be allocated to lodgers from the Asiatic Section in an attempt to alleviate the congestion and social problems in the area. However, this was unacceptable for the

thousands of lodgers from the old location, many of whom had their names on the council's housing waiting list for up to a decade.[89] The council's folly detonated a train of events that culminated in the 'illegal' occupation of these houses by lodgers and the largest squatter land occupation movement on the East Rand. In all of these developments the council stumbled from one blunder to the next, exposing its ineptitude, and was repeatedly outmanoeuvred by politically more skilful and wily location leaders.

Foremost among these was Harry Mabuya, an entrepreneur (he was an undertaker and restaurant owner), Advisory Board member and squatter leader – the East Rand's own James Mpanza. The council's official history described him as 'essentially an opportunist', but grudgingly also admired his achievements and acknowledged he was the 'uncrowned king of the location' in the late 1940s.[90] In 1945 Mabuya set up the African Housing and Rates Board to deal with the housing crisis in the location. He quickly won wide support especially among women and later that year he led his followers (lodgers from the Asiatic Section and location) to establish a squatter camp. By the end of 1945 more than one hundred families had settled in Mabuya's Tent Town. The council attempted to undermine the squatter camp by establishing its own 'legal' Tent Town but could manage to attract only a few families. In contrast the 'illegal' Tent Town rapidly mushroomed and by the end of 1948 was 4000 strong (in 820 tents) compared to a mere fifty-seven in the legal Tent Town.[91] Even more troubling to the authorities was the complete absence of any control by them in the 'illegal' camp. Mabuya had in fact established his own system of local governance in Tent Town, which included rent collection, keeping the camp clean and controlling its political life. According to Bonner, Tent Town therefore represented a rival source of authority and administration.[92] Such an open challenge to the authority of the local state presented the authorities with a serious dilemma. Yet, the forcible removal of the thousands of squatters could not seriously be considered because most of them were employed in the local industries and legislation required the authorities to provide alternative accommodation in the event

of such a removal. The existence of the camp between 1945 and 1948 effectively narrowed the scope of the municipality's control over the black population.

In May 1948 the council seemed finally to regain the initiative when it established the new Wattville Emergency Camp, to which the squatters from both Tent Towns were removed. Mabuya's more co-operative relations with the council (he became a nominated member of the Advisory Board from 1950) seemed to confirm this. However, it was abundantly clear that the underlying problems of homelessness and overcrowding had not been overcome. The number of lodgers in both the location and the Asiatic Section had continued to register steep increases. More than 5000 people were crammed into the Asiatic Section.[93] Once again this situation caused alarm among the authorities. In September 1949 the Chief Inspector of the South African Police wrote to the council to complain about the 'very unsatisfactory state of affairs in the Asiatic Bazaar'. He warned the council that 'the place has become a breeding place of crime and violence, which may one day lead to racial clashes with serious consequences.'[94] In June 1950, J.E. Mathewson, the manager of Native Affairs reported to the council that 4 400 African families required houses.[95] Clearly the conditions that gave rise to the squatter movement in 1945 remained, and in many respects had become worse. It was only a matter of time before a new crisis hit the town.

The Council was not unaware of the gravity of the situation unfolding in the town and began considering plans to provide some accommodation for the town's African population. However, its immediate proposal to alleviate the rapidly increasing number of homeless Africans was merely to create another Emergency Camp. This proved to be hopeless dithering in the face of a serious crisis and soon the council was again overtaken by events. On 23 June 1950 a few African families established a squatter camp at Apex. As was the case five years before the council was paralysed by the tactics of local leaders, who were determined to force the authorities to provide housing for the black residents of the town. Confronted by the inaction of a supine local authority, homeless families flocked to the Apex squatter camp in very similar fashion to the way in which their predecessors established Tent

Town. At the end of July 632 shacks had been erected, accommodating over 5000 souls. By the time Daveyton was established the population of Apex squatter camp stood at a massive 23 225.[96]

A survey conducted at the Apex camp found that 50% of the squatters had come from peri-urban areas around Benoni, 25% were from the town's white areas and 22% came from the old location and Asiatic Section.[97]What these figures reveal is the extent to which the town's problem of overcrowding had spread to the peri-urban areas. Despite continued attempts by the authorities to evict black people from these small white-owned farms, the practice became more common in the late 1940s as the housing situation deteriorated even further in the location. At the beginning of 1949 the Council attempted to evict the approximately 150 families squatting on various plots in Brentwood Park.[98] By the end of that year complaints of squatting were flooding in from other peri-urban sites, including Varkfontein, Ysterfontein, Putfontein and Zesfontein.[99] In 1949 the council received numerous reports confirming the extent of the squatting problem in the peri-urban area. The Local Native Commissioner expressed his disquiet about the situation to the council in September 1949:

> I am concerned about the increased number of complaints received by me in regard to illegal squatting in the Municipal Areas and on surrounding plots and small farms... In every case which I have so far investigated the majority of squatters claim to be employed in the Municipal area but are unable to secure accommodation in your Location owing to the shortage of houses.[100]

In one case a farmer, Mr. C.J. du Plessis had permitted sixty families to squat on his farm. The council threatened to prosecute the offending farmer but realised such a step would require the provision of alternative accommodation in the urban area, which was not available.[101] Thus by 1950 the Benoni council was besieged on all fronts by the consequences of its failure to provide houses to the town's black

population. The political turmoil that centred around the struggle for socio-economic improvements was most concentrated in this town, which also made it a prominent centre of political mobilisation in the subsequent period.

Popular struggles in the 1940s were characterised mainly by their focus on local 'bread-and-butter' issues and against municipal control.[102] The localised character of these struggles was perhaps most graphically illustrated on the East Rand, with its various towns in such close proximity, but where there seemed to be neither any planned nor spontaneous moves to co-ordinate the struggles. Moreover, these struggles were mostly contemporaneous and the issues at the heart of them were remarkably similar. Nonetheless, these popular struggles had the general effect of producing considerably more radical political movements and leaders in the locations.

The CPSA had a headstart over the ANC in its involvement and influence in the popular struggles at the time because of its earlier role in the unionisation of black workers. The Party also actively recruited African workers into its ranks during this time. It therefore emerged as the most prominent and influential national political organisation in the region, with a number of key local political figures either being members or supporters. Dinah Maile of Payneville was a prominent CPSA member. David Bopape of Brakpan was the most notable communist leader in the region. It is unclear whether the CP's membership grew significantly in the locations, but it certainly enjoyed extensive influence among leading figures in the region. It held public meetings, organised marches and regularly sent petitions to the authorities. There is evidence that in Benoni's old location the CPSA held regular public meetings on Sundays in the mid-1940s. On at least one occasion it organised a public meeting (attended by about 1000 residents) to press the council to introduce a sub-economic housing scheme.[103] After that the Party's influence and activity seemed to have diminished rather rapidly.[104] A number of CPSA-aligned lawyers continued to assist various community and political organisations.

The ANC's involvement in the struggles of the 1940s was very limited. In Benoni it briefly featured in the struggle for housing and supported the occupation of the new houses by lodgers. However, the lodgers and squatters, who were in the

forefront of the struggles during this period, were not the traditional base of the ANC. Its main support lay with the established residents of the old location, who did not fully endorse the action taken by squatters. As a result the ANC's foray into squatter movement, the most significant political movement in Benoni in the mid-forties proved to be short-lived.[105] Although the ANC's involvement in these struggles was uneven, these initiatives did have a radicalising effect on the organisation, which in turn helped nurture a more militant leadership. From the early fifties the ANC displaced the CPSA as the most influential organisation on the East Rand (partly due to the banning of CPSA in 1950). The importance of the region was underlined by the ANC's decision to launch the Defiance Campaign of 1952 in Stirtonville. From that time the ANC won considerable support in the East Rand, especially among the residents of the old locations.

The pressure of the struggle from below and the radical politics of the CP affected other location organisations. In particular, the Advisory Boards became important targets of intervention by radical political leaders. Under the pressure of local struggles the Advisory Boards were shaken out of their political slumber and acquiescence, and often transformed into important sites of struggle between the new radical activists and the old conservative political elite. In the 1940s and 1950s radicals managed to gain control over some of the Advisory Boards using them as effective weapons of mobilisation against the authorities. In Payneville Dinah Maile and Absolom Khumalo dominated the Advisory Board for a few years. In Stirtonville the more radical leadership of Nebojah Mokgako, Benjamin Mvabasa and Peter Motloung controlled the Advisory Board in the mid-forties and adopted a more confrontational approach to the local authority. Marches and boycotts were organised to oppose liquor raids and demands better services and Mokgako effectively controlled the township at the expense of the local authority.[106] Similar struggles occurred over the control of the Katlehong Advisory Board.

The Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) also re-emerged as a prominent opponent of the government and ally of the ANC. In January 1946 the TIC organised a public meeting in Benoni's Asiatic Section to protest against the Council's plans to

compel Indian residents to sign monthly tenancy forms.[107] It was from the early 1950s though that the organisation made a real impact on the political scene with vocal and effective opposition against apartheid laws, especially the Group Areas Act. On the East Rand the TIC gained significant support in the Benoni's Asiatic Bazaar and in Bakerton (Springs).

By the early 1950s the East Rand had emerged very prominently on the country's socio-economic and political landscapes. The industrialisation of the region placed it in the forefront of the country's economic development. At the same time the region was also a crucial arena where the consequences of the rapid economic expansion unfolded. The struggles waged by the emerging black working class highlighted the extent to which local authorities had neglected the well-being of black urbanites. The political ineptitude of the authorities in the 1940s further aggravated the crisis and by the time the NP assumed power in 1948 there was a clamour from various quarters for state intervention to restore control and order in the urban areas. The state's response to the urban crisis is the subject of the next chapter.

ENDNOTES

[1] The most important studies in this regard are P. Bonner, ' "We Are Digging, We are Seizing Huge Chunks of the Municipalities Land (Siyawugubha, Siyawughuba Umhlaba Ka Maspala)" Popular Struggles in Benoni, 1944-1952', Unpublished Paper presented at the African Studies Seminar Series, University of the Witwatersrand, October 1985 and 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 1988; P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus – A History*, Maskew Miller Longman, Johannesburg, 2000; H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation and Struggles Against Municipal Control in Brakpan, 1920-1958', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988, J. Cockhead, 'The East Rand: A Geographical Analysis of the Transition of the Economic Base of the Region from Gold Mining to Manufacturing and its effects upon future Economic and Spatial Development', M.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1970; D. Gilfoyle, 'An Urban Crisis: The Town Council, Industry and the Black Working Class in Springs', Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1983 and N. Nieftagodien, 'The Making of Apartheid in Springs: Group Areas, Forced Removals and Struggles', M.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1995

[2] The main exception to this remains J. Cockhead's 1970 dissertation on the economic transformation of the East Rand.

[3] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni, Son of my Sorrow*, Town Council of Benoni, 1968, p.259

[4] For a summary of Brakpan's and Spring's early economic development see H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation" and D. Gilfoyle, 'An Urban Crisis', p.5. For an overview of the mining industry in the PWV see Natural Resource Development Council (N.R.D.C.), 'A Planning Survey of the Southern Transvaal', Pretoria, 1957

[5] P.J. Cockhead, 'The East Rand', p.19

[6] Government Publications, University of the Witwatersrand, National Resource Development Council, 'A Planning Survey of the Southern Transvaal', 1957, p.9

[7] H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation', p.5 and D. Gilfoyle, 'Urban Crisis', p.5

[8] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas *Benoni*, p.266

[9] N. Nattrass, 'Economic Aspects of the Construction of Apartheid', in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds) *Apartheid's Genesis*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1993, p.43

[10] Ibid

[11] T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1983, p.11

[12] N.R.D.C, 'A Planning Survey', 1957, p.17

[13] Ibid, pp.18 & 20

[14] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus,* pp.3-5

[15] D. Humphriss and D.G Thomas, *Benoni*, p.282

[16] Ibid and P. Bonner, ' "We Are Digging', p.2

[17] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.282-3

[18] N.R.D.C. 'A Planning Survey', 1957, p.20

[19] Germiston accounted for half of the 82 954 industrial employees on the East Rand at the end of the 1940s, which confirmed its position as the second most important industrial town after Johannesburg on the Witwatersrand. Its proximity to Johannesburg and its position as an important railway link between the Witwatersrand and the rest of the country especially augmented its status as an industrial centre.

[20] P.J. Cockhead, 'The East Rand' and P. Bonner, ' We Are Digging'

[21] N.D.R.C. 'A Planning Survey', 1957, p.20. Brakpan was an exception because of the limited industrial development that had occurred there. Even the creation of a new industrial township, Vulcania, in 1938 had little impact on the town's economic fortunes. See especially H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation', p.169

[22] Social and Economic Planning Council, Report No.3, 'The Economic and Social Conditions of the Racial Groups in South Africa', 08.05.48, p.20

[23] B. Hirson, *Yours for the Union: Class and Community Struggles in South Africa, 1930-1947*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1989, p.2

[24] R. Fine and D. Davis, *Beyond Apartheid*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1991, pp. 14 & 156

[25] The process of African urbanisation, as Bonner has pointed out in various articles, was also considerably more complex, which had an important bearing on the

character of urban black politics. See especially P. Bonner, 'African Urbanisation on the Rand Between the 1930s and 1960s: Its Social Character and Political Consequences', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 1993

[26] GP, Union Statistics for Fifty Years, p. A-33

[27] Ibid

[28] Government Publications (GP), University of the Witwatersrand, South African Population Census, 1951

[29] N.R.D.C., 'A Planning Survey', p.18

[30] Ibid

[31] GP, South African Population Census, 1951, A-30 to A-33

[32] N.R.D.C., 'A Planning Survey', p.16

[33] Ibid, p.26

[34] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.2

[35] Central Archives Depot (CAD), Municipality of Springs Records (MSP) 1/3/5/1/25, Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee, 'Preliminary report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year ended 30th June, 1952'

[36] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.2

[37] N. Nieftagodien, 'The Making of Apartheid in Springs: Group Areas, Forced Removals and Resistance', M.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1995, p.118

[38] Benoni, Boksburg, Germiston and Springs established locations before the passage in 1923 of the Urban Areas Act, whereas locations were formally proclaimed only afterwards in Alberton and Brakpan.

39. Gilfoyle, D: 'An Urban Crisis', p.21

40. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/39, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee* of 4/7/57. This appears to be a revised figure. In 1952 the medical officer reported that the total population for Payneville was 18 243. However, the records do not indicate the reasons for this massive discrepancy. The figure of 33 000 is probably more accurate

because in 1954 the figure stood at 24 000, after the removal of a few thousand people to KwaThema.

41. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/28, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee*, Preliminary report of the medical officer of health for the year ended 30th June, 1952

42. Gilfoyle, D: 'An Urban Crisis', p.21

43. Ibid

44. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/25, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee*, Annual report of the manager of Non-European Affairs, July 1950

45. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/31, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee*, Report of the Town Clerk

46. Interview with *Banzi Bangani*, 01.07.95, KwaThema

[47] H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation', p.171

[48] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus,* pp.5-8

[49] Ibid, pp.8-9

[50] Ibid

[51] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.6

[52] CAD, Municipality of Benoni (MB)1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.2.45, 'History: Asiatic Section'

[53] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.2.45, 'Report from the Native Social Worker on conditions in the Asiatic Section'

[54] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.2.45, Minutes of Special Native Affairs Committee Meeting, 29.5.45

[55] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.3

[56] CAD, MB 1/4/10, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 14.2.46, 'Petition: From Residents of Parktown (Cape Coloureds) Improvements to Township, etc'

57. *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 2 March 1950

58. *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 27 December 1950

59. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/31, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee*, Preliminary report of the medical officer of health for the year ended 30th June, 1953

[60] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.3

[61] H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation', pp.174-8

[62] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 11.11.49, Local Native Commissioner to Department of Native Affairs, 28.9.49

[63] P. Bonner, 'African Urbanisation', p.1

[64] Statement by the Springs Chamber of Commerce, quoted in D. Gilfoyle, 'An Urban Crisis', p.42

[65] Among the most important work in this regard are P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness' and 'African Urbanisation on the Rand Between the 1930s and 1960s: Its Social Character and Political Consequences', 1993, H. Sapire, 'Municipal Control'

[66] Until the early the sale of hard liquor such as brandy and whisky to Africans was illegal.

[67] See especially P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness'. Also P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*

[68] P. Bonner, 'African Urbanisation', pp. 27-29

[69] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.2.45, Extract from report of Native Social Worker

[70] This was at least in some respects due to the ambiguities in the existing 'racial' classification used by the government. Although coloureds were regarded by the authorities as a separate 'race' the criteria used to distinguishing them from Africans were not always clearly defined.

[71] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 11.1.45

[72] GP, 1936 Census Report, Distribution of the Native Population in various areas, pp. 100-101

[73] The number of strikes involving black workers increased throughout the war and culminated in the 1946 miners strike that was organised by the African Miner Workers Union under the leadership of prominent Communist Party members. For a

discussion on workers' struggles during this period see especially P. Alexander, *Workers, War and the Origins of Apartheid: Labour and Politics in South Africa, 1939-1948*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2000 and B. Hirson, *Yours For The Union*

[74] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, pp.42-3

[75] For a detailed discussion of the struggles in the Brakpan location in the early 1940s see H. Sapire, 'African Urbanisation', Chapter Three

[76] The healthy surpluses generated from 'kaffir beer' sales in the late forties and early fifties (£42 026, £38 143 and £55 387 in 1948/49, 1949/50 and 1950/51 respectively) confirm this as an important source of income for the municipality but, conversely, as a substantial loss of income for domestic brewers.

[77] P. Bonner, 'Backs To The Fence: Law, Liquor, and the Search For Social Control in an East Rand Town, 1929-1942' in J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds) *Liquor and Labour in Southern Africa*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1992, p.297

[78] CAD, Department of Native Affairs Files (NTS) 7676, 110/322, Report of the Springs Police District Commandant, 1945

[79] CAD, NTS 7676, 110/322, Report of the Springs Police District Commandant, 1945

[80] CAD, NTS 7676, 110/322, Report of the Non-European Affairs Manager on the Disturbances in Payneville, 22.07.45

[81] CAD, NTS 7676, 110/322, *Rand Daily Mail*, 23.07.45

[82] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/28, Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 'Protest against the proposal to use profits from the sale of Kaffir beer for housing funds', 1949

[83] *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 31.03.50

[84] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, pp.28-29

[85] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging'

[86] Ibid, p.5

[87] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 23.1.45

[88] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.2.45, 'History: Asiatic Section'

[89] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p.5

[90] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.113

[91] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging' p.16

[92] Ibid, p.15

[93] Ibid, p.17

[94] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 7.10.49, Chief Inspector, South African Police, to Benoni Town Clerk, 27.9.49

[95] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.121

[96] Ibid, p.121 & 124

[97] Ibid

[98] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 11.3.49

[99] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 11.11.49

[100] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 7.10.49, Local Native Commissioner to Benoni Town Clerk, 14.9.49

[101] CAD, MB 1/4/13, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 11.11.49

[102] The popular struggles by the black working class on the Witwatersrand during the 1940 have been the subject of numerous publications. See for example P. Alexander, *Workers, War*, P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging' and 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', B. Hirson, *Yours For The Union*, H. Sapire, 'Municipal Control' and A. W. Stadler, 'A Long Walk to Freedom: Bus Boycotts in Alexandra, 1940-1945' in P. Bonner (ed) *Working Papers in Southern African Studies: Volume 2*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981 and 'Birds in the Cornfield: Squatter Movements in Johannesburg, 1944-47' in B. Bozzoli (ed), *Labour, Townships and Protest: Studies in the Social History of the Witwatersrand*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1979

[103] CAD, MB 1/4/10, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 9.4.46

[104] P. Bonner, 'We Are Digging', p,14

[105] Ibid, pp.12-14

[106] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, pp.36-37

[107] CAD, MB 1/4/10, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 14.2.46, Transvaal Indian Congress to Benoni Town Council, 10.1.46

CHAPTER TWO

State response to the urban crisis: the origins of 'modernist apartheid'

The intensity of the crisis in the 1940s brought into sharp relief what was perhaps the major dilemma facing South Africa's ruling class and state: how to deal with the economy's increasing dependence on African workers. Secondary industry required a stable and more skilled workforce, which meant the acceptance of a much larger permanently urbanised African population, as opposed to the previous reliance on a mainly migrant African labour force. But this shift brought with it numerous problems for the state. Massive (and virtually uncontrolled) urbanisation, widespread popular struggles for social improvements and growing demands for political rights by the black majority posed serious threats to the status quo.[1] The state was thus forced to grapple with the vexed issue of how to modernise the economy (and itself) while simultaneously protecting white privilege and, more broadly, capitalism.

The state's responses to this multi-faceted dilemma from the mid-1940s and especially in the early 1950s are the principal concerns of this chapter. It focuses on the ways in which the state reconfigured the urban centres, especially on the East Rand, as a means of attaining its main objectives. In the 1940s the state's response was habitually tentative and devoid of a clearly defined vision, with the result that it enjoyed only limited success in countering the mounting urban crisis. By the early 1960s, however, the situation had been almost completely reversed as the state imposed an extremely authoritarian control over the black population. It is widely acknowledged that the brutal suppression of the black opposition movement in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre fundamentally shifted the balance of political forces in favour of the state. Under the severely repressive conditions of the 1960s the state was able to implement its social engineering schemes virtually

unchallenged. However, even before this crucial turning point had been reached the state had already begun implementing important aspects of its policies, especially in relation to urban restructuring. Notwithstanding its manifest shortcomings, the United Party (U.P.) laid the foundation for these schemes in the 1940s. But it was the ideologically driven Nationalist Party (N.P.) which systematised state policies in the early 1950s and which from the mid-1950s began to put them into practice, albeit with varying degrees of success.

The N.P.'s historic electoral victory in 1948 introduced a number of far-reaching alterations in the state's overall strategy and *modus operandi*. The political differences between the U.P. and the N.P. have been the subject of debate among historians and politicians for a long time.[2] Certainly these parties offered differing proposals particularly in respect of the critical question of the role of African workers in the economy and the implications of that, namely, their residential and political statuses in the 'white' urban areas. Yet, as the debate has revealed, the policies of these parties were also remarkably similar in important respects. The continuities in the state's response to the urban crisis before and after 1948 were especially noticeable, as has been argued recently by scholars from a variety of disciplines.[3]

The U.P. and N.P. shared a similar analysis of the causes of the urban crisis and drew on the same local and international policy precedents to formulate responses to it. Most important, both parties were keenly interested in suppressing black opposition and securing white privilege and power. In contrast to the traditional liberal argument that deemed apartheid as essentially backward, anti-modern and inimical to capitalist development, it is argued here that apartheid, although steeped in racism, was fundamentally also concerned with managing the contradictions thrown up by a modernising (capitalist) economy and safeguarding its development.

The NP's emphasis on 'proper planning' of urban areas drew extensively on the modernist discourse current in Europe and the United States, where governments were pre-occupied by the formulation and implementation of effective post-war reconstruction policies. The interweaving of these 'modernist' notions with the

state's commitment to segregation and racial oppression produced what Mabin has termed 'modernist apartheid'.[4] A key feature in this process of policy formulation was the increasingly interventionist role played by the central state in directing urban development and management. This important change was reflected in, among other things, the shift from 'ad hoc' to 'proper planning' as well as the deliberate efforts by the N.P. government in particular to diminish the pivotal role played by local authorities in matters dealing with the urban black population. In pursuance of these objectives the government promulgated numerous pieces of legislation to enable and facilitate urban restructuring[5] and appointed a number of commission comprising hand-picked experts to translate these laws into practice. Posel has shown that this did not happen instantly and the N.P. did not assume power with a blue-print of apartheid.[6] However, she agrees that more planning did ensue.[7] This chapter shows how the government was able to implement these plans from the mid-1950s, eliminating the integrated locations and imposing modern African townships and regional 'racial' group areas. This did not occur without struggles between different factions in the state, between the central government and some local authorities and, most importantly, between the state and the black population.[8] All of this will be explored in the context of the East Rand.

Early state intervention: *Ad hoc* urban planning

State intervention to direct and control urban development has featured centrally in the history of South Africa's towns and cities. The levels and intensity of these interventions in the pre-1994 period may have varied considerably, but the objectives of segregation and control were always primary. In particular control over the urban black working class was the central thread running through the various incarnations of the state's urban policies. From the end of the 19th century when the modern (capitalist) town's had their genesis, the government's urban policies were directed primarily to effecting 'racial' segregation.[9] Both the colonial governments and the Boer Republics introduced legislation to determine the course of private and municipal developments. Towns such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, where there

already existed sizeable black populations, were subjected early on to segregationist measures. Separate locations were set aside for black people, thereby creating the (racist) template on which future urban segregation would be elaborated.[10] In those early days the mine compounds were the primary means by which segregation between whites and blacks were effected.[11] Mining compounds continued to be the main form of accommodation for African residents on the East Rand until the 1940s. Another frequently overlooked component of urban segregation that had its roots in the 19th century was the creation of 'Asiatic Bazaars'.[12] The Transvaal government set aside small portions of land, normally in close proximity to the black location or compounds, for the minority Indian population who were allowed to engage in small scale businesses in these areas. In terms of Law 3 of 1885, Indian occupation was restricted to certain streets 'for the purposes of sanitation'. The Precious and Base Metal Act of 1908 similarly circumscribed Indian trading. The Lange Commission of 1919 endorsed these pieces of legislation and called for a 'system of voluntary segregation', which would allow 'local authorities to lay out residential, as well as trading, areas for Asiatics'.[13] The 'Asiatic Bazaars', of which the East Rand probably had the largest concentration, were governed by special 'Asiatic Bazaar' regulations. Initially, the small coloured population of the Witwatersrand were governed by the same legislation as urban Africans and were often placed in the same locations, albeit in specially demarcated zones.

The formation of Union in 1910 opened a new chapter in the relationship between white rulers and the subjugated black population. The key piece of legislation passed by the new Union government was the infamous Land Act of 1913, which codified on a national scale the dispossession of the African population. In terms of the Act, African people who comprised 80% of the population could not acquire or own land outside the reserves. The same law by implication determined that urban areas would be reserved for white ownership and occupation. The Land Act did not, however, specifically prevent blacks from enjoying various forms of tenure, including freehold and leasehold, in the urban areas. The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 however explicitly denied Africans the right to hold individual title (freehold) in the 'native villages' or locations,[14] but a further loophole existed in

the legislation. It did not stop Africans from buying property in 'white' areas *outside* the locations. This loophole was only closed by the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1937.[15] As a result Africans in some locations were able to acquire freehold title, a matter that remained a source of serious contention over the following decades. The possibility of Africans owning land or property in the urban areas was an extremely sensitive issue to white policy-makers because it directly affected the general status of Africans in urban areas. According to Parnell, 'No other issue demonstrated so vividly African urban impermanence than their inability to claim fixity of land holding'.[16]

Until the end of World War One urban growth proceeded unevenly and haphazardly. Under the impact of a wave of militant struggles by black workers and in the context of the devastating impact of the 1918 influenza epidemic the state was spurred into more decisive action. Some town planners attempted to import the notion of the 'garden city', which advocated greater public direction over the mainly uncontrolled private development that characterised urban life in the early part of the century.[17] A key concern from the outset for urban planners and government officials was the uncontrolled, and therefore potentially politically volatile, growth of towns. Over the next few decades government interventions would be directed at overcoming this persistent problem.

In 1919 the government established a Housing Committee, whose primary function was to investigate the question of state financial assistance for local authorities to undertake public housing programmes. Its recommendations led to the passage of the 1920 Housing Act, which created a Central Housing Board, tasked with the responsibility of disbursing housing funds to municipalities on behalf of the government.[18] Its major concern was to provide segregated housing for poor whites. Although mechanisms were set in place to provide housing to black people the questions of where such accommodation would be located and who would qualify for them still had to be resolved.

The principal law governing the status of African people in the urban areas was the Native (Urban) Areas Act of 1923. The Act was a hybrid piece of legislation. In many respects it espoused the principles enunciated by the Stallard

Commission of 1922, which had infamously declared that Africans "should only be allowed into the urban areas, which are essentially the white man's creation, when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister."[19] However, the Act also recognised the presence of a more permanent urban African population when it empowered local authorities to set aside land for black occupation. Parnell has argued that an objective of this piece of legislation was 'to create a reliable, manageable supply of semi-skilled labour through the social differentiation of the African urban population'. A corollary of this aim was to improve the living conditions of urban dwellers.[20] From the early 1930s local authorities on the Witwatersrand began discussing the viability of introducing regional planning as a means to address the urban woes of the country. In 1932 a conference of Witwatersrand municipalities agreed that regional planning would be advantageous and in 1934 the province even appointed a 'regional planner'.[21] But little was done in practice to pursue these initiatives.

In 1934 the Slums Act was promulgated specifically to empower local authorities to destroy areas (or properties) deemed unsafe or unhealthy (in other words a slum). This piece of legislation was used primarily to benefit poor whites.[22] However, Africans, especially those living outside Johannesburg rarely benefited from the ameliorative intentions of this piece of legislation. Local authorities were the main culprits in this neglect of the living conditions of Africans. Many of them also resisted implementing the 'welfarist components' of the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923,[23] mainly because of the additional costs that they would have to incur in the provision of alternative accommodation to people who were evicted from declared slums. As a result, the locations on the East Rand experienced a flourishing of shack letting. One of the main problems that confronted the authorities throughout this time was their slackening control over the influx of Africans from the rural areas. The migration of women especially registered significant increases at the time. Various pieces of legislation, such as the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1937, were introduced to curb this influx and to empower local authorities to prosecute and remove 'idle and disorderly' persons.[24] These laws, however, failed to meet their main objectives.

Thus local authorities proved to be woefully unprepared, politically and materially, to deal with the myriad problems unleashed on them from the late 1930s. In fact, the impotence of many local authorities both to anticipate and halt the crisis of the 1940s was regularly cited by the government as a key contributor to the intensification of the volatile situation that prevailed in urban areas after the war.

Modernism in vogue

From the late 1930s the Smuts government regularly raised its concerns over the apparent 'irregular' urbanisation, especially of Indians and coloureds. The Thornton Report of 1940 expressed its dismay at the "occupation of land and buildings irrespective of race with the result that Europeans were found to be occupying premises and living cheek by jowl with non-Europeans".[25] However, the government's focus on the war effort precluded immediate and decisive intervention to address these concerns. Towards the end of the war the government's efforts turned towards post-war reconstruction paralleling developments occurring in Britain and other war-time belligerents. In 1942 the Smuts government convened the Social and Economic Planning Council (SEPC) whose primary objectives were to prepare for post-war reconstruction and to promote the country's rapid industrialisation. The significance of this body had less to do with its immediate impact on legislation than what it indicated about the changed direction of government thinking. The SEPC was an inter-departmental, non-statutory body and was given a broad mandate by the government to advise it on social and economic policy matters in order to promote "the balanced development of the resources of the Union and its external and internal trade as well as the prosperity and well-being of its population as a whole."[26] It consisted of 13 part-time members under the chairmanship of a prominent moderniser, Dr. H. J. van Eck, the Managing Director and Vice-Chairman of the Industrial Development Corporation.

During the ten years of its existence the SEPC produced a number of reports on issues ranging from public works programmes to urban planning and even the compilation of statistics.[27] Perhaps the most prominent theme emerging from the

reports of the SEPC was its advocacy of an interventionist role for the state. This was succinctly captured in its third report where it argued that

> the modern state can no longer content itself with the exercise of the traditional functions of maintaining law and order and of restraining anti-social acts... As the highest collective organ, the State is, therefore, held accountable for bridging the gap between the potential capacity to produce and the minimum standards of consumption which will ensure freedom from want... In the general interest, the State is in growing measure impelled to assist, to guide, to regulate and to initiate.[28]

The SEPC's proposals for post-war reconstruction echoed international trends, which inclined towards the adoption of Keynesian ideas, which were characterised by social democratic and welfarist policies. A central theme of Keynesian policies was that the running of the modern (capitalist) economy could not be left solely in the hands of the capitalist class. The Council's calls for local public works programmes to generate employment, economic development and to rebuild society reflected an endorsement of the principle of state intervention to ensure social development.[29] The SEPC insisted that "while it is widely accepted that the special advantages of the private enterprise system should be preserved, it is also accepted more and more widely that it is necessary and proper for the State to control it as to make sure that important social objects will be attained."[30] These objectives, which it went on to enumerate, included minimum standards of life, full employment, 'that man be not allowed to exploit man' and 'that equality of opportunity and greater equality of income and wealth are prime essentials of true democracy'[31] – all of which were core components of the 'modernist discourse'.[32] Surprisingly, these egalitarian views were initially articulated with little reference to the systemic racial oppression in South Africa and there was an implicit suggestion that reconstruction and state welfare should benefit the whole population. However, the South African realities soon silenced these hints of equality from the reconstructionist agenda. In its place emerged a conception of urban restructuring

that was steeped equally in the international modernist discourse and the highly racialised and discriminatory practices that dominated local policies.

The SEPC was probably the first official body explicitly to articulate a well-defined programme of modernisation. Locally the wide acceptance of these ideas was rooted in the conditions created by industrialisation and urbanisation, which demanded a set of policies very different from those employed by a mining-dominated economy. There were, for example, growing calls for proper co-ordination and planning of land use to assist the development of a 'modern industrial economy'. An important corollary of these 'modernist' notions was a renewed emphasis on regional planning, which the SEPC viewed as a central plank of state intervention. It asserted that "Physical planning will be essential if in future the State is to promote the orderly development of the nation's resources and to strive towards a sound distribution of population. This will have to occur on a regional basis. Purely local planning will be too narrow."[33]

The Council's third report recommended the creation of a Department of Physical Planning and Regional Development. Its fifth report reiterated the call insisting "It is only by such wider approach that the distribution of economic activity and population can be soundly influenced."[34] The Housing Act of 1944, which allowed for the formation of a regional planning commission, suggested some sympathy with the SEPC's approach but otherwise its proposals were unsympathetically received by politicians and policy-makers who appeared pre-occupied by more pressing concerns.[35] The government nevertheless remained under pressure to deal with urban problems. In 1947 the National Resources Development Council was established to co-ordinate the regional planning of townships in the Orange Free State goldfields. However, similar planning by the Council was not undertaken anywhere else in the country. In Natal and the Cape, Councils independently moved towards more regional planning.[36] Although regional planning was gaining acceptance among urban planners and local authorities, there was very little co-ordination of efforts to implement such plans on a national basis.

Ultimately a desperate housing situation impelled the authorities in the direction of co-ordinated and central planning. In 1944 the Housing Act was

amended to allow for the establishment of the National Housing and Planning Commission in place of the Central Housing Board. In addition a National Housing Council, consisting of Provincial executives and municipal associations, was set up to advise the Minister.[37] Despite this, the number of African families living without accommodation outside locations more than doubled between 1936 and 1951, from 86 000 to 176 000. In 1947 it was estimated that more than 150 000 family houses and 106 877 units for single male workers were required in the urban areas.[38] The inability of the authorities to address the housing shortage exposed the utter inadequacy of existing housing legislation and strategies.[39]

Individual municipalities on the East Rand (Benoni, Germiston and Springs in particular), attempted to resolve the problem on their own by making plans for the establishment of new African locations, but found the acquisition of land for that purpose rather difficult.[40] In March 1947 a meeting of local authorities from Pretoria, the Witwatersrand and Vereeniging proposed the establishment of a Witwatersrand Regional Committee to consider the issue of African housing in the whole region. In May of that year the proposal was accepted and the Witwatersrand Advisory Council for non-European Housing was formed.[41] The initial focus of its discussions was the establishment of "jointly-sponsored native towns to serve the whole Reef", including one for the East Rand towns of Brakpan, Springs, Benoni and Boksburg.[42] Little came of this initiative. Local authorities complained about the heavy financial burden such development would place on their shoulders and since they enjoyed the sole power to initiate public housing schemes,[43] their non-compliance blocked any progress.

Pegging Acts and WARS

Modernist principles, with their international precedents, made a clear impression on state policies. An equally important factor, rooted in the local experience, was the renewed emphasis from the mid-1940s on urban racial segregation. These two issues became more intimately interwoven from the mid-1940s and created the framework within which the future attempts of urban social

engineering took place. One worrying symptom of the 'disorderly' urbanisation at the time was the perceived threat by local and other authorities of black encroachment on white areas. Although the national government again proved slow in responding to these pressures, UP-controlled municipalities took the lead in formulating policies to address the concerns of the white electorate. The initiatives embarked on by the Durban and Johannesburg Councils in the mid-1940s would have profound consequences for urban racial segregation policies over the next two decades.

The Durban Council's policies towards the local Indian population had especially far-reaching consequences. From the early 1940s Durban's Indian population became a prime target of the United Party's urban racial zoning. For some while whites, especially small businessmen, had voiced their concern about the competition from Indian traders. In 1940 Smuts appointed the first 'Penetration' Commission to investigate the apparent encroachment by Indian traders on predominantly white areas since 1927.[44] The investigation had twin concerns: the transgressions of racial segregation and the perceived threat posed by Indian traders to white small businesses. A second commission was appointed in 1943 to investigate the acquisition by Indians of land in Durban. As a direct outcome of these commissions the government passed the Trading and Occupation Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act of 1943 which forbade changes in ownership between Indians and whites without ministerial permission.[45] This measure was intended not only to curb business exchanges between whites and Indians, but also to preclude further acquisition of land by the emerging Indian middle class. The subsequent passage of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act in 1946 was a watershed in the development of residential segregation.[46] It allowed for the identification of land for Indian occupation outside of which they could not acquire or occupy property. In a profoundly significant move the government also established the Land Tenure Advisory Board (LTAB), staffed by an inspectorate, to oversee the segregation of Indians.[47] These 'Pegging Acts', which initially applied only to Durban were the principal legislative precursors to the Group Areas Act (GAA). Maharaj has understandably made a strong case for the pre-eminent role

played by Durban in shaping the GAA.[48] However, this emphasis has tended to understate the other equally important influences on the GAA, such as modernist principles.

The second important initiative occurred in Johannesburg where the UP-controlled council formulated the Western Areas Removal Scheme to get rid of Sophiatown and its neighbouring locations. Van Tonder has exposed the centrality of this scheme in the Johannesburg City Council's (JCC) strategy to deal with the urban crisis.[49] The western areas of Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare were particularly problematical for the JCC not only because of their racial integration but because they were generally beyond the control of the authorities and were in many respects the centre of black opposition in Johannesburg. From the point of view of the JCC it was vital that these 'black spots' be removed. Instrumental in the removal plans of the western areas was prominent United Party member, Sarel Tighy, who according to Van Tonder advocated the removal of Sophiatown as far back as 1939.[50] Tighy's constituency consisted largely of white working class and lower middle class residents. The proximity of the black western areas was a constant source of concern to this community who continuously pressured the JCC and government to remove these areas. In 1944 the JCC proposed a ten year programme for the removal of the western areas but its implementation was delayed because of a severe shortage of funds.[51] Thus Van Tonder concludes that there were some elements in the United Party who were "as dedicated to the ideals of urban and spatial (racial) segregation as were the Nationalists".[52] In fact, the UP's strategy anticipated in great detail future NP policies of forced removal of urban 'black spots'.

Despite numerous policy and practical initiatives undertaken during the 1940, the UP was manifestly unable to resolve the urban crisis. In part this was due to factors beyond its control, such as the war. However, it was also hamstrung by a combination of local political obstructions as well as internal party problems. Local authorities, it has already been noted, often resented central government interference, fearing a loss of autonomy. This attitude hampered attempts to introduce centralised planning and regional co-ordination.[53] The UP was also wracked by internal political

squabbles and lacked a clear political strategy to deal with the multiple crises faced by the country after the war. All these factors combined to render the UP's response to the urban crisis ineffectual. It was left to the NP to implement the wide-ranging social engineering policies for which the UP had laid much of the groundwork in the half decade before.

The Group Areas Act

The electoral victory of the NP in 1948 represented an important turning point in urban management. A central plank in the party's election platform was its promise to restore strict segregation in the urban areas. Thus, on assuming power, it was vital for the NP to demonstrate unequivocally that, in contrast to its predecessor, it would assert control over the urban black population. The Malan government proceeded speedily to formulate national legislation to give effect to its election promises. Within months of its historic victory the new government established two committees under the chairmanship of D.S. van der Merwe, chairman of the Land Tenure Advisory Board, to investigate the future of 'Asiatic land laws'. The investigation also addressed itself to the broader application of these pieces of legislation, an exercise that culminated in the drafting of the Group Areas Bill.

In March 1950 the minister of the interior, T.E Dönges, presented the Group Areas Bill to the House of Assembly and by September of that year the GAA became law. Its primary aim, as the name suggests, was to establish 'group areas' for the different 'races'. The government's vision of the role and aims of the GAA was illustrated in a memorandum:

> The Group Areas Act is virtually only a form of town planning and no town planning scheme can ever be carried out without dislocation and inconvenience and even loss...
> The main object of the Group Areas Act is to create the possibility of an orderly society in a country inhabited by various race groups which differ so much from one another as regards degree of civilisation, cultural development, way of life

> and habits and economic ability that a society without race grouping and group areas can only lend to racial friction and race riots, chaos and the eventual disappearance of Western Civilisation.[54]

Unlike the Asiatic Land Acts of the 1940s, the GAA applied to all people classified as white, coloured and Indian, throughout the country: segregation would be compulsory and comprehensive. The Act also allowed for the reversal of existing integration to ensure that all residential areas would become 'racially-exclusive'. As a first step, the Act provided for the "preservation of any particular area from further penetration by one group or the other" and "for the control of the acquisition of immovable property and the occupation of land and premises".[55] These provisions were clearly designed to freeze existing residential patterns pending proclamation of a 'group area'.

The GAA instituted procedures to be followed before the proclamation of 'group areas'. The first was the establishment of *controlled areas*. Within such an area property could not be exchanged between different 'groups' without ministerial permission. In such an area it was compulsory that the occupant of any property be of the same 'racial group' as the owner.[56] The declaration of a *controlled area* was the prelude to the proclamation of a 'group area'. However, the state recognised that initially it would be impossible fully to implement *controlled areas* because of all the anomalies that would arise. For example, unless people were immediately removed from a *controlled area*, which was not intended for their occupation, they would automatically be in breach of the law. But they could not be removed before 'group areas' were established. In order to deal with such dilemmas the government allowed for *specified areas* to be declared. In such an area the *status quo* regarding ownership and occupation would be frozen. This permitted the continuation of integrated areas until such time that complete segregation could be enforced. It also meant that there could be no exchange of properties between different 'racial groups', while allowing for exemption from the harsher provisions applicable in *controlled areas*. The Act also established *defined areas,* which could apply to parts of a

property. For example, if a house was declared a *defined area* any extension to it could only be occupied by the 'group' for which it was declared. Occupation by anyone else required ministerial permission.

The Act stipulated that there would be three types of 'group areas': for occupation only, for ownership only and for occupation and ownership.[57] In practice this meant that blacks could be placed in a group area with only occupation rights. But it also meant that whites could own properties in areas not for their occupation. In general white 'group areas' were always declared for ownership and occupation to avoid the possibility of blacks owning properties in such areas. Once an area was proclaimed for a certain 'group' all those from other 'groups' became 'disqualified persons' and normally had to vacate the place within a year.[58] The LTAB, which was created by the United Party, now became the main body overseeing the implementation of the Act. Finally the GAA established an inspectorate whose responsibility it was to ensure that the provisions of the Act were not violated. The GAA thus seemed to be all encompassing and well thought out.

The GAA was arguably *the* emblematic piece of legislation of apartheid. In the words of apartheid's first prime minister, D.F. Malan, the GAA "was apartheid".[59] However, like other iconic pieces of apartheid legislation such as the Mixed Marriages Act its importance was more symbolic and anticipatory. At the time of its promulgation the country's most urban centres were already up to 90% segregated.[60] Thus Maylam has argued that the GAA's significance as the key segregationary piece of legislation has probably been overestimated.[61] In addition, the lack of a clear strategy to realise the objectives of the GAA (reflected in the absence of a plan for compulsory segregation in the Sauer report), meant that it took some years before the Act was actually implemented.

To appreciate the full significance of the GAA, it should be viewed not only as a piece of racially-inspired legislation, but also as a central plank in the broader strategy of the government to achieve order and control over the urban black population. This became evident in the early 1950s as the various aspects of the government's intervention began to coalesce into a more coherent plan of urban restructuring. The various laws promulgated in the early 1950s enabled the

government to address the entire gamut of problems it perceived as underlying the urban crisis. The key provisions of these Acts were incorporated into the details of the local and regional plans formulated in the early 1950s. It is to the elaboration of the 'grand plan' for urban restructuring of the Witwatersrand and the East Rand in particular that this chapter now turns its attention.

Laying the basis for regional African townships

> The time has come to review the whole position with the aim of re-planning the townships of the Witwatersrand, as far as it is possible.... The bigger centres on the Witwatersrand are all strongly industrialised and mainly dependent on Native labour. It is necessary in virtually all of these centres to acquire more land for location purposes... In view of the fact that land requirement for Natives will be much greater than that for Asians or Coloureds, this Department is particularly interested in regional planning of any sort...
>
> *T.E. Dönges, Minister of the Interior, September, 1950.* [62]

The concentration of the urban crisis on the Witwatersrand, the economic and political heartland of the country, made it the focus of state intervention. The most serious problem faced by the state, and alluded to by Dönges, was how to deal with the presence of large numbers of African people in the urban centres. It was to the resolution of this particular issue that the Native Affairs Department (NAD), under the guidance of H.F. Verwoerd, turned its attention with singular vigour from the early 1950s. Over the next decade, as Posel[63] has explained, the influence of the NAD in government and its public stature as the arm of government principally responsible for dealing with Africans grew significantly. So too did the political fortunes of its leader, Verwoerd. Increasingly, Verwoerd and his acolytes in the NAD became the primary source of ideological pronouncements and policy formulation for the government as a whole.

In the early 1950s the pressure mounted on the government to translate its ideological commitment into effective policies. Despite the promulgation of important laws there was little evidence of progress on key planks of its election platform, namely, control of the black urban population and the imposition of compulsory segregation. In addition, the pace of black urbanisation continued virtually unchecked. Equally serious from the perspective of the white population, was the growth of black political opposition in the early fifties. The 1950 stayaways and the 1952 Defiance Campaign augured badly for the new government, which had based so much of its 1948 *swart gevaar* campaign on taming the 'unruly' black population. Thus, partly in anticipation of the election in 1953, the government stepped up a gear and made concerted efforts in 1952-3 to formulate plans for the development and restructuring of the Witwatersrand. A number of commissions were formed to investigate matters relating to the siting of African locations, prospective industrial development and the future of coloureds and Indians in the region. These were the years in which the policies of social engineering took shape. The first indication of the direction in which Verwoerd was heading was the appointment of the Nel Commission in 1952 to investigate the siting of African locations in Pretoria. This commission represented an important first step towards the systematic planning of the entire Witwatersrand.

In 1952 Verwoerd appointed the Mentz Committee to 'investigate the question of townships for Natives in the Witwatersrand and Vereeniging regions'. The decision to form this committee was taken after a meeting held in Pretoria at the end of 1951 with hand-picked 'interested parties' to discuss the planning of African locations[64]. The Mentz Committee was ostensibly created to "thoroughly investigate the different proposals in an attempt to make recommendations which would have the unanimous, or at least the majority support of the participants".[65] The terms of reference of the committee were not specified and Verwoerd presented it as a fact-finding body.[66] Yet, as will be shown, the recommendations of this 'fact-finding body' became the main guidelines for government policy in the planning and development of African locations on the Witwatersrand, and in particular on the East Rand. Certainly, Verwoerd had very clear ideas about the conclusions he expected to

emanate from the committee. In his announcement of the formation of the Mentz Commission, he unambiguously stated his preferred solution to the urban crisis:

> Squatter chaos, overcrowding of existing Native plots, illegal lodging in white yards, the removal of those who refuse to work and thus don't belong in the city, can only be combated once large enough legal townships for Natives are established close to the towns... The most complicated problem of this character in the Union, exists in the area from the north in Pretoria to the Vaal River, and in the east from Springs till far in the west to Krugersdorp and Randfontein... [67]

The composition of the committee suggested Verwoerd had a more ambitious objective in mind for it than the expressed aim of information gathering. The chairman, F.E Mentz, was a member of the Native Affairs Commission, J.H. Moolman was a leading figure in the Natural Resources Development Council, M.C. Barker was prominent in the Land Tenure Advisory Board and C.A. Heald was an important figure in the Native Affairs Department. These men were therefore all key figures in matters relating to 'native affairs' and were instrumental in the formulation and application of government policy on the Witwatersrand.

The Mentz Committee formally began work in August 1952 and by the end of that year it had completed its investigation. In terms of its mandate the Committee convened hearings in each of the five designated sub-regions of the Witwatersrand to consult with local authorities, businesses and interested individuals.[68] The principal aim of these meetings was to discuss with local authorities their respective proposals to accommodate Africans in new townships and in the process to incorporate each local plan into a regional scheme. The government at this stage deemed it necessary to consult local authorities because it had not yet acquired the authority and control over them simply to impose its policies. Some local authorities also jealously guarded their relative autonomy over local policy matters and were opposed to any undue state intervention in their affairs. The shifting balance of power between the central and local tiers of the state over matters relative to the urban black population

featured prominently in the decade and a half following the NP's accession to power. The creation of the Mentz Committee was an early signal of the direction the central government was heading in its relations with local authorities. Although it necessarily had to consult local authorities, the Mentz Committee operated strictly within a framework developed by the NAD and would not tolerate any deviation from it. The Mentz Committee hearings were therefore not consultations about the basic principles of urban restructuring, but about how local plans could fit into the general framework. The formulation of important national policies became the function of closed committees such as those of Nel and Mentz.[69] Regional and local planners were generally not involved in their activities, unless they shared Verwoerd's vision.

Verwoerd sketched his vision for the future siting and planning of African townships in the Senate in May 1952. The basic principles he enunciated in this regard were:

1. The site should be at an adequate distance from the European town;
2. It should preferably adjoin the location of a neighbouring town, so as to decrease rather than increase the number of Native areas;
3. It should preferably be separated from the European area by an industrial buffer where industries exist or are being planned;
4. It should have provision for an adequate hinterland for expansion stretching away from the European area;
5. It should be within easy distance of the town or city for transport purposes, by rail rather than by road;
6. It should have a road of its own connecting the location site with the city, preferably running through the industrial areas;

7. It should possess open buffer zones around the proclaimed location areas, the breadth of which should depend on whether the location borders upon a densely or sparsely occupied European area; and
8. It should be at a considerable distance from main, and more particularly national roads, the use of which as local transport routes for the location should be totally discouraged.[70]

These ideas were not entirely new. For example, the siting of townships such as Orlando and Natalspruit, were guided by these principles before they were articulated in Verwoerd's speech. Nevertheless, his announcement in parliament effectively elevated these ideas to government policy. So, while the committee entertained representations from different bodies, it did not accept anything that did not comply with these principles. The committee met with little opposition from municipalities or employer representatives on the East Rand. The Boksburg Council, for example, concurred that industrial areas should serve as the main buffer between African locations and white residential areas. In the case of the East Rand this meant white areas would generally be located in the north and African locations in the south, with the industrial areas and the main railway line separating the two.[71] Part of the rationale behind this requirement was that it obviated the need for Africans to travel through 'white areas' to their places of employment. In addition, the industrial areas and railway line were regarded as useful buffer zones, an absolutely essential aspect of town planning. The municipalities were particularly sensitive about the proximity of locations to their white residential areas. Thus the Farmers' Association of Roodekop strongly objected to the idea of expanding Natalspruit too close to their areas. Heidelberg, on the other hand, objected to this expansion because it would bring the location too close to the national road.[72]

In November 1952 the Mentz Committee met all the municipalities of the East Rand as well as various mining and industrial companies to discuss the establishment of regional African townships.[73] All the municipalities submitted plans

for township development, which reflected their local concerns about where to establish the new townships. The meeting first considered a submission from the Brakpan municipality to create a single African regional township for Brakpan, Benoni, Boksburg and Springs, which it proposed should be located in the north-eastern corner of the region.[74] Other municipalities, the Mentz Committee and the owners of smallholdings in the area where it was proposed to create the regional township all rejected this proposal. White farmers and residents were especially concerned that any new African township be created sufficiently far from their areas. Benoni and Springs objected to the proposal because they had already developed plans for the creation of their own townships, which did not accord with Brakpan's proposal.[75] Both towns had already acquired the land for township purposes and, in the case of Springs, had already begun building houses in its new township. Germiston's development of a new township was even more advanced. It had already established Natalspruit in 1949 and wanted that area to be further developed as a regional township complex. The headstart enjoyed by these three municipalities put them in an advantageous position to influence where the regional townships would be situated. The Mentz Committee also endorsed their existing plans and made them the basis of its proposals for regional townships in the region.[76] In contrast, Boksburg and Brakpan did not yet have any such plans and thus lagged behind in the planning and development of new African townships. The Committee proposed that Brakpan's new township be located adjacent to KwaThema. The Brakpan municipality initially disagreed with this idea and suggested a different site for the township, but the Committee rejected its counter-proposal.[77] Boksburg was perceived as the most problematic case.[78] Initially it was suggested that the old location (Stirtonville) be expanded and developed to accommodate the town's entire African population, but Rand Mines objected to this proposal. As a result of these difficulties a special sub-committee was created to investigate the creation of a township for Boksburg's African population, which was expected to need between 46 600 and 76 000 houses once the town's anticipated industrial expansion had been completed.[79] After considering a number of options, the committee concluded that Boksburg's township should be created as part of the Natalspruit complex. Although

the Brakpan and Boksburg local authorities accepted the proposals of the Mentz Committee, it took them a few more years to formulate plans and begin the construction of their respective townships.

The final Mentz Report, which was published in December 1953,[80] provided a blue-print for the establishment of regional townships on the East Rand. Its primary recommendation was that all existing locations in the region (as well as on the whole Witwatersrand) should be disestablished and be replaced by fewer regional townships. For the authorities the old locations epitomised uncontrolled urbanisation, which combined with their residents' propensity for militant struggles and their proximity to the 'white' towns, made them prime targets for removal. It is for this reason that the Mentz Committee was popularly known as the 'black spots' committee. The government also believed the concentration of Africans in large regional townships would facilitate the monitoring and control of the urban African population.[81]

After considering the specific proposals from the various municipalities the committee concluded that there were three areas which lent themselves to natural planning of 'Native locations'.[82] 'Natural planning' of course meant that the locations could be developed in accordance with the principles set out by the government. In August 1955 the NAD announced the Mentz Committee 'grand plan' for the East Rand. Two large regional townships were to be established: first, the people from Payneville (Springs) and the Brakpan and Dunnotar locations would be relocated to the new township of KwaTsaDuza (KwaThema , Tsakane and Duduza) and second, residents from old locations of Germiston, Alberton, Boksburg and Elsburg were to be relocated to Kathorus (Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus).[83] The committee also approved Benoni's plans to establish a separate township (Daveyton) to the North-East of the town. As was expected, the government gave the Mentz Committee's proposals a ringing endorsement:

> Every area has been planned with a view to the creation of the necessary buffer zones and availability or possible provision of the necessary transport services, so that the Natives living

> there will be able to get to work with the least inconvenience... The Mentz Commission has thus completed the planning of the whole Reef area from Heidelberg to Vereeniging, and found solutions to both the short and the long-term problems. The local authorities can now go ahead on this basis with no uncertainty about the future.[84]

It took nearly two years for this announcement to be made from the time when the final report was submitted to the government. The reasons for this delay are unclear. It is likely, however, that the government awaited the completion of the work of other committees so that the plans for African locations could be integrated into the broader plans for the restructuring of the Reef (see below for the discussion on the Subsidiary Planning Committee). Beyond that the plan to remove 'black spots' all over the Reef was probably held in abeyance pending the implementation of the Western Areas Removal Scheme. It was here that black resistance was fiercest and potentially subversive of the government's plans. The successful removal of residents from Sophiatown represented an important turning point in the government's national urban restructuring strategy.

The United Party opposed the recommendations of the Mentz Committee and established its own Tucker Committee to formulate alternative plans.[85] In March 1954 this committee announced its recommendations which coincided largely with those in the Fagan Commission.[86] It called for the recognition of Africans as permanent residents in the urban areas, but also agreed that influx control was necessary. The Tucker Report specifically rejected the Mentz Committee's proposal to remove Africans from various integrated locations.[87] However, by 1954 the United Party was wracked by internal division, especially over the Western Areas Removal Scheme.[88]

Objections to the Mentz report from municipalities were few and far between. Where criticisms arose, as in the case of Springs, these were directed more at the perceived high-handed intervention by the central government in matters traditionally perceived as falling within the competence of local authorities. Jack

Ellis, a leading Springs councillor and UP member, was especially indignant about the undermining of the role of local authorities:

> We as Municipalities know the best place for our locations, but in the future somebody from Pretoria, who knows nothing about our conditions, will tell us where to put our locations whether it is convenient for us or not... The whole thing is like a vicious circle, ... You cannot establish an area for a future location unless you have the funds for Native Housing on hand. Industrial expansion will mean an influx of native labour, an influx of native labour means new locations and new locations provide the labour for industrial expansion. Stop the establishment of new locations and you stop everything.[89]

Most local authorities, however, accepted the underlying principles propounded by the government in relation to urban planning and the development of African locations in particular. These also gained currency among other planners on the Witwatersrand. A.J. Cutten, a liberal town planner, concurred with the essence of the government's thinking. In a memorandum dealing with township development he agreed that since "the entire economic structure of European life in South Africa is so dependent upon Native labour, it is important that such labour be housed in townships located conveniently close to the labourer's place of work".[90] Locations, he argued, could only be established in the south or north because the main urban development on the Reef occurred along an East - West line.[91]

While the Mentz Committee was formulating its 'grand plan' for the urban African population living on the Reef, the government initiated a parallel process to develop a similar plan for coloureds and Indians. The decision to disestablish all 'black spots' also encompassed coloureds and Indians, who according to the Population Registration and Group Areas Acts, could no longer reside in the same residential area.

The Subsidiary Planning Committee: regional planning of group areas

The idea of centralised regional locations for coloureds was first raised in November 1951 at a conference to discuss the position of coloureds in the Witwatersrand. The conference, convened under the auspices of I.D. du Plessis, Commissioner of Coloured Affairs, was attended by municipalities from all over the Witwatersrand, as well as by senior politicians, including prime minister Malan, P. Sauer (acting minister of Internal Affairs) and W.W.M. Eiselen (Secretary for Native Affairs).[92] Du Plessis explained that there was a growing concern about the future of coloureds in a province where they formed only a miniscule proportion of the population (1,5% of the total population in the Transvaal and 3% in the Witwatersrand).[93] The "coloured man", he averred, "found himself in a very special position that had already been described as 'a brown island in a black sea'."[94] In his opinion, "This problem required immediate attention in view of the fact that it was the Government's policy that the coloured community in the Transvaal alos (sic) be enabled to develope (sic) as an independent group."[95] In response to his impassioned plea that special consideration be given to the plight of coloureds, the conference resolved

> that the principle of centralised ... residential areas be adopted for the East, Central and West Rand Areas, respectively, and that all aspects and implications of this motion be investigated in consultation with local and other authorities with a view of drafting concrete proposals.[96]

The following year the government acted on this suggestion and took decisive steps in consolidating the numerous laws and proposals affecting the urban situation into a coherent and implementable plan. On December 2, 1952, the acting Minister of Economic Affairs, J.F. Naude, announced the establishment of the Subsidiary Planning Committee (SPC) under the chairmanship of Dr J.H. Moolman, who was also a member of the Mentz Commission.[97] According to Naude the idea of

creating a permanent planning committee for the Witwatersrand area originated with Verwoerd, for whom a co-ordinated approach to the restructuring of the whole region was essential.[98] Although it was declared to be merely an advisory body, the SPC was also expected to "provide a lead in the planning of the region on a much wider basis."[99] This emphasis on co-ordinated planning was further confirmed by the decision to place the SPC under the auspices of the Natural Resources and Development Council (NRDC). The chief planner of the NRDC was acutely aware of the inter-relationship between the implementation of urban apartheid and urban planning in general:

> I acknowledge that race zoning, that is the creation of locations and residential areas for coloureds and Asiatics, is of cardinal importance in our country, but it cannot be separated from simultaneous planning of white areas, industrial areas, traffic systems, the recovery of natural resources, etc.[100]

The presence of senior members from the Departments of Mining, Native Affairs, Transport and Internal Affairs on the committee also highlighted the extent to which the government wanted to integrate the work of its different departments into a single, coherent strategy.[101] At its first meeting held in January 1953, the chairman of the NRDC, F.J. du Toit explained to delegates the main purpose of the new committee:

> In the past the one department or local authority seldom knew what its neighbours were planning and each one was just carrying on its own.... this Committee will provide an opportunity for automatic consultation with the result that various aspects of development will no longer clash with one another.[102]

It was envisaged that the SPC would play a key role in co-ordinating the future development and planning of industry, mining, transport and residential areas

on the Witwatersrand. As one delegate proposed it "should aim at the preparation of a master plan within which private enterprise can operate... Development can follow the pattern outlined by the Committee."[103] This proposal reflected the dominant thinking among policy-makers and government officials. In an important sense therefore the modernist principles first propounded by the SEPC, and which at the time received only a lukewarm reception, had become universally accepted.

The members of the SPC discharged their responsibilities with enthusiasm. They agreed that "co-ordination can only be achieved through voluntary co-operation", but were prepared to invoke the authority of the government if such co-operation was not forthcoming. In terms of the legislation governing the functioning of the NRDC, the government could of course proclaim an area a *controlled area*, which would make consultation with the SPC compulsory.[104] Significantly, one of the first policy pronouncements by the new committee was to endorse the recommendations of the Mentz Committee. At a conference held in Johannesburg to inform other role players of the establishment of the SPC, Du Toit promised that his committee would urgently give attention to the big problem of residential racial integration.[105] The SPC viewed itself and the Mentz Committee as the two components of the government's double-pronged strategy to restructure the urban areas of the Witwatersrand. Whereas the former dealt with the majority African population, it would do the same for coloured, Indians and whites.

The SPC created a number of sub-committees to investigate the different aspects of urban and regional planning for the Witwatersrand. Two of the most important of these committees were the Minerals and Mining committee, and the Group Areas committee. M.C. Barker, another member of the Mentz Commission, chaired the latter. Other members of the committee were drawn from the Departments of Native Affairs, Coloured Affairs and National Housing. This committee played a key role in the division of the region into 'group areas' for coloureds, Indians and whites. The committee's report has no record of public hearings or investigation similar to those conducted by the Mentz Committee, suggesting that there was at best only minimal consultation with local authorities. By

this time the government had dispensed with the formalities of public hearings and left urban planning in the hands of its committee-men.

The SPC's basic 'principles and work methods' not surprisingly coincided largely with those laid out by the Native Affairs Department. In accordance with the GAA, the committee aimed to devise a system of "planning that would allow each group the opportunity to develop on their own and at the same time to ensure the most convenient transport to workplaces without the need for one group to move through the area of another group to reach their workplaces."[106] The sub-committee on group areas completed its work in 1955 and produced detailed plans for carving the region into group areas. Its report on the East Rand included maps with clear demarcations of 'group areas' for the region as well as for the individual towns. The committee argued that in respect of the East Rand

> the present number of non-whites, excluding natives, in the different municipalities is so small and the fact that separate schemes for such small groups in these towns would be uneconomical, the committee attempted as far as possible to combine the racial groups of two or more municipalities into a single region.[107]

The committee extended the Mentz Commission's regional planning of African townships to coloureds and Indians on the East Rand. In its report on Springs it suggested that the coloured population from Germiston, Springs, Boksburg and Brakpan be moved to one township. It was proposed that this regional township be located south of Boksburg, not too far from where Reiger Park is situated today.[108] This area was regarded as suitable because of its proximity to the industrial areas which would serve as an adequate buffer between coloureds, Africans and whites.[109] The committee also suggested that the 510 'malays' of the East Rand be located in a single area, within the proposed coloured township.[110] It was calculated that the 'malay' population would probably grow to about 4000 in 60-70 years and that enough land had to be made available for future expansion of their

residential area.[111] The planning of residential areas for Indians and Chinese likewise proposed the creation of townships on the Far East Rand and in the Germiston/Boksburg area.[112] The Mentz and Subsidiary Planning Committees plans were thus central components in the government's schemes to restructure the Witwatersrand. Their recommendations, which fused racial segregation with urban planning in an industrialising country, guided state policy for the next two decades.

The initiatives by the government to institute and co-ordinate greater regional planning were not the only ones attempted on the Witwatersrand. There were also independent plans initiated by municipalities on the Reef to co-ordinate their policies in relation to blacks. In 1952 a conference of Reef municipalities proposed the formation of a regional body - the Witwatersrand Regional Planning Council - "whose function would be to plan on a regional basis the provision of Native housing on the Witwatersrand with due regard to the present and future industrial and other development of the areas."[113] These initiatives were indicative of the successful conversion of most town planners to the idea of regional planning by the mid fifties. The early initiatives of the central government ensured that the important decisions on the planning of regional development and co-ordination for blacks would rest with it and would occur within the political framework set out by the National Party. These principles came closest to representing a blue print for urban development, and to a large extent they determined the racial restructuring of the cities in the fifties and sixties.

The difficulties initially experienced by the government support the argument that the making of apartheid was a complex and contradictory process.[114] This was particularly evident during the first few years of Nationalist rule when it engaged in almost frantic efforts to formulate an effective response to the urban crisis. At the same time the struggles by black opposition movements were intensifying, posing a serious challenge to the authorities. In this context, the ruling party, whose electoral position was not yet consolidated, could hardly impose its will on the black population. State policy was indeed contested at every level of society. However, as this chapter has tried to illustrate, the government was able – despite numerous difficulties – to consolidate support

for its vision among state officials, planners and local administrators. Notwithstanding continued debate over important issues such as the role of African workers in the 'white' economy, the support for decisive state intervention, proper urban planning, compulsory segregation and the establishment of regional townships – all principal components of 'modernist' apartheid – grew dramatically in the early 1950s. In this way too, the state was itself strengthened especially as even opposition-controlled local authorities (for example, Benoni) endorsed the government's strategies. As a result the government was able to proceed more expeditiously to implement its grand plan for the restructuring of the East Rand, albeit in the face of new forms of opposition. These latter issues are the subjects of the following chapter.

ENDNOTES

[1] M. Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post 1948 South Africa, *Journal of Southern Africa Studies*, vol.1, no.1, 1974 provided a seminal explanation of the key paradox that existed for the state and how it affected the state's rethinking of its policies in the 1940s

[2] See for example, M. Legassick, 'Legislation, Ideology', H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid', *Economy and Society*, 1, 4,1974, M. Lipton, *Capitalism and Apartheid: South Africa, 1910-1986*, London, 1985 and D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948 – 1961: Conflict and Compromise*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, P. Alexander, *Workers, War and the Origins of Apartheid*, David Philip, Cape Town, 2000

[3] Especially pertinent here are A. Mabin, 'Comprehensive Segregation: The Origins of the Group Areas Act', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.18, no.2, 1992; A. Mabin & D. Smit, "Reconstructing South Africa's cities? The making of urban planning 1900 – 2000", *Planning Perspectives*, 12, 1997; P. Maylam, 'Explaining the Apartheid City', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.21, no. 1, March 1995 and P. Wilkinson, 'A discourse of modernity: The Social and Economic Planning Council's fifth report on Regional and Town Planning, 1944' paper presented to the *Symposium on South African Planning History*, September 1993

4. A. Mabin, 'Comprehensive Segregation'

[5] The most important of these were the Group Areas Act, the Population Registration Act, the Building Workers' Act, the Native Services Levy Act, the Native Resettlement Act and the Native (Urban) Areas.

6. D. Posel: 'The Construction of Apartheid, 1948 – 1961', paper presented to the African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, August 1988, p.2

7. Ibid, p.3

8. P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel,'The shaping of apartheid: contradictions, continuity and popular struggle' in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds) *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935 – 1962*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1993

9. South African urban scholars have differed over the main causes of the creation of segregated cities. For Maylam the creation of segregated locations was intimately related to the state's aim to contain African urbanisation and to ensure a ready supply of labour for industry. Hindson also emphasises the importance of control over the African urban workforce. Parnell argues that state intervention to protect working class white residential conditions, and especially to prevent the

further impoverishment of 'poor whites', was an important imperative in the emergence of segregated towns. See D. Hindson, *Pass Controls and the Urban Proletariat*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1987; P. Maylam, 'The rise and decline of urban apartheid in South Africa', *African Affairs*, vol. 89, 1990 and S. Parnell, 'Johannesburg Slum and Racial Segregation in South African Cities, 1910-1937', Ph.D Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1993

10. See D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid* for a discussion of some of the key early planning legislations and practices, especially pp.194-198

11. A, Mabin, 'Labour, Capital, Class Struggle and the Origins of Residential Segregation in Kimberley', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 12, 1986, argues that compounds were the first 'rigid' manifestation of residential segregation

12. Union of South, Department of Interior, 'Report of Asiatic Land Laws Commission, Pretoria, 1939; H. L. Dugmore, ' "Becoming Coloured": Class, Culture and Segregation in Johannesburg Malay Location, 1918-1939', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1993. See chapter one for a discussion on the setting aside of an area for occupation and trading for Indians and malays on the outskirts of Johannesburg. T.R.H. Davenport and K.S. Hunt (eds) *The Right To the Land*, David Philip, Cape Town, 1974, p.63

13. Union Government, Department of Interior, 'Report of Asiatic Land Laws Commission', pp.11-13 and pp. 70-72

14. T.R.H. Davenport, 'The Beginning of Urban Segregation in South Africa: The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and its background', Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, 1971, pp.15-17. Interestingly the draft Bill of this piece of legislation proposed that Africans be allowed tenure in the segregated location in 'white' towns. But the majority of white parliamentarians, led by Hertzog, rejected the proposal.

15. T.R.H. Davenport and K.S. Hunt, *The Right To The Land*, p.72

16. S. Parnell, 'Johannesburg Slum and Racial Segregation', p.51

17. A. Mabin and D. Smit, 'Reconstructing South Africa's cities?', p.197. See also Parnell's discussion on the role of Dr. Charles Porter in the formulation of early town planning policies, in S. Parnell, 'Johannesburg Slum and Racial Segregation', Chapter Two.

18. A. Mabin, 'Origins', p.408

19. Quoted in A. Lemon, *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, David Philip, Cape Town, 1991, p.4

20. S. Parnell, 'Johannesburg Slum and Racial Segregation', p.42

21. A. Mabin, 'Conflict, Continuity and Change: Locating 'properly planned native townships' in the forties and fifties', paper presented to the Symposium on South African Planning History, Pietermaritzburg, September1993, p.313

22.Ibid, Chapter Nine for a discussion of slum clearance in Johannesburg

23.Ibid, p.78

24. P. Bonner, 'Back to The Fence: Law, Liquor, And The Search For Social Control In an East Rand Town, 1929-1942' in J. Crush and C. Ambler (eds) *Liquor and Labour in Southern Africa*, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1992, pp.293-296

25. Quoted in A. Mabin, 'Origins', p.413

[26] P. Wilkinson, "A discourse of modernity", p.249

[27] Ibid. Wilkinson has provided an in depth historical analysis of the SEPC and a particularly informative textual analysis of the crucial 5th report that dealt with urban and regional planning.

[28] Union Government, Social and Economic Planning Council, *Report No.3: Aspects of Public Service Organisation and Employment*, 26 November 1943

[29] P. Wilkinson, "A discourse of modernity", p.255. Van Eck and his lieutenant, Dr. F.J. van Biljon (the secretary of the SEPC), were particularly staunch supporters of such ideas

[30] Union Government, Social and Economic Planning Council, *Report No.3: Aspects of Public Service Organisation and Employment*, 26 November 1943, p.1, paragraph 4

[31] Ibid

[32] P. Wilkinson, "A Discourse of Modernity", p.262

[33] Union Government, Social and Economic Planning Council, *Report No.5, Regional and Town Planning*, p.4

[34] Ibid

[35] P. Wilkinson, 'A Discourse of Modernity', p.272

36. A, Mabin, 'Conflict, Continuity and Change', p.316

37. P. Morris, *A History of Black Housing in South Africa,* South African Foundation, Johannesburg, 1981, p.31

[38] D.Hindson, *Pass Controls*, p.56

[39] Mabin argues that the government could not even build the minimum of 7000 housing units a year to meet existing requirements. See A. Mabin, 'Conflict, Continuity and Change', p.308

40. Ibid, p.318

41. Ibid, p.319

42. Ibid

43. Ibid, p.320

44. L. Kuper, *et al*: *Durban: A study in racial ecology*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1958, pp.143 -144

45. Ibid, p.152

46. Ibid

47. A. Mabin, 'Origins', p.417

[48] B. Maharaj, "The 'Spatial Impress' of the Central and Local States; The Group Areas Act in Durban" in D. Smith (ed), *The Apartheid City and Beyond*, Johannesburg, 1992, pp.75-77

49. See D. Van Tonder, 'First win the war and Sophiatown: Removals and Protest, 1940-1955', MA Dissertation, Unisa, 1990. Also Lodge, T: *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1983

50. D. Van Tonder, 'Sophiatown', p.316

51. Ibid

52. Ibid

[53] P. Wilkinson, 'A discourse of modernity', p.273

54. Central Archives Depot, Pretoria, (CAD), Group Areas Board files (GGR) 48, 15/4, 'Memorandum on the Group Areas Act'.

55. U. Meshtrie, 'Tinkering and Tampering: The Group Areas Act', *South African Historical Journal*, 28, 1993, pp. 179 -180

56. University of the Witwatersrand (UW), Historical and Literary Papers (HLP), South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) files, AD 1947, paper on the Group Areas Act, p.1

57. U. Meshtrie, 'Tinkering and Tampering', p.180 -181

58. Ibid

[59] H. Southworth, 'Strangling South Africa's Cities: Resistance to Group Areas in Durban during the 1950s', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 1, 1991, p.1

[60] A. Lemon (ed), *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, Bloomington, 1991, p.8

[61] P. Maylam, 'Apartheid City', pp.27-28. Maylam also emphasises this argument to highlight the continuities in the urban policies of the UP and NP governments.

62. CAD, GGR 53, 20/2

[63] D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid*

64. Government Publications, University of the Witwatersrand, Introduction to *Mentz Committee Report*, 'Verslag Van Die Komitee Aangestel Om Die Vraagstuk Van Woongebiede Vir Naturelle In Die Omgewing Van Die Witwatersrand En Vereeniging Te Ondersoek', p.1

65. Ibid

66. Ibid, p.2

67. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/4, *Persverklaring oor Lokasie-beplanning in die Pretoria tot Vaal-rivier streek insluitende die Witwatersrand (Press release of H.F. Verwoerd announcing the formation of the Mentz Committee in 1952)*

68. A, Mabin, 'Conflict, Continuity and Change', pp.322 – 325

69. Ibid

70. H.F. Verwoerd speech to the Senate, 1952

71. *Mentz Committee Report*, Part IV, p.4

72. Ibid

[73] Ibid, p.1. Some of the following companies were represented: Rand Mines, New Consolidated Goldfields and Anglo American Corporation. The Rondebult

Boerevereniging and the Roodepoort Farmers' Association also attended.

[74] Ibid, p.2

[75] Ibid, p.3

[76] Ibid, p.8

[77] Ibid, p.10

[78] Ibid, p14

[79] Ibid, p15

80. D. Van Tonder, 'Sophiatown: Removals and Protests', p.45

81. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/4, *Persverklaring oor Lokasie-beplanning in die Pretoria tot Vaal-rivier streek insluitende die Witwatersrand*

82. Mentz Committee Report, Part IV, p.8

83. CAD, GGR, 40, 14/1/4, *Rand Daily Mail,* 26.08.55

84. Ibid

85. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/4, newsclipping from *The Star*, 6.01.53 *First sign of action on Mentz report*

86. D. Van Tonder, 'Sophiatown', p.172

87. Ibid, p.172

88. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/4, Newsclipping from *The Star*, 8 .01.54, *Internal arguments in U.P. over Mentz scheme policy*

89. *The Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 12.02.54

90. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/4, *Regional Native Townships: Johannesburg and Witwatersrand Area*, by A.J. Cutten, 1.10.52

91. Ibid

92. CAD, Municipality of Springs (MSP) records, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee*, 1/3/5/1/28

93. Ibid

94. Ibid

95. Ibid

96. Ibid

97. CAD, NTS 8056, 1039/400, *Aankondiging in verband met beplanning van Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Gebied*

98. Ibid

99. Ibid

[100] Quoted in A. Mabin and D. Smit, 'Reconstructing South Africa's Cities?', p.206

101. CAD, NTS 8056, 1039/400, *Aankondiging in verband met beplanning van Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Gebied*

102. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/5, *Notule van die eerste vergadering van die beplanninghulpkomitee vir die Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Gebied, gehou in kamer nr.125, Paulhof, H/V Paul Kruger- en MinnaarStraat Pretoria op Donderdag 8 Januarie 1953*

103. Ibid

104. Ibid

105. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/5, Article in *Die Transvaler*, 13 February 1952, *Bevolkingsprobleem roep om oplossing*

106. CAD, GGR 40, 14/1/5, *Verslag van die ad hoc komitee vir groepsgebiede*

107. CAD, NTS 8056, 1039/400, *Verslag van die ad hoc komitee vir groepsgebiede: Pretoria-Witwatersrand -Vereeniging streek*

108.Ibid, p.12

109. Ibid

110. Ibid, p.14

111. Ibid

112. Ibid, pp.13-14

113. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/28, Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 'Report of the sub-committee appointed by the conference of Reef

municipalities to consider the rights, powers and duties which should be accorded to a proposed regional body to be responsible for the planning of native housing along the Reef.'

[114] P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel, 'The shaping of apartheid: Contradictions, Continuity and Popular Struggles' in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds) *Apartheid's Genesis,* p.1

CHAPTER THREE

Group Areas and Regional Restructuring on the East Rand

By the mid-1950s the government had achieved one of its key objectives in the formulation of detailed restructuring plans for the Witwatersrand. Among the main aims of these plans were the disestablishment of 'black spots' and the relocation of their inhabitants to 'racially' exclusive townships or group areas. The local authorities of the East Rand endorsed these basic objectives and formulated their local plans accordingly. The government had also managed to overcome many of the legal and political obstructions, which initially hindered the smooth functioning of the Group Areas Board. It appeared at the time that the government would relatively quickly be able to implement key components of its social engineering policies on the East Rand. The forced removals of Sophiatown's residents and the establishment of Daveyton and KwaThema in the mid-1950s seemed to confirm this perception. Yet it took the government until the late 1960s successfully to implement the main features of the East Rand's regional plan and a further decade before the final forced removals of residents from 'black spots' were effected.

This chapter analyses the process of implementation of the government's regional 'grand scheme' on the East Rand. It discusses some of the myriad local factors that influenced the pace at which this scheme was introduced regionally and in the different towns. It argues that, notwithstanding the National Party's zealous commitment to compulsory 'racial' segregation and the central government's increasing control over local authorities, it was more difficult than the government might have expected to implement policies according to plan. Indeed, the period between the late 1950s and mid 1960s proved to be a crucial time for the implementation of urban apartheid. It was at this point that local

opposition was especially pronounced. The most important source of resistance emanated from the local black populations – the victims of urban apartheid – and their political organisations.[1] However, an often neglected source of opposition, albeit on fundamentally different grounds from the former, emerged from a host of local white interest groups. The chapter focuses on the opposition posed by local authorities and other white interest groups, which the government could neither dismiss as irrelevant nor repress as it did with black opposition. In this context the tension that arose between the central government and local authorities was not primarily over the principle of segregation. Rather, local authorities proposed plans that reflected their particular interests and which, at times, contradicted the government's regional plans. The effects of the multiple and diverse forms of opposition to the government's regional group area scheme were first to delay its implementation, then force a review of substantial parts of it and eventually cause its abandonment in the 1970s.

The Group Areas Act in the 1950s: from inertia to consolidation

During its first term of office the NP experienced mixed success in its attempts to grapple with the urban crisis. On the one hand, it proceeded speedily and deliberately to create an enabling legislative framework and to formulate detailed plans to intervene in the crisis. On the other hand, its ability to implement these plans proved more complicated than it might have expected. This was nowhere better illustrated than in the case of the Group Areas Act (GAA).

The GAA empowered the Nationalist government with the legal means to effect compulsory segregation and to reverse existing practices of racial integration. The rapid and successful establishment of group areas was a matter of paramount importance to the government, which committed itself in 1948 to a programme of rapid enforcement of residential segregation. However, the promulgation of the GAA in 1950 was not followed by immediate successes. Between 1950 and 1957 the government faced numerous obstacles to and inadequacies in its own plans. The GAA was in practice relatively deficient in its

exposition of plans for the creation of group areas. The government only appointed the Mentz Committee and the Subsidiary Planning Committee in 1952 to advise it on the details of creating townships and group areas. The weaknesses of the group areas policy framework was vividly illustrated by the virtual absence of group area proclamations in the early 1950s: six years after the promulgation of the GAA only five group areas had been declared, that is, less than one a year.[2] Various factors contributed to this delay.

The implementation of the GAA was initially retarded by administrative shortcomings. One of the first obstacles faced by the Land Tenure Advisory Board (LTAB), which was responsible until 1955 for supervising the implementation of the GAA, was uncertainty over the number of 'racial groups' identified by the government. The Population Registration Act of 1950 identified three main 'racial groups', namely, white coloured and 'native'.[3] These arbitrary divisions proved inadequate and the government made provision for more racial subdivisions. Coloureds, for example, were further subdivided into Chinese, Indians, coloureds and malays. The process of racial classification was both tragic and farcical. In 1951 Indians and Chinese were officially recognised as separate groups in all provinces except the Orange Free State. Malays were also officially recognised in a number of Cape municipalities. However, once they left these areas they were no longer malays but became either Cape coloured or *other* coloured![4]

Once this process of racial classification was sufficiently advanced the LTAB could proceed with the declaration of *controlled, specified* or *defined areas,* the precursors to the establishment of group areas. When a locality was earmarked for group area demarcation, permits had to be issued to those people ('disqualified groups') who resided in the 'wrong' location. Similarly, businesses operating outside their designated group area also had to apply for permits. Each permit application had to be investigated, which took up a considerable amount of time. In 1951-52 the LTAB issued 581 such permits but by 1958-59 this figure had leapt to 3395, which demonstrated the enormous bureaucratic burden involved in the administration of the GAA.[5] These administrative difficulties were not foreseen by the government and impeded the implementation of the GAA. The GAB was

initially far more involved in these myriad administrative duties than in preparing recommendations for the proclamation of group areas.

More significant, however, was the opposition organised by the South African Indian Congress (S.A.I.C.) which effectively exploited the administrative shortcomings in the GAA to stall its implementation. This was possible because LTAB hearings to decide on group area demarcations were initially open to all affected parties. For example, in 1953 the S.A.I.C. demanded that members of the LTAB sitting at Lydenburg should recuse themselves because they were not impartial. Although this was not acceded to, the LTAB was forced to test the matter in court. This resulted in a delay of nine months before the Board could proceed with its plans. Interventions of this kind occurred in many centres with Indian populations and frustrated the smooth operation of the LTAB.

Objections from white local authorities also caused delays in the establishment of group areas. For example, the refusal by the Uitenhage Council to implement the GAA because it would adversely affect coloured, Indian and Chinese businesses delayed the creation of group areas in that town.[6] Elsewhere individual councillors opposed the GAA in principle, and in some cases succeeded in stalling the implementation of group areas. Other Councils opposed the GAA because they were reluctant to carry the financial burden of implementing group areas.[7] However, by the mid-fifties many liberal councillors and town planners supported the government's plans to restructure urban areas, in which the creation of group areas was pivotal. Mabin has argued that many planners were 'seduced' by the Nationalist's commitment to bring about order to the urban areas.[8] Many of them also shared the National Party's commitment to assert greater control over the black population.

The initial successes scored by these forces in delaying the implementation of group areas was perhaps more indicative of the relative weakness of the National Party in the early fifties *vis-a vis* the local authorities and the increasingly militant black urban population. The government was then still obliged to conduct open hearings, consult widely with local authorities and even tolerate objections from the black population. But as their electoral position strengthened in 1953 and 1958, and the inability of the black opposition to prevent forced removals became

apparent after the implementation of the Western Areas Removal Scheme, the Nationalists were able to proceed more systematically and autocratically with their plans.

The opposition from the S.A.I.C. and some liberal-controlled Councils also alerted the government to shortcomings in the GAA. The Act was amended on numerous occasions and in 1957 the Group Areas Amendment Act was passed, incorporating all the amendments made to the original Act. In addition the Group Areas Development Act, which established the Group Areas Board, was passed in 1955. The cumulative effect of these amendments was to give the central government and the Group Areas Board specifically, greater power to ensure compliance from local authorities. These amendments, for example, empowered the GAB to prohibit from its hearings anyone who did not propose the establishment of a group area, thereby excluding opposition groups. The 1957 Act represented a turning point in the establishment of group areas. Over the next two years the number of group areas declared increased to 170.[9] An important trump card held by the central government was its threat to withhold finance for housing, without which Councils would not have been able to tackle the black housing crisis. In this way it was able to force compliance from Councils. These seemingly consolidated the legislative foundation on which the government could construct and elaborate the edifice of racially divided urban centres.

Local interests versus the central grand plan

Nearly a decade after coming to power the Nationalist Party thus seemed on the verge of fulfilling one of its main promises to the white electorate. However, the government was confronted at the time by a new set of dilemmas and obstacles in the form of opposition emanating both from the black population as well as local white groups. It is on the role of the latter that the chapter focuses its attention.[10] As noted previously a consensus had been established in the early 1950s between the government and local authorities on the general principles of the racial restructuring of the urban areas and particularly on the creation of group areas and regional black residential areas. But this political consensus belied important differences that

existed between these tiers of the state, especially over the practical and financial implications of the government's schemes.

One of the most important disputes over the implementation of the GAA occurred between the Durban City Council and the government. The Durban Council's aim from the 1940s of halting and reversing 'Indian penetration' placed the city in the forefront of those advocating urban 'racial' segregation[11] and throughout the 1950s it was among the most vocal supporters of the GAA. However, the local authority baulked at the prospect of having to take on the financial responsibility for the implementation of group areas in its own backyard. As a result it called for the creation of group areas in the city to be postponed.[12] This example reveals an important source of tension between the government and local authorities over which of them should bear the financial responsibility for forced removals and the creation of group areas.

Another contentious issue was the divergent attitudes of some local authorities towards their black populations. Generally, local authorities across the country displayed a partiality towards coloureds and Indians, as opposed to Africans. In practice they were willing to support the forced removals of Africans, but were often ambivalent about the application of such policies to coloureds and Indians. Consequently, local authorities more readily accepted the government's policies affecting Africans than those affecting coloureds and Indians. However, another level of discrimination pervaded the policies and attitudes of national and local authorities. They were invariably far more favourably disposed to coloureds than Indians. This discrimination often meant that local authorities insisted on keeping coloureds in their towns, whereas they rarely displayed such commitment to their local Indian population. On the contrary, many of them actively encouraged the government to remove Indians. The hierarchy of discrimination against black people, especially in relation to the application of group areas, underpinned many of the disputes that occurred between municipalities, and between them and the government over the issue of forced removals.

A case in point was the Uitenhage Council, which fully supported the removal of African people from its old location but opposed similar treatment of coloureds and Indians. It argued that the businessmen and property owners from

these communities would be especially adversely affected if they were removed from their existing residential area.[13] That African residents were not given the same consideration underscores the universal support by local authorities for the confinement of urban Africans to new townships, irrespective of the hardships they would endure in the process.

A similar set of issues influenced the relationship between the local authorities and the government over the creation of group areas on the East Rand. During the GAB hearings held on the East Rand in 1957/58 important differences emerged between the local group area plans devised by municipalities and the regional plan, which the Subsidiary Planning Committee recommended and the government endorsed. At the centre of this disagreement was the Benoni, Springs and Boksburg Councils' proposals to create group areas for coloureds and Indians in their respective towns. At the hearing held in Springs in 1957 the Council proposed that Payneville and Bakerton be set aside for coloureds and Indians respectively. In support of its recommendation, the Council argued that it had invested considerable capital over many years in these areas and therefore opposed their intended destruction. Furthermore, it objected to incurring any cost that would arise from the removal of these people to new sites.[14] At the Benoni hearings the local authority deployed similar arguments for keeping coloureds and Indians in the town: it recommended that a coloured group area be created in Wattville and that the local Indian population be accommodated in the Benoni Old Location.[15] In 1959 the Boksburg Council, which was politically closer to the government than the more liberal councils of Springs and Benoni, proposed that Zindabad, the area occupied by Indians, be declared a group area for them.[16]

Although the local blue-prints presented at the group areas hearings closely followed the general prescription laid out by the government for the creation of group areas,[17] they simultaneously reflected local political and economic interests of the respective municipalities. One of the main concerns emerging from the municipalities' submissions was the possible disruptive effect of group areas on the supply of labour to their local industries. This problem was raised especially in relation to the coloured workforce. Thus Benoni and Springs objected to the removal of coloureds because many of them were employed in

local industries and were generally regarded as reliable workers. Their attitudes to Indians were totally different. Indians were mainly involved in commerce and were not perceived as important to industry. The Councils were consequently less enthusiastic about their support for the retention of the local Indian population than for coloureds.

Most interesting, was the GAB's response to these proposals. The Board's executive endorsed the recommendations presented by the East Rand's local authorities, despite the fact that they contradicted the government's regional scheme. In November 1958 the GAB formally accepted the Benoni Council's plans[18] and soon after the Boksburg hearings the chairman of the Transvaal Committee of the GAB, M.P. Prinsloo promised that his committee 'will press for the development of Zindabad' [as an Indian group area].[19]

It is inconceivable the GAB would not have been aware either of the regional plans that were devised earlier by the Mentz and Subsidiary Planning Committees or of the government's commitment to regional townships. M.C. v.t. Barker, an executive member of the Board, served on the Mentz Committee. The GAB did not, however, serve on the Subsidiary Planning Committee,[20] which recommended the creation of regional group areas for coloureds and Indians on the East Rand. The disjuncture between plans proposed by the municipalities and the stated objectives of the government seemed to have arisen because the SPC, while having endorsed the principle of regional group areas, did not propose a detailed plan for the creation of such group areas on the East Rand. It suggested simply that the coloured and Indian populations from two or three municipalities be combined into regional group areas.[21] And, equally important, the government did not formally endorse the recommendations made by the SPC. As a result, the municipalities and GAB did not have a blue-print to guide them. Although municipalities were expected to take account of the principle of regional group areas, there were no mechanisms in place to co-ordinate the process of formulating local plans on a regional basis. This meant that each local authority devised its own group area plans without much, if any, reference to the parallel processes taking place in neighbouring towns.[22] Notwithstanding the involvement of various government bodies in the process of urban restructuring, none of them

assumed (or was given) the responsibility of harnessing their various proposals into a single plan for the East Rand. The GAB, however, seemed best placed to play this role.

The main functions of the GAB and its predecessor, the Land Tenure Advisory Board, were to advise the government on the establishment of group areas and to administer the implementation of the GAA. In discharging these responsibilities the GAB had to liaise with all interested parties, especially local authorities and business groups. The GAB was therefore conceived at the outset as an intermediate body between the government and local authorities. One of the challenges facing this body was to strike a balance between the demands placed on it by the central and local tiers of the state. Prior to group area hearings on the East Rand in the late 1950s, the GAB focused its attention on gaining agreement from local authorities on the principles of 'group areas' and on urging them to formulate local group area plans. Although the Board supported the principle of regional planning, it had neither formally endorsed it nor made any attempt to reconcile local group area plans (for coloureds and Indians) with the regional restructuring scheme endorsed by the government. The hearings revealed a number of inconsistencies between these plans and it immediately became apparent that the central government would not endorse, let alone proclaim, the group areas proposed by the East Rand's local authorities. The government had meanwhile begun promoting the idea of creating single regional group areas for coloureds and Indians.

In response to this dilemma the executive of the GAB resolved to hold in abeyance the implementation of the group areas proposals until the completion of an investigation into the creation of group areas on the East Rand.[23] A special committee comprising members of the GAB and the National Housing Commission was created to investigate and elaborate on the establishment of single regional group areas for coloureds and Indians.[24] The first objective of the committee was to bring the GAB's policies in line with that of the government, which it achieved by formally adopting the principle of establishing regional group areas for coloureds and Indians.[25] This step marked an important shift in the relationship between the Board and the East Rand's local authorities. Thenceforth

it more vigorously advocated the government's schemes and worked towards achieving compliance with them from local authorities. The shift in the GAB's policy placed it at odds with the East Rand's municipalities. By so doing the Board also became more of an agent and conduit for central government policies, and ultimately was incorporated into the newly formed Department of Community Development in 1963.

Once the GAB had gone through the ritual of formally endorsing the principle of regional group areas, it proceeded to identify the places where these could be established. The investigating committee made specific proposals in this regard. The 'black spots' of Benoni (Benoni Old Location, the Asiatic Bazaar and Coloured Section) and of Boksburg (Galeview, Stirtonville and Zindabad) would be consolidated and developed into the group areas for Indians and coloureds respectively. According to the committee these locations were ideally suited for this purpose because they were either sufficiently distant from white residential area or there existed acceptable buffer zones to separate them from the white areas.[26] According to government policy, the presence of adequate buffer zones was a primary prerequisite for the establishment of a black residential area. In Boksburg the buffer zones included the huge East Rand Proprietary Mines complex as well as the Cinderella Dam. The existence of a large slime dam of between 250-300 acres between the proposed coloured group area and the white town of Elsburg ensured the suitability of this particular site.[27] The 'black spots' of Benoni were similarly separated from the white town by industrial areas.

The GAB motivated its support for regional group areas on the grounds that there were too few coloureds and Indians on the East Rand to make the creation of group areas in individual towns financially feasible.[28] The local authorities refuted this argument and showed that the process of relocating people from various parts of the East Rand to single group areas would be more costly. For example, the Benoni Council argued that the removals would become a serious financial burden on local authorities because of the compensation they would have to pay to people being relocated.

Once the GAB decided where the new group would be located, it proceeded to formulate detailed plans to put together the different parts of the

regional group areas puzzle. The most important steps in this plan were the speedy disestablishment of 'black spots', their proclamation as 'group areas', the removal of 'disqualified' persons from them and the development of the proclaimed 'group area' according to the perceived needs of the people assigned to it.[29] It was therefore the recommendation of the special investigating committee rather than the findings of the GAB hearings that launched the group areas restructuring process on the East Rand.

In Boksburg, Africans had to be removed from Stirtonville and Galeview, and Indians from Zindabad and the Asiatic Bazaars, in order to the clear the area for occupation by coloured people from all over the region. The local African population was destined for the new 'modern' township, Vosloorus, and the Indian population was to be relocated to Actonville, the proposed Indian regional group area.[30] But this plan was beset by a number of problems. The 'black spots' of Boksburg, whose suitability was largely premised on it being surrounded by buffer zones, proved too small to accommodate all the coloured people on the East Rand, and was prevented from further expansion by these self same buffer zones. The area had a limited capacity of 2400 family units. The government expected that 1600 families from all over the region would move into the new group area in the early 1960s and that full capacity would be reached within 15 years.

The Boksburg and Benoni Councils readily agreed to the proposed removal of Africans from their old locations to Vosloorus and Daveyton respectively. These removals were initially recommended by the Mentz Committee and were central components of the regional plan for creating African townships. However, when it came to the proposals regarding coloureds and Indians a number of controversies arose, which would impede the speedy implementation of the regional group area plans. The opposition emanating from Benoni proved to be the most serious problem confronting the government in this regard.

Benoni's white opposition to the regional plan

The government's group area plans for Benoni provoked opposition from various and diverse quarters. On the one hand, were those organisations that rejected the whole concept of group areas. These were drawn overwhelmingly from the town's black community and were mainly organised under the banner of the Congress Alliance. On the other hand, there were those organisations that supported the principle of group areas, but opposed specific aspects of its implementation at the local level. Foremost among the latter were the local chapters of the official white opposition parties, namely, the United and Labour Parties, which traditionally dominated white politics in Benoni.[31] These parties were particularly vocal about their opposition to the removal of coloured people from the town. The demand to keep the local coloured population was, most interestingly, also supported by an alliance of Afrikaner organisations. The Council's proposal to create a coloured 'group area' in Wattville won approval from these organisations. Local industrialists were also keen to retain coloureds in the area because they were an important source of artisanal labour. The significance of the opposition that emanated from these diverse constituencies was the extent to which local interests often contradicted the government's national plans. A secondary, but important, feature emerging out of this process was the differential attitude of various groups to different 'racial groups'.

The Benoni Council was especially concerned about the financial implications of the proposed forced removals. It criticised the government's plans as being 'uneconomical' because it recommended a staggered removal process of Africans, first from Benoni Old Location and then, after three decades[32], from Wattville.[33] J.E. Mathewson, the Director of Non-European Affairs, was particularly adamant that the town's interest would be best served if all Africans were immediately removed to Daveyton. Such a move, it was argued, would minimise the cost to the Council and would mean that the Old Location could be revamped as part of the Indian group area. Coloured people would also be moved to Wattville where they would be accommodated in the houses vacated by Africans, without any major additional costs.[34] The anticipated cost of the

removal was not insignificant: it was estimated the removal of Africans alone would cost approximately R1 million, an amount which the Bantu Affairs Department wanted covered from the Council's general account.[35] The implication of this was that local white taxpayers would carry the financial burden of implementing the government's plans, something most local authorities were reluctant to accept.

The government remained unperturbed by the complaints of the Benoni Council. As far as it was concerned the financial costs of the removals were outweighed by the political importance of effecting regional group areas. The government also accused the Benoni authorities of placing its local interests above regional and national concerns. The government at the time refused to consider any exceptions to its regional plans and remained adamant about creating the regional Indian group area in Benoni, the implication of which was that coloureds would have to move.[36]

The Benoni Council was initially equally determined to retain its local coloured population and in mid-1962 proposed what it called a 'new deal' to achieve its objective. The town's white political leaders viewed themselves as pioneers of developing innovative plans to alleviate the living conditions of black people and now suggested to the government that it be allowed to implement another of its 'winds of change' experiments.[37] The local authority believed it was ideally placed to establish a local Coloured Affairs Department and to allow coloureds a measure of local self-government, including in time, the creation of a Management Committee.[38] The government had at the time begun formulating policies for the development of such racialised local government structures for coloureds and Indians. The Council's plans were therefore hardly original and its proposed 'New Deal' thus represented an endorsement of the government's policies. But it hoped that by enthusiastically embracing these plans, its own plans would be more favourably received by the government. However, the government remained unimpressed by this overture and insisted that Benoni's coloured population be removed to the regional group area in Boksburg.

A politically significant development at the time was local Afrikaners' opposition to the government's plans. In February 1961 an article in the *Benoni*

City Times made some astute observations on the motivations of different interest groups' support for keeping coloureds in Benoni, and also commented on the importance of the 'Afrikaans support for local coloureds':

> Benoni's 6000 Coloureds already have a staunch champion who will try and persuade the Group Areas Board not to remove them from the town. But it is not the voice of industry (who likes them as workers), nor the voice of the municipality (to whom they are a source of reliable revenue) nor, as yet, that of any other predominantly English speaking group in the town. The fist champions of the Coloureds are a strong combination of local Afrikaner organisations whose energetic approach has already secured them an interview with the Group Areas officials.[39]

This Afrikaner alliance comprised the local chapters of some of the most important organisations in the Afrikaner establishment. The most prominent among these were the N.G. Kerk and the Benoni National Party branch, which together with a number of social organisations and Afrikaner Councillors formed the Committee of Coloured Affairs, whose main aim was to campaign against the government's plan to remove coloureds. The committee, like most other white organisations, supported the policy of group areas, but concurred with the view espoused by the Council that coloureds were beneficial to the town.[40] The difference in their attitude towards the Indian population was striking. The committee argued, more explicitly than any other organisation, that if any 'group' had to be moved it should be the local Indian population. In its memorandum to the GAB, the committee advanced an argument that revealed a strong bias in favour of coloureds.[41] It claimed that historically coloureds had a stronger claim to residential rights in South Africa than Indians.[42] According to this view coloureds should therefore be given preferential treatment in the allocation of land or residential areas. Echoing the views of other organisations, the committee argued that coloureds would be severely inconvenienced if they were relocated because they would have to travel longer distances to and from their workplaces. Indians, the committee averred, did not work in industry and would adapt more

easily to the hardships of being relocated.[43] The local Afrikaners' attitude echoed a general antipathy among whites and officialdom generally towards Indian people, who were perceived as politically troublesome, a threat to white small businesses and of little value to industry. The committee also argued that the removal of Africans from Wattville and their replacement by coloureds would alleviate the congestion in Benoni Old Location.[44]

The local Afrikaner opposition was significant enough to prompt a visit in November 1961 to Benoni by the Minister of Community Development, P.W. Botha. The stated purpose of the visit was to allow the government to explain to its constituency the importance of its group areas plans.[45] It was one thing for the government to be criticised by its political foes, which dominated the Benoni Council, but opposition from within the ranks of the ruling party and the dominant Afrikaner church was not a situation it could tolerate. This local dispute assumed special significance as it occurred at the time when the National Party (and the Afrikaner establishment as a whole) was involved in an acrimonious internal struggle over the issue of direct coloured representation in parliament.[46] According to O'Meara there was strong support in the National Party for the idea of coloured representation by coloureds in parliament, including support from the usually conservative sections of the party (leaders of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State).[47] It is unclear where the Benoni branch of the National Party stood in this debate. The existence of such public and fierce contestation in the ruling party would, however, have created the space for local branches publicly to voice their opposition, at least on issues relating to the position of coloureds.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the government acted swiftly to address the concerns raised by local Afrikaners. Interestingly, Verwoerd had elevated P.W. Botha to a full Cabinet rank in August 1961, specifically to deal with the recalcitrant voices in the Cape Province division of the party.[48] Botha's visit to Benoni was therefore highly significant and would have sent a clear message to local party supporters of the gravity with which the government viewed their opposition. During the discussions the Minister reiterated the government's commitment to regional group areas and insisted that its plan was more cost effective because the provision of basic services to a single large group area

would cost less per capita. The direct intervention by a senior government Minister seemed to have convinced the Afrikaner alliance, the local Chamber of Commerce and the local National Party branch to abandon its opposition.[49] From this point on this important constituency fully supported the government's plans for Benoni.

In 1963 the Council made one last attempt to deflect the government's plans. Under the pretext of the need to expand its industrial land, the Council opposed the development of the Indian residential area, the expansion of which would occur on the land now earmarked for industrial development.[50] The Bantu Affairs Department (BAD) vehemently objected to the proposal and saw it as nothing more than a manoeuvre by the Council to impede the declaration of an Indian group area. The government accused the Council of reneging on agreements it had previously made with BAD and threatened to withhold any further financial assistance to the council. The government insisted that the Council would only be permitted to use the Native Revenue Account for the payment of compensation if it agreed to the aforementioned land for Indian residential purposes.[51] This was a serious threat and forced the Council to reconsider its position. One of the main complaints previously raised by the Council was that the cost of the removal (including paying compensation to those African residents who owned property in the Benoni Old Location) should not be paid from the General Account.[52] The Group Areas Development Board in a similar vein threatened to withdraw its co-operation and support unless the Council agreed to the expansion of the Indian residential area.[53] The threat to withhold financial support proved to be the government's trump card when it was confronted by opposition from local authorities. The Council began to buckle under this enormous pressure and divisions emerged in ranks over the issue of developing an Indian group area. At least one Councillor, P.W. Smith, accused the Management Committee of discriminating against Indians.[54]

The one consistent oppositional voice from the white community was that of Leo Lovell, the Labour Member of Parliament from 1949 to 1958.[55] Unlike other white opponents of the government's plans, Lovell opposed the removal of Africans from Wattville. He was also the legal representative of the Benoni

Coloured Vigilance Association, which led the campaign against the removal of coloured people from Benoni. Lovell also argued that the removal of coloureds and Africans from the old location would have adverse effects on the Indian traders, who were dependent on the local clientele for their businesses. The residents of Benoni Old Location viewed Lovell as an ally and he often addressed public rallies, called to mobilise against the forced removal, in the location.[56] Lovell opposed group areas but was also prepared to use any legal argument to achieve his immediate objective of stopping the removal of black people from the old location. For example, he argued at the GAB hearings that Wattville was already a completely segregated residential area and therefore conformed to the government's prescriptions, making it unnecessary to remove Africans from that township.[57] In 1959, Lovell organised a petition to oppose the removal of African people from Benoni Old Location to Daveyton. Nearly four hundred white residents signed the petition, which reflected the widespread sympathy that existed for Lovell's campaign. Lovell succeeded in mobilising opposition among white residents mainly because he exposed the financial burden they would have to bear in the process. He had calculated that removals would cost white taxpayers approximately £3,7 million.[58] But Lovell was concerned by more than the financial implications of the removal. He seemed genuinely interested in fostering amiable 'race relations', which he believed would be undermined by the removals. This much is apparent from his petition:

> The question of human discontent is of paramount importance. The Native inhabitant of the Old Location and Wattville are a settled and happy community. Their removal from deep rooted associations and well established homes and gardens must stir resentment even in the most peaceful and docile people ... the general community of the Town of Benoni, European and Non-European will suffer seriously as a result of the removal both in good relations and in the impoverishment of their resources by virtue of the unnecessary expenditure involved.[59]

By the early 1960s Lovell had however become a lone voice of opposition in the white community. The United Party-led council and the alliance of Afrikaners had resigned themselves to the inevitable implementation of the government's regional plans. Nonetheless, in the short period between 1958 and 1962 Benoni offered some of the most serious and possibly portentous local white opposition to critical aspects of the government's urban apartheid scheme. In the event, the different strands of the opposition were themselves too divided seriously to contemplate a united stand against the ruling party. As a result, the government could deal separately with each of them and was able to undermine the threat each of them posed. Nonetheless, it took nearly seven years from the time of the GAB hearings before the government was in a position to proclaim group areas in Benoni.

Boksburg's feeble opposition

The situation in Boksburg differed markedly from the oppositional fervour that characterised Benoni in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In contrast to Benoni, the opposition to group areas in Boksburg, came almost exclusively from the Indian community. The Boksburg Council supported the government's regional plans and was especially pleased about the creation of the coloured regional group area in the town. Although the local authority initially supported the creation of an Indian group, it jettisoned the idea when the GAB pressed for the removal of Indians from the town. As a result the Indian population received very little support for its campaign from any official quarters, which reflected the weakness of white opposition parties in the town compared to Benoni. The African population of Stirtonville and Galeview received even less support and there is no record of any white opposition to their removal to Vosloorus.

Since the late 1940s the Boksburg Council had supported the creation of a separate residential area for Indians. In 1948 Zindabad was identified for exclusive Indian residential occupation under the Land Tenure Act. However, the development of the area was postponed due to the government's intention to introduce the GAA, which the Council anticipated would affect the status of

Zindabad. The proclamation of the GAA in 1950 seemed to have spurred on the Council to develop the area. In that year the Council took transfer of the area specifically to develop it as a residential area. The following year Zindabad was provisionally approved for township purposes and in 1952 this step was formalised.[60] When the Administrator of the Transvaal empowered the Council to sell stands to Indian residents, the local authority and residents understandably assumed the area would in due course be proclaimed an Indian group area. However, the government refused permission for the area formally to be proclaimed as such while it was still formulating its detailed plans for the racial restructuring of the entire region.

At the group areas hearing in 1959 the Council again recommended the development of Zindabad and the surrounding areas for the purpose of an Indian group area. It also suggested that Indians living elsewhere in the town (for example, in Boksburg North, where a number of families had been living and trading for many years) be relocated to the proposed group area.[61] After years of stalling the Council appeared adamant about the development of the Indian group area and publicly stated that it was 'absolutely essential that the group area for Indians be proclaimed in Boksburg'.[62] The endorsement of this recommendation by the GAB seemed to confirm the future of the area.

But the Boksburg Council's support for an Indian group area proved to be very brittle. Almost immediately after the group area hearings it apparently reversed its position. When the government announced its racial demarcation scheme for the town at the end of 1959 no provision was made for an Indian residential area.[63] That this announcement was made when there still existed some uncertainty over the regional group areas plans (which were then still under investigation) suggests the government had already won the support of the Council and GAB for its plan. The complete absence of any opposition from the local authority to the government's announcement confirmed its acquiescence.

Some white residents did however voice their disapproval of the intended removal of Indians. In the early 1960s a number of white residents of Boksburg North publicly supported the demand by Indian residents living and trading in 14th Avenue to remain in the area. According to these residents it was unnecessary to

move the small group of Indians because they were 'model citizens' and 'well behaved'.[64] The attitude of white traders and shoppers in the area directly contradicted one of the main reasons the government advanced to support the removal of Indian traders, namely, that they represented unfair competition to white small businesses. Local white traders acknowledged the stiff competition posed by Indian traders, but were surprisingly philosophical about the situation, arguing that 'business is business'. White shoppers were even more aggrieved over the loss of Indian traders because many white working class families enjoyed the benefits of credit facilities at the Indian shops.[65] But these impassioned appeals were not only ephemeral, they were also confined to a small minority of Boksburg's white population. The dominant view among white residents and authorities was strong support for the government's policies.

The fate of Boksburg Indian community is best understood in the context of the government's determination to resist and break any opposition emanating from Indians over group areas. According to H.S.J. van Wyk, the chairman of the Southern Transvaal Committee of the GAB, the 'Asiatic problem was a big problem' and its resolution required the full attention of all Councils.[66] In this view the success of the group areas resettlement programme hinged on the authorities' ability to overcome the resistance by Indians. The relocation of the entire East Rand's Indian population into a single regional group area was thus perceived as a primary objective.[67] The removal of Indian traders from various parts of Boksburg, but especially those living in the so-called Asiatic Bazaar No.2 and Boksburg North, became a priority because of their proximity to white residents.[68] Under the weight of the government's determined pursuit of its plan to evict all Indians from Boksburg, the already weak resistance offered by Indian residents and the feeble support from a small number of whites quickly crumbled.

In contrast to its lacklustre and ephemeral support for the cause of the local Indian population, the Boksburg Council displayed considerably more enthusiasm over the prospect of having the regional coloured group area located in its town. As early as 1963 it approached the BAD about the establishment of an additional industrial complex in the municipality in order to create more jobs for the expected influx of coloured workers.[69] At this point the government was

divided over the issue of proclaiming new industrial areas on the Witwatersrand. The BAD was generally averse to such steps because it wanted to stem the influx of new African workers from the rural areas. The Department of Community Development was more supportive of the proposals (it was more interested in the welfare of coloureds than BAD), but insisted that special legislation would have to be introduced to ensure that coloureds and Indians would be employed in any new industries. Although the existing legislation discouraged the employment of Africans, it neither encouraged nor compelled industrialists to employ coloured or Indian workers in their place.[70] The Boksburg authorities hoped the influx of thousands of coloureds into the area would improve its industrial labour pool and thus encourage the establishment of new industries in the town.

However, local industrialists were divided in their opinions about the desirability of coloured workers. Some of them refused to employ coloured workers (presumably because they were perceived to be ill-suited for hard labour) and expressed their reservations over the influx of coloured workers into the area. They feared these workers would merely be 'surplus labour' and therefore be a burden on the town.[71] The Boksburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry held a very different view. It was far more favourably disposed to the idea of the establishment of a 'coloured city' and believed that the town's commerce and industry would 'dramatically' improve as a result.[72] The Chamber was less optimistic about employing coloureds in local industries but was confident that they would spend their income in Boksburg, which it was hoped would cause a 'general business boom' in the town.[73] The Boksburg and Benoni local authorities therefore campaigned for the right to have the coloured regional group area in their towns primarily because of coloureds' supposed suitability (and reliability) as industrial workers and because they were a reliable source of revenue. During the period under discussion the two municipalities publicly and often vociferously vied for the right to have the coloured group area. Neither made much of an issue of having the regional Indian group area. The effect of the tussle between these towns was to cause further delays in the implementation of group areas.

By the end of 1962 the government had grown extremely impatient with the slow progress being made by the East Rand's local authorities in giving effect

to its regional scheme. Rather than facilitating this process, the municipalities of Benoni and Boksburg were perceived as creating unnecessary obstacles. In order to expedite the implementation of its plan, the government adopted a more uncompromising stance in relation to the municipalities as well as other oppositional voices. The GAB and the Minister of Community Development believed the proclamation of Actonville as an Indian group area was imperative to send a clear signal to the coloured residents of that area that their opposition to the removals was futile.[74] They called for an acceleration of the process of preparing for and declaring group areas in Benoni. The authorities expected coloureds from Benoni Old Location to resist their removal and recommended their forcible expulsion from the area.[75] The government's change in attitude was also reflected in its advice to the Benoni Council to forcibly evict all coloured families living in the backquarters of the Asiatic Bazaar.[76] Not even the compliant Boksburg Council managed to escape the wrath of the government. P.W. Botha, who had taken a personal interest in the progress of the establishment group areas on the East Rand, threatened to give the Boksburg Council a 'rude awakening' by creating the coloured group area elsewhere unless it proceeded speedily to implement the government's plan.[77]

The regional plan is revised

The government's renewed drive to instil urgency into the process of restructuring the East Rand was, however, not immediately successful. One of the main difficulties the government confronted was that the different (local) parts of the regional puzzle were so intimately linked that any delay in one caused the postponement of the entire plan. This was evident in the early 1960s when the government attempted to hasten the removal of black residents from various 'black spots' to the new townships or group areas. The development of Reiger Park was a pivotal piece in the regional puzzle because the removal of coloured people from the other 'black spots' was a prerequisite for the conversion of those locations into group areas. For example, the old locations of Benoni and Germiston could not be disestablished as 'native locations' and reproclaimed as

'group areas', let alone be developed as long as coloureds still lived in them. Benoni was especially affected by this: in order for its old location to be proclaimed and developed as an Indian group area, the coloureds living there had to make way for Indians from other parts of the region.

None of this could materialise in the early 1960s because of the delays in removing the African population of Galeview and Stirtonville (which were to form the main parts of Reiger Park) to Vosloorus.[78] First, the Boksburg Council took until 1957 to identify the land on which it intended to build the new African township. Most of the East Rand's municipalities had by then already begun developing their townships (Daveyton, KwaThema, Katlehong) or were in the process of doing so (Thokoza). However, once the land was identified a number of further delays occurred, which were not entirely the Council's fault. The most important causes of the long delay in developing Vosloorus was the dispute with the local mining company over compensation for mineral rights and problems the Council encountered over the provision of water to the new township.[79] The protracted negotiations over the former issue precluded even the laying down of basic infrastructure until the early 1960s. The Council's problems were exacerbated by the meagre income generated from the Service Levy Fund, which proved insufficient for the financing of services and amenities in the township. The Council required permission from the BAD to cover the shortfall from its Bantu Beer Account. But this involved them in another bureaucratic process of protracted negotiations.[80] Only once these negotiations were successfully concluded and the finances were made available could the Council proceed to develop Vosloorus. In 1964 the township was completed and the removal of African residents from the old location was set to take place in March and April of that year.

However, on the eve of the removals another dispute between the Council and the government flared up, this time over the transport cost involved for African workers commuting between Vosloorus and the Boksburg industrial areas. For its part the Council refused to subsidise these new travelling costs.[81] Once again the issue of financing apartheid emerged as a sticking point: the Boksburg local authority had consistently proved to be a loyal ally of the central

government, but even so was not prepared to carry the financial burden of the government's policies. The Council found the government's transport subsidy inadequate. The Government Transport Levy Fund offered a subsidy of one cent out of every ten cents towards the cost of bus fares, but the Council rejected the offer and insisted the government increase its offer to four cents.[82] The cost of transport from the new townships to workplaces was a contentious issue for African workers on the East Rand. Previously, the majority of them had lived within walking distance from the industrial areas and town centres. The new townships were created far from these areas, thereby imposing a considerable financial burden on a workforce, which generally received low wages. Residents of Vosloorus could now expect to pay at least 20 cents for a bus trip between the township and Boksburg.[83] The Boksburg Transportation Department, which was responsible for operating the bus service, also could not carry the financial burden of further subsidisation because it was operating unprofitably, having incurred a loss of approximately R100 000 in 1963.[84] After intensive negotiations between the various parties, it was agreed that African commuters would pay R3, 90 for a monthly ticket and that the Government Transport Levy Fund would provide a subsidy of 7½ cents per daily ticket.[85] The delay caused by this particular dispute was not great, but it reflected the extent to which the regional restructuring process was beset by numerous dilemmas, some of which were unexpected, as in the above case.

The dust had hardly settled on the transport dispute when the Boksburg Council was faced by another and potentially more serious controversy. The authorities had previously recognised that the land allocated in Reiger Park for the coloured group area was inadequate to cater for future population growth. The successful development of that area in the long term depended on the availability of more land. However, the East Rand Proprietary Mines (E.R.P.M.)[86], which held the mining rights in the area, opposed the expansion of Reiger Park because it required the land for further mining purposes. In 1965, when the African population had been removed from the old location, the authorities estimated that a further 4500 houses would be required over the following two decades to accommodate the increase in the coloured population of the East Rand.[87] More

land was thus required on which to build these houses. But the mining company was adamant about retaining its rights over the land. E.R.P.M.'s attempt to prevent the expansion of Reiger Park was the result of the changing fortunes of local mining. In 1948 it was estimated that the life expectancy of the mine was only two years, but within a year that prognosis was completely reversed. The devaluation of the currency in 1949 markedly increased the value of gold and as a consequence the life expectancy of the Boksburg mine was increase to 24 years. This meant that the company expected to continue mining in the area until the mid-1970s.[88] Besides needing the land in question for mining, the company also wanted to use some of the adjacent land for the disposal of water and waste. The implication of this position was that Reiger Park could not be extended for at least a decade, making it impossible to accommodate the East Rand's entire coloured population there as envisaged in the government's plan.

Faced by these obstacles, the government was forced to reconsider how it would implement its regional group areas scheme. Instead of meeting its objective of speedily implementing the whole regional plan, the government acknowledged it would have to delay and stagger its implementation. The first step undertaken was to identify which removals could be delayed. For example, because the coloured populations of Alberton, Kempton Park and Edenvale were relatively small and lived in separate sections in the African locations of those towns, their continued presence in these locations was not perceived as a serious threat to the government's plans. It was agreed therefore to delay their removal.[89] The removal of Indian residents from Alberton and Kempton Park was delayed for similar reasons. However, in Edenvale where Indian-owned shops occupied the same area as white residents, their removal was regarded as urgent. In Germiston the twenty-one Indian families and three coloured families living among white residents were also obliged to move. By contrast, the removal of coloureds and Indians living in Germiston's coloured location and Asiatic Bazaar respectively was no longer regarded as a priority because those areas were earmarked for future industrial development and not as a white group area. In Benoni the removal of the coloured population was made the priority in order that the Indian group area of Actonville could begin to take shape.[90] At this stage no time limit or plans were put in place

for when and where those coloureds and Indians who were not immediately being removed would be relocated.

Once these new plans and priorities had been agreed to, the Benoni and Boksburg Councils, together with the Departments of Community Development, Coloured Affairs and Indian Affairs, recommended that the Minister declare 1 April 1964 as the date for the commencement of the removals of coloureds from Actonville. This was seen as the first and important step in kick-starting the revised regional removal scheme. P.W. Botha duly endorsed the recommendation.[91] From this time the opposition to the removals quickly dissipated as it was realised the government was determined to proceed with the implementation of its plans and would use every means at its disposal to ensure their realisation. The process of removals accordingly accelerated. By the latter half of 1964 the Boksburg Council had already resettled 2 500 African families in Vosloorus and expected to lift the figure to 3000 before the end of the year. The Council had simultaneously relocated 92 Indian families in Actonville. The removal of Africans from Galeview and Stirtonville opened the way for the resettlement of Benoni's coloured population, which by the end of 1964 had already amounted to 784 families.[92] A government progress report circulated in early 1965 indicated that rapid progress was being made with the removals: only 1150 coloureds families still had to be resettled in Boksburg compared to the 2076 families at the end of the previous year. The same report showed that all the 250 stands put up for sale in Reiger Park had been bought and on 64 of those private houses had already been erected. At the same time 1575 coloured families had occupied houses vacated by African families.[93] As these figures illustrate the forced removals programme on the East Rand reached its apogee in the mid-1960s. By the late 1960s most black people in the region had been forcibly relocated into their respective 'racial' residential areas. In particular, Actonville and Reiger Park were eventually converted and proclaimed as regional group areas as the government intended from the early 1950s. Despite these successes, however, the government had only partially achieved its grand plan for the region. Many coloured and Indian people still remained outside these regional group

areas. The situation in Springs, Germiston and Alberton represented important exception to the regional blue-print.

Springs – the end of the regional grand plan

The Springs Council's policy towards group areas for its coloured and Indian population was characterised by dramatic shifts from the early 1950s. In 1952 the Council wanted Payneville to retain its coloured and African populations but by the time of the GAB hearings in 1957 it recommended that the old location be converted into group areas for coloureds and Indians. By the mid-1960s the Council had executed another about turn and wanted the whole town, excluding KwaThema, to be proclaimed a group area for whites. The vicissitudes in the local authority's group areas policy, the delays in completing the regional plans and opposition from local mining companies all combined to detach Springs from the regional group areas scheme.

As was the case in other East Rand towns, the Springs municipality was confident after the 1957 GAB hearing that its plans for group area demarcation would be effected very quickly.[94] The plan agreed to by the GAB was that all African residents would be relocated to KwaThema and that Payneville and Bakerton would be declared coloured and Indian group areas respectively. In November 1959 the Council sought ministerial approval for the disestablishment of Payneville as a 'native location' and confidently anticipated that the way would be cleared for the creation of group areas.[95]

However, the Springs Council expected neither the negative response by the government or the 'strenuous opposition' that came from the local mining houses (Grootvlei and Geduld). Grootvlei Proprietary Mines especially objected to the proposed use of the land as residential areas for coloureds and Indians.[96] The company contended that unless the land was reserved for a 'native location', for which purpose the Council was originally granted occupation, then it should regain full use of the land.[97] As was the case with E.R.P.M. in Boksburg, the Springs companies proved unco-operative in making land, over which they exercised some control, available to black people. The negotiations with these

highly influential mining groups prevented local authorities planning any residential development for coloureds and Indians. As a result, the Springs Council was forced to recommend that the disestablishment of Payneville be postponed.[98] Despite a series of intense negotiations between the Council, the GAB and various government departments and a decision by the Department of Mines to support the Council's proposed demarcation of Payneville,[99] the mining companies remained steadfast in their opposition. The GAB attempted to circumvent their objections but failed[100] and the Council was therefore unable to implement its own recommendations.

By 1960, the Council had altered its opinion about creating group areas for coloureds *and* Indians in the town. Partly at the pressure of the government to allow only regional group areas, the Council advised the GAB it was no longer keen to have an Indian group area. Instead it supported the removal of the local Indian population to Actonville.[101] The Council's antipathy to Indian people echoed the sentiments of its regional neighbours. So too did its positive attitude to the coloured population. At the time the Mayor of the town argued,

> that it might be to the advantage of Springs if all the Coloureds were to establish themselves in Springs. Coloureds have attained a higher level of development and were more reliable than natives. Coloureds usually earned higher wages and would accordingly have a greater purchasing power.[102]

But the changes in the political balance of forces in the Council that occurred in 1962/63 produced another dramatic shift in the Council's policy. In particular, the National Party's ascendancy in the Council had a profound influence on the political positions adopted by the Council from the early 1960s.[103] In 1963 the new mayor of Springs, Mr. Dyssel, explained his Council's changed attitude to coloureds. He admitted the Council initially believed coloureds would be suitable replacements for African labour but had since reached the conclusion that coloureds would never be beneficial to the town's industrial development.[104] Consequently, the local authority endorsed the removal of coloureds to Reiger Park. The Council's policy vicissitudes caused immense

uncertainty over the future of the local coloured and Indian populations. Ironically, its support for the government's regional plan seemed to end that uncertainty, even though coloureds and Indians rejected the plan.

On 21 February 1964 the government officially proclaimed Springs as a white 'group area'.[105] At the same time the Payneville/Bakerton complex was provisionally proclaimed a 'controlled area', pending the eventual removal of coloureds and Indians. In terms of the proclamation those Indian businessmen operating in the town could continue to do so for a limited period, but had to find residential sites in an Indian 'group area'.[106] At this point the Springs Council was adamant that Payneville and Bakerton should eventually be declared a white 'group area',[107] which would leave KwaThema as the only area in the town legally occupied by black people. According to the Council the residents of KwaThema, namely African workers, would fulfil the town's labour requirements and, therefore, no other blacks were needed.[108]

In an ironic twist of fate, the Springs Council's zealous commitment to move coloureds and Indians to their respective regional 'group areas' was thwarted by the government's inability to implement its regional scheme. Over the next decade Springs, more than any other East Rand town, was left in limbo about its future. Meanwhile, there were signals that the government was prepared to deviate from its regional 'grand' plan. In 1967 the authorities suggested that it might be necessary to create a second coloured group area in the region.[109] In May 1968 the GAB advertised its intention to proclaim Bakerton a coloured 'group area', much to the chagrin of the Springs municipality, which immediately rejected the recommendation.[110] The early 1970s witnessed even more dramatic fluctuations in the official policies regarding the future of Payneville and Bakerton. In 1971 the campaign to proclaim those locations as a white 'group area' gained new momentum when the Departments of Indian Affairs, Coloured Affairs, Mining and Development came out in full support of the proposal. These Departments argued that this proclamation would accelerate the resettlement of the location's black residents to their rightful 'group areas' in the region.[111] In February 1973 the Council conducted a social survey of the old location and, not surprisingly, found the place to be 'dilapidated' and 'impossible to clean

properly'.[112] The Council argued that it would be too expensive to upgrade and clean the area and proposed to erect temporary dwellings in KwaThema for coloureds. Punt Janson, the Deputy Minister of Bantu Affairs, supported the proposal but the local coloured population rejected it.[113]

Strangely, at the time the latter recommendations were being aired the Council also held top level discussions with the government. At a meeting in February 1973 between the Council and various ministries, the government's commitment to its regional scheme was reiterated. However, government delegates acknowledged that the plan would not immediately come to fruition and agreed that Indians would have to live in Bakerton until at least the late 1970s and coloureds in Payneville for another three years.[114] By the end of 1973 the government acknowledged that its vacillation over these issues was untenable. In October 1973 it eventually agreed that Indians living in Springs and Nigel would not be forced to move to Actonville because there simply was not enough space there for them. The government was especially concerned that any further procrastination on its side would alienate the Indian population.[115] Bakerton was then identified as the site for a new Indian group area. Only the future of the coloured population from Springs still hung in the balance. When coloured residents of Payneville rejected the proposed, albeit supposedly temporary, move to KwaThema, the Council agreed to invest some money in the area to effect minimal improvements.[116] This was done largely in acknowledgement of the atrocious conditions that prevailed in the location. But the Council's intervention was a case of much too little, too late. When Helen Suzman, the Opposition Member of Parliament, visited Payneville in the late 1970s she described it as 'the worst slum in the Transvaal'.[117] At this stage the terrible conditions in Payneville were threatening to become a serious political embarrassment for the government, which hastened the process of relocating coloureds to the new coloured 'group area' in the region, namely Geluksdal.

In the late 1960s coloureds and Indians who were living in the near East Rand towns of Germiston, Alberton and Edenvale had not yet been relocated to the regional group areas. As a result, these towns began considering the creation of further group areas for coloureds and Indians. In 1969 the Alberton Industries

Association urged the municipality to proceed with its proposal to create a coloured group area. The Association concurred with the government's objective to "maintain a reasonable ratio between Bantu and other workers in urban industrial areas". In their opinion, it was "obvious that every attempt should be made to encourage Coloured workers in any given areas in order to maintain the desired ratios."[118] A meeting of the Association noted that there were only a few coloureds employed in the area because of the lack of accommodation for them and that some of these workers travelled from as far as Pretoria. In a veiled threat the Association indicated that industrialists were "[reviewing] their programmes very critically particularly with regard to future expansion" because of the lack of labour caused by the imposition of quotas by the Department of Planning.[119]

In 1970 the government eventually relented and agreed to establish a coloured group area on the near East Rand to accommodate coloured people from the central Witwatersrand, which comprised the towns of Germiston, Alberton, Elsburg, Kempton Park and Edenvale.[120] The new area, which was named Eden Park, was established five miles from the Alrode industrial and adjacent to Thokoza.[121]

At the same time a similar process was unfolding in respect of the Indian population on the near East Rand. In 1969 the Inter-Departmental Committee for the Transport of Non-Whites reported that the government had agreed in principle to establish a new Indian group area for the near East Rand towns.[122] However, two years later the government reiterated its stance that Actonville would be the only regional group area for Indians. Referring to the representations made to it by the Council and Indian community of Germiston for a group area, the Department of Community Development conceded only that Indians from Germiston be given first preference for relocation to Actonville.[123] In the late 1970s, however, the government was forced to reverse this position and agreed to establish an Indian group area adjacent to Eden Park.

The creation of Bakerton, Geluksdal, Eden Park and Palm Ridge as the new group areas for Indians and coloureds respectively brought to an end a long and tortuous journey during which the government continually reiterated its commitment to the regional grand scheme devised in the 1950s. However, it was

apparent in the mid-1960s already that this grand plan would not be realised. But, it required the vastly different political situation of the 1970s to force the government into formally changing its policy.

This chapter has demonstrated that the Nationalist government had devised detailed plans – a regional grand plan – for the implementation of group areas on the East Rand by the early 1950s. It had even succeeded in 'seducing' many of its political adversaries to support the main principles and practical proposals of this plan. However, the practical implementation of these policies proved to be complex and arduous. The assertion of local interests by a variety of local white interest groups undermined key features of the regional grand plan. Few of these groups, however, opposed the principle of group areas. The chapter has argued that the relationship between the different tiers of the state was rather complex. In relation to the implementation of group areas, local authorities often facilitated but sometimes also obstructed their creation. The complex role of local authorities and key local administrators in relation to the majority African population is explored further in the following two chapters.

ENDNOTES

[1] A detailed discussion of black opposition to group areas is contained in the final chapter.

2. U. Meshtrie, 'Tinkering and Tampering Tinkering: The Group Areas Act', *South African Historical Journal*, 28, 1993, pp. 179 – 180

[3] D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991

4. U. Meshtrie, 'Tinkering and Tampering", pp. 179 – 180

[5] Ibid, pp.185 –186

[6] G.Adler, 'The Factory belongs to all who work in it', Ph.D. Thesis, University of Columbia (1994), p.146

[7] H. Southworth, 'Strangling South Africa's Cities: Resistance to Group Areas in Durban during the 1950s', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24, 1, 1991, p.88

[8] A. Mabin, 'Comprehensive Segregation: The Origins of the Group Areas Act', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.18, no.2, 1992, pp. 423-427

[9] U. Meshtrie, 'Tinkering and Tampering', p.178

[10] The crucial issue of opposition by black residents is dealt with extensively in the final chapter.

[11] L. Kuper, *Durban: A Study in Racial Ecology*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1958 and B. Maharaj

[12] H. Southworth, 'Strangling South Africa's Cities'

[13] G. Adler, 'The factory belongs to al who work in it', p.147

[14] CAD, Department of Planning File (BEP) 221, G7/168, 'Verslag en aanbevelings van die Transvaalse en Vrystaatse Komitee van die Groepsgebiedraad insake groepsgebiede in Springs' [date]

[15] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1) 'Memorandum from H.S.J. van Wyk (Chairman of the Transvaal Committee) to the GAB, Re: Benoni', November 1958

[16] CAD, BEP 172, G7/143/4, 'Memorandum from the Asiatic Association of the Asiatic Bazaar to the Under Secretary of Indian Affairs', 17.05.62

[17] The key objectives were to disestablish 'black spots' and to create separate black townships and group areas that were sufficiently distant from the white areas.

[18] CAD BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1), 'Memorandum from H.S.J. van Wyk, Re: Benoni'

[19] CAD, BEP 172, G7/143/4, 'Memorandum from the Asiatic Association of the Asiatic Bazaar to the Under Secretary of Indian Affairs', 17.05.62

[20] Despite the SPC's focus on planning the creation of group areas the GAB did not serve on it. Instead the committee comprised representatives from government department involved in policy-making for black people.

[21] CAD, NTS 8056, 1039/400, 'Verslag van die ad hoc komiteee vir groepsgebiede: Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging Streek'. See chapter two.

[22] It should also be noted that municipalities were most concerned about identifying those areas within their borders that would be declared white group areas and that the creation of coloured or Indian group areas was a secondary consideration.

[23] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1) 'Verslag en aanbevelings van komitee wat ondersoek ingestel het insake streeksbeplanning vir kleurlinge en Indiers op die Oos-Rand', 11.02.60

[24] The committee's members were M.C. v.t. Barker, H.S.J. van Wyk, M.P. Prinsloo, Dr. P. van Biljon (all from the GAB) and P.S. Reinecke (a member of the National Housing Commission).

[25] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1) 'Verslag en aanbevelings van komitee wat ondersoek ingestel het insake streeksbeplanning vir kleurlinge en Indiers op die Oos-Rand', 11.02.60

[26] Ibid

[27] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/1, 'Groepsgebeidraad. Boksburg: Instelling van Groepsgebiede, besluit van 26.04.60'

[28] The absence of evidence to support these arguments suggests that political considerations predominated.

[29] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1) 'Verslag en aanbevelings van komitee wat ondersoek ingestel het insake streeksbeplanning vir kleurlinge en Indiers op die Oos-Rand', 11.02.60

[30] Ibid

[31] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni: Son of my sorrow*, Benoni Town Council, 1968

[32] The government opposed the immediate removal of African residents from Wattville because they held 30-year leases, which were introduced to ensure that these residents pay off the loan that was raised to construct the houses in that township.

[33] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1), 'Notes of meeting between the Benoni Council, Group Areas Board, Bantu affairs Department and the Department of Coloured Affairs, 28.02.61'

[34] Ibid

[35] *Benoni City Times*, December 1961, 'Will ratepayers pay for R1 000 000 Bantu move?'

[36] Ibid

[37] The town had earned considerable kudos from the government and other parties for the way it went about with the planning and creation of Daveyton in the mid-1950s.

[38] *Benoni City Times*, 05.06.62, 'Benoni offers a 'New Deal' to keep Coloureds'

[39] *Benoni City Times*, 17.02.61, 'Afrikaans support for Coloureds'

[40] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/1, 'Memorandum from Committee of Coloured Affairs in Benoni to the Southern Transvaal Committee of the Group Areas Board'

[41] There existed strong support within the ruling elite for a special and preferential political dispensation for coloureds, which would see them being allowed to elect their own representatives to parliament. See D. O' Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, Ravan Press Johannesburg, 1996, pp. 106-108. No such support for Indian political representation existed.

[42] Although the government had changed its official policy regarding the national status of Indians, having accepted them as South African citizens and effectively abandoned its long standing policy of repatriation, there were still those who held onto the old policies.

[43] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/1, 'Memorandum from Committee of Coloured Affairs in Benoni to the Southern Transvaal Committee of the Group Areas Board'

[44] Ibid

[45] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.137

[46] D. O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, pp. 106-108. The NG Kerk was itself divided over the issue.

[47] Ibid, p.107

[48] Ibid, p.108

[49] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.137

[50] CAD, BEP 11, G5/15/2, 'Minutes of meeting between the Benoni council and the Department of Bantu Affairs, Indian Affairs and Community Development, 08.02.63'

[51] Ibid

[52] As previously explained the General Account was the Council's main account, which was financed primarily by revenue from the local white population. Local authorities nationally were against using white rate-payers' money to finance the removal of black people. The government acceded to this concern and agreed that local authorities could use money from the Native Revenue Account, which was financed by, among things, taxes on local Africans and income from beer sales. By using money from this account Africans residents would be paid compensation from their own taxes and whites would be relieved of any responsibility in this regard.

[53] CAD, BEP 11, G5/15/2, 'Minutes of meeting between the Benoni council and the Department of Bantu Affairs, Indian Affairs and Community Development, 08.02.63'

[54] *Benoni City Times*, 1963, 'Industry or Indians in Actonville?'

[55] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.188

[56] Interviews with John De Jager and P.R. Deeva

[57] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.136

[58] *Benoni City Times*, 1959, 'Lovell-led petition against £3 700 000 location move'

[59] CAD, NTS 6641, 125/313V, 'Memo from the Bantu Administration Department to the Minister, April 1960'

[60] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 2.10.59, 'Council wants to improve Indian living conditions'

[61] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 28.08.59, 'Boksburg council recommends Indian move'

[62] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 2.10.59, 'Council wants to improve Indian living conditions'

[63] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 10.11.59, 'Indians protest against Group Areas Proclamation'

[64] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 17.11.61, 'Whites support Indian plea to Stay'

[65] Ibid

[66] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1), 'Notes of meeting between the Benoni CityCouncil, Group Areas Board, Bantu Affairs Department and the Department of Coloured Affairs, 28.02.61'

[67] Ibid

[68] CAD, GEM 196, G14/3/144, 'Hervestiging van Indiers en Gekleurders: Oosrand' (undated, but likely early 1960s)

[69] CAD, BEP 172, G7/143/1, 'Memorandum: Nywerheids ontwikkeling'

[70] Ibid

[71] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 31.03.61, 'Boksburg will get Coloured city after all'

[72] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 11.08.61, 'Vosloorus is Progressing'

[73] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 03.11.61, 'Official Okay in bid for Coloureds'

[74] CAD, BEP 168, G7/141 (2), 'Proklamering van groepsgebiede te Benoni, 16.11.62'

[75] CAD, Department of Community Development Files (GEM) 196, G14/3/144, 'Hervestiging van Indiers en Gekleurders: Oosrand'

[76] Ibid

[77] CAD, GEM 196, G14/3/143, 'Streekgebied vir Gekleurders Te Boksburg, 1962'

[78] CAD, BEP 33, G6/23/2 (1), 'Samesprekings met verteenwoordiges van Bantoe-Administrasie en Ontwikkeling, Transvaalse Komitee en die Uitvoerende Komitee in verbande met streeksbeplanning op die Oosrand vir Indiers en Kleurlinge, 11.02.60'

[79] Ibid

[80] CAD, GEM 196, G14/3/143, 'Streekgebied vir Gekleurdes te Boksburg, 1962'

[81] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 24.03.64, 'No transport so Vosloorus move held up'

[82] Ibid

[83] The Boksburg Council and government had previously agreed it would be uneconomical to erect a rail connection between Vosloorus and Boksburg because of the limited number of commuters. As a result buses became the primary means of transportation for African workers. Throughout the history of Vosloorus buses remained a source of friction and during the uprising in the 1970s and 1980s they were frequently attacked as symbols of oppression.

[84] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 24.03.64, 'No transport so Vosloorus move held up'

[85] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 15.05.64, 'Mass move to Vosloorus for May 23 says Township Manager'

[86] ERPM was arguably the predominant business in the town, being the largest employer and contributor to the town's economic development. As a result it was an influential player in the politics of the town.

[87] CAD, BEP 11, G5/15/1, 'Minutes of meeting held between the Boksburg Council, the Department of Community Development and mining houses, 25.10.65'

[88] Ibid

[89] Ibid

[90] Ibid

[91] Ibid

[92] CAD, GEM 196, G14/3/141, 'Memorandum van die Departement van Gemeenskapsbou: Herbevestiging van onbevoegdes aan die Oosrand, 18.09.64'

[93] CAD, GEM 196, G14/3/143, 'Memorandum van die Departement van Gemeenskapbou: Hervestiging van Kleurlinge en Indiers aan die Oosrand, 09.04.65'

[94] Prior to the GAB hearings the Springs Council had consulted with business group and reached an agreement on the group areas plans for the town. The GAB's endorsement of the plan raised the hope of its speedy implementation.

[95] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/42, 'Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 13.11.59'

[96] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/42, 'Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, October 1959', Letter to the Mining Commissioner

[97] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/42, Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 12.11.1959

[98] Ibid

[99] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/45, 'Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, Report of the Director of Non-European Affairs, July 1960'

[100] In 1961 the GAB proposed that the proclamation of a group area in Payneville might invalidate the objections of the mining and suggested that the Surface Right Permit be amended to include coloureds and Indians. Both these proposals failed to materialise.

[101] CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/44, 'Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 09.06.60'

[102] Ibid

[103] The National Party, operating under the guise of the Ratepayers Association took control of the Springs Council in 1963. Its dominance was augmented by the introduction of Management Committees, which proved to be far less accountable to the rest of the Council and the white electorate and effectively operated as local cabinets. These changes transformed the Springs Council into a reliable ally of the central government, which was immediately reflected in the support it gave to the government's regional group area plans.

[104] CAD, BEP 223, G7/168/3, 'Onderhoud in verband met die plasing van die Indiers en Kleurlinge van Springs, September 1963'

[105] CAD, BEP 223, G7/168 (3) 'Persverklaring deur Departement van Gemeenskapbou in verband met groepsgebiede: Springs, 21.02.64'

[106] Ibid

[107] CAD, MSP 1/2/1/1/52 'Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, Report of the Director of Non-European Affairs, June 1965'

[108] Ibid

[109] Germiston Archives, East Rand Administration Board Files, H5/57/5, 'Springs;

Identifiseering van n verdere groepsgebied vir Kleurlinge van die oosrand, 11.02.67'

[110] Germiston Archives, East Rand Administration Board Files, H5/57/5, 'Letter from the Secretary for Indian Affairs, 07.05.68'

[111] Germiston Archives, East Rand Administration Board Files, H5/57/5, 'Voorstel vir die proklamasie van die Bakerton-Paynevillekompleks, Springs, as n blanke groepsgebied'

[112] CAD, MSP 1/2/1/161, 'Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, Report submitted by the Chief Technical Officer, March 1973'

[113] CAD, MSP 1/2/1/161, 'Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, Verslag oor onderhoude met ministers in Kaapstad, 20.03.73'

[114] Germiston Archives, East Rand Administration Board Files, H5/57/5, 'Notule van samesprekings: Hervestiging van Indiers en Kleurlinge en inlywing van grond vir nywerheidsdoeleindes, 12.02.73'

[115] Germiston Archives, East Rand Administration Board Files, H5/57/5, 'Minute van die Departement van Beplanning en Omgewing: Indiers aan die Oosrand, November 1973'

[116] CAD, MSP 1/2/1/163, 'Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, May 1973'

[117] Quoted in *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 18.11.94, 'From Payneville to Ongeluks-dal'

[118] Alberton Municipal Archives, Thokoza files, Box 406, 11/13/2, vol.2, Alberton Industries Association to Alberton Town Clerk, 03.09.68

[119] Ibid

[120] Ibid, Joint Press Statement by the Departments of Community Development and Planning; Group Areas: Alberton, District of Alberton, 03.07.70

[121] *Rand Daily Mail*, 08.07.70

[122] Alberton Municipal Archives, Thokoza files, Box 406, 11/13/2, vol.2, Interdepartementele Komitee vir die Vervoer van Nie-Blankes: Groepsgebiede vir Kleurlinge en Indiers, 11.08.70

[123] Ibid, Joint press statement by the Departments of Planning and Community Development: Group Areas at Benoni, District of Benoni, 23.04.71

CHAPTER FOUR

The emergence of 'modern' townships: The Daveyton model

The massive and virtually uncontrolled influx of Africans into the country's urban areas was arguably the most urgent and vexing issue that confronted the white ruling class and electorate during the historic 1948 elections. The Nationalist Party (NP) successfully mobilised around this issue of *oorstroming* and promised the white electorate it would expeditiously deal with the apparent threat of the so-called *swart gevaar*. The NP's apartheid policies were rooted in racist segregationist ideology, but were also a response to the mounting demands from different sections of the white population in the 1940s for the authorities to bring the urban black population under control. Industrialists were concerned about the disruptive effects to production of the high labour turnover and wanted the growing industrial militancy of black workers to be curbed. Employers therefore demanded that the government intervene decisively to ensure a reliable supply of cheap and docile black labour. White residents for their part were worried about the 'overrunning' of the urban areas by blacks and their propensity to be involved in militant political struggles.

Once in government the NP earnestly set about the task of converting its 'apartheid ideology' and the promises made to its constituencies into practical policies. Until then, as Posel has argued, there was no blue-print for apartheid.[1] Furthermore, the 'meaning of apartheid' was highly contested between the 'purist' and 'practical' factions in the state and the Afrikaner establishment more generally. The 'purists' stood for total economic segregation between whites and blacks, whereas the proponents of 'practical' apartheid acknowledged the indispensable role of African workers in the economy and hence their permanent presence in the urban areas.[2] Although these debates continued throughout the 1950s, the government's

policies during the period – the *first phase of apartheid* - were dominated by the principles of 'practical apartheid'.

A multitude of measures and laws were introduced to achieve these aims. The tightening of influx control legislation was an important component in this strategy, the aim of which was to stem the tide of African urban migration. The creation of 'modern' townships was another central feature of apartheid policies, the primary objectives of which were to **stabilise** and **control** those Africans residing in the towns (that is, those who were deemed necessary to the urban economy) and to impose effective urban 'racial' segregation. In the early 1950s the government engaged in a process of formulating plans to establish new and better-controlled townships for Africans, especially on the Witwatersrand. This process culminated in the government adopting the Mentz Committee's recommendation to create regional African townships. This chapter focuses on the implementation of these plans on the East Rand.

The main subject of the chapter is the establishment of Daveyton, which was regarded as *the* 'model' African township in the 1950s and early 1960s. An interesting feature of Daveyton's early history was the extent of its conformity to the government's prescriptions for township development. This was surprising because of Benoni's reputation as a bastion of opposition white politics. Thus when an official history of Benoni published in 1965 glowingly described Daveyton as the "Product of the Policy of Separate Development"[3], it accurately captured the underlying political processes that shaped the township's emergence as well as the municipality's endorsement of a crucial tenet of apartheid policy. A principal reason for the convergence between supposed political adversaries is to be found in the concurrence between Benoni's local interests and the government's national aims. Politically this was expressed in the convergence between the conservative wing of the United Party, which controlled the Benoni Council, and the proponents of 'practical apartheid' in the Nationalist Party, who dominated the government at the time. J.E. Mathewson, the Director of Non-European Affairs, played a principal mediating role in forging this co-operative relationship. Similar relations between the government and other

opposition municipalities on the East Rand, namely, Germiston and Springs, also developed during the 1950s. The Benoni Council's success in creating Daveyton relatively quickly and with a minimum of complications is compared in this chapter to the more difficult process involved in creating other East Rand townships, especially those in Boksburg and Brakpan whose local authorities were under the control of Nationalist Party sympathisers.

The chapter finally considers the extent to which the African population was stabilised in the new townships. It argues that the African population of the East Rand, and of Daveyton in particular, experienced some improvements in their lives in the first half of the 1960s. This was largely a consequence of the availability of better job opportunities for them in the burgeoning industrial economy of the 1960s, which also yielded in higher earnings.

Daveyton: *The* Model 'Modern' Township

As the new 'modern' townships began to take shape in the mid-1950s and especially in the early sixties municipalities repeatedly marvelled at their achievement in creating an ordered urban environment out of the pre-existing urban slums and squatter camps. The Benoni Town Council's self-appraisal in 1963 of its accomplishments in the establishment and development of Daveyton was typically self-congratulatory:

> When one considers that in a few days time... Daveyton will be eight years old, and when one thinks of what has been achieved and of the vast amount of money and effort which have been spent, the present happy position of the Native Revenue Account is indeed remarkable. The presence of this well-developed Bantu Township on such a large area of land – land which was merely part of a farm eight years ago – remains a tribute to all those many people whose foresight, faith and energy made this modern miracle possible. It is good to know that the Council's enterprise in this difficult field of national development has

> been amply rewarded, so that Benoni is, in this respect, the envy of many local authorities in the Republic. It is no wonder that Daveyton has proved a most popular attraction, particularly to overseas visitors... This publicity will undoubtedly play a big part eventually in attracting industrialists to Benoni, where adequate labour is available and everyone is anxious to assist in the economic resurgence of the Republic.[4]

Other East Rand municipalities celebrated their achievements in a similar manner. The Springs Council likewise presented its new African township, KwaThema, as a 'model township'. KwaThema was established in 1952[5] prior to the work of the Mentz Committee, which endorsed it as an ideal regional township.[6] The Springs Council's meticulous approach in the planning and establishment of KwaThema was held up as model of how other councils should proceed to establish their new townships. The municipality conducted detailed research on African housing needs, engaged in careful planning of the new township and was among the first to employ African labour on a large scale in the construction of houses in KwaThema. It also boasted that KwaThema was the only African township which had streetlights installed all over.[7]

But it was Daveyton that stood out as the prime product of apartheid urban social engineering on the East Rand. 'Native administrators' nationally acclaimed Daveyton as a 'model township', a view echoed by politicians from across the spectrum of official politics.[8] Most significantly, H.F. Verwoerd in his capacity both as Minister of Native Affairs and Prime Minister routinely praised Daveyton. According to the 'architect of apartheid' Benoni had set an example to the rest of the country in the 'speedy progress' it made in solving the African housing problem.[9] Verwoerd was especially impressed by Benoni's expeditious resolution of one of the country's largest squatter problems in the early fifties. Moreover, Benoni, a leading United Party-controlled municipality, was probably among the most diligent

executors of apartheid policies, which provided Verwoerd with invaluable political ammunition to counter the criticisms by the parliamentary opposition.

Why did Daveyton emerge as *the* 'model' African township in the 1950s? The answer, it is suggested in this chapter, lies in the coincidence of various factors during the early development of Daveyton. First, the planning of the township coincided with the work of the Mentz Committee, and incorporated its recommendations centrally in its 'grand plan' for new African townships on the East Rand. Second, was the political convergence between the Benoni Council and the government on a range of issues affecting the development of Daveyton and especially the position of urban Africans. Despite Benoni's reputation as a leading opposition dominated municipality, it developed a better working relationship with the government than its pro-Nationalist neighbours. In all these matters, J.E. Mathewson, the Director of Non-European Affairs in Benoni, played a crucial role as an intermediary between the local authority and the central government. He was the principal local official responsible for directing the development of Daveyton. Mathewson's political views and ambitions brought together the government's aims and the Council's local interests.

The role of local authorities in the implementation of apartheid

The question of which tier of the state should exercise political control over African townships featured prominently in the relationship between the central government and local authorities from the time the National Party came to power in 1948. Despite its obvious importance the central-local government relationship has generally been neglected in the historiography of apartheid. Mabin and Parnell have highlighted the absence of analysis on the local state and have suggested that "One of the reasons ... urban researchers have not drawn sufficient attention to this in South Africa is that they have consistently underestimated the part played by the local state in mediating conflicting ideological and material imperatives."[10] They argue that this gap in the literature has contributed to local authorities being portrayed merely as

'toothless watchdogs of the central government'. For them, "The most worrying consequence of this kind of treatment of urban history, where urban development is explained with reference to the ideology of the ruling parties, is that there is no conception of the fact that state policies do not always translate neatly into practice."[11] This chapter builds on Mabin and Parnell's insights but extends the range of party politics to embrace both central and local government. It rejects the characterisation of the local authorities as either mere conveyor belts for or as principled bulwarks against state policy. It shows how on the East Rand in the 1950s municipalities often had very varied relations with the government (Benoni and Boksburg provided examples of this contrast). These relations were influenced by a host of factors such as local economic interests, party politics, resistance (or the lack thereof) by the local black population, the extent of the housing crisis and national politics.

The period under review witnessed a transition in the central-local state relationship from one in which local authorities enjoyed considerable autonomy in the way they governed the African population under their jurisdiction to the situation where they were gradually stripped of that responsibility, until in 1973 the management of the townships came directly under the control of government directed Administration Boards. It is within this transitional milieu that a host of previously unanswered questions need to be addressed: Were municipalities merely transmission belts for Nationalist policies? What was the nature of the opposition, if any, emanating from opposition-controlled municipalities? Did these municipalities in any significant way augment or undermine the policies of the government at the local level? How did party politics affect the relations between the different tiers of the state? And, how did these issues influence the establishment of the new 'modern' African townships? The interrogation of these will hopefully shed more light on nature of apartheid during this period.

The success of urban apartheid depended heavily on the ability of the Nationalist government to ensure the co-operation of municipalities in the implementation of its policies. Since the official opposition controlled some of the

most important local authorities in the country such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Benoni, their response to the government's desire for stricter control over urban Africans assumes particular relevance. There were a number of much publicised confrontations between leading UP-controlled municipalities and the government in the 1950s. The most important of these involved the Johannesburg Council over the Western Areas Removal Scheme.[12] Durban, too, after initially endorsing the forced removals under the Group Areas Act opposed aspects of the government's policies in the late 1950s.[13] These high profile conflicts might suggest there was serious disharmony between the Nationalist government and all UP-controlled municipalities. Until recently this was a commonly held view. Bekker and Humphries, in their study of the Administration Boards published in 1985, argued that the relationship between the government and the municipalities underwent an important shift once the National Party came to power. According to them, in the pre-1948 period disagreements between these tiers of government were "not of the order to suggest that opposition or reaction from municipalities to central government policy was ever sufficiently resented... to cause them to centralise more tightly the administration of policy". However, in their opinion, after 1948 "Disagreement and conflict between the municipalities and the Department became much more marked as the newly elected National Party government began to implement wide-ranging changes in policy."[14] These disagreements apparently covered a range of issues such as housing, finance and influx control. This conflict also assumed party-political dimensions between United Party-controlled municipalities and the Nationalist government.

The National Party's determination to bring African townships directly under the central government's control and administration was probably the principal factor influencing the central-local government relations in the first two decades of apartheid. Initially the Nationalist government attempted to implement its policies by persuading municipalities to co-operate with it. Until the mid-1950s the ruling party did not possess the political and administrative capacity to enforce its will. Thereafter when confronted by what it perceived to be political obstruction it moved quickly to

introduce legislation to strengthen its hand *vis-à-vis* recalcitrant municipalities. Much of the legislation promulgated during the 1950s was aimed at shackling the capacity of opposition groups to oppose government policies. The various amendments to the Group Areas Act, especially in 1955 and 1957, were examples of this trend. Similarly the Native Resettlement Act of 1954 was specifically promulgated to allow the government to circumvent the Johannesburg Council in its quest to implement the Western Areas Removals Scheme.[15] More generally the government asserted its authority by threatening to withhold funds for housing and development from recalcitrant local authorities. This measure, perhaps more than any other, forced compliance from the majority of local authorities who understood that without state financing they would not be able to deal with the enormous and urgent black housing problems.

After the 1953 elections the Nationalist Party asserted more insistently its prerogative as the sole source of 'native policy'. "The Government", Verwoerd lectured delegates at 1956 conference of the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs (IANA), "is the body responsible for formulating Native policy and it does not usurp but merely fulfils its own obligations when it issues its directives and when it exercises its supervisory functions over the local authorities which neglect to carry out their duty in regard to Native Affairs."[16] Verwoerd was at pains to delineate the scope of such intervention and to affirm aspects of local government autonomy, observing that "I am not discussing the autonomy of Local Authorities in other fields. I am confining myself to this clear specific issue [i.e. 'Native Policy']. The facts must be very clear because the position exists of necessity not only for conformity but for the sake of peace and good order in the country so as to obviate confusion and conflicting attitudes in our dealings with the large number of Natives for whom we are responsible in our cities and towns." At a further endeavour at even-handedness he went on to extol the virtues of co-operation between the two tiers of the state: "In spite of my saying that the local authorities have certain obligations to the State which is responsible for formulating policy, it is nevertheless true that friendly co-operation rather than just performance of duty is of supreme importance.

Even though the State has the right and power to announce and enforce its policy, one cannot expect much success from that alone."[17] He nevertheless concluded by insisting that the government must govern and that delegates had to "realise that the State must formulate policy and to put it bluntly the Local Authorities are the agents that must (faithfully) implement it."[18]

By the end of the 1950s the government shifted tone and shifted gear. Probably buoyed by the NP's electoral victory in 1958 where for the first time it won a majority of votes, Verwoerd's successor as Minister of Bantu Affairs, De Wet Nel instructed delegates attending the 1959 IANA conference that they should "carry out the policy laid down by the State." While acknowledging that these officials were in the service of the local authorities, the Minister reminded them they were "also subject to the authority of the State – that is why you are licensed by the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development."[19] De Wet Nel then proceeded to add a veiled threat that, "This is a requirement because he has to perform functions for which the State as a whole has to be accountable and must see that the policy laid down by the State is carried out, which is why the State has the right of supervision. It is, therefore, important that the State, in its own interest, has the right to withdraw a licence if a municipal official does not perform the function entrusted to him properly."[20] One of the most serious challenges to the powers of local authorities came in the form of the 1960 Bantu in European Areas Bill. This was the first legislative attempt by the government to centralise control of townships in the Bantu Affairs Department[21] and was made in response to the government's perception that opposition dominated municipalities were not controlling urban Africans. Although the Bill was not passed it clearly demonstrated the intention of the government to usurp control and administration from the municipalities. The repression of the opposition movement in 1960 –2 and the growing compliance of local authorities made it less urgent to pursue this policy. It was only in the late sixties that the government proceeded to draft new legislation to give effect to this aim. Therefore, during the course of the 1960s the government progressively asserted greater control over local authorities and was more easily able to assert its policies on them.

However, in the 1950s the government-municipal relationship was determined far more by the willingness of local authorities to co-operate with the government. The nature of these relations played a crucial role in shaping the way that apartheid policies, especially urban segregation, were implemented in urban centres across the country.

Party Politics and Local Governments

Such discussion as has taken place on the relationship between local and central government in the 1950s has been dominated and coloured by the particular experience of Johannesburg. In the early 1950s the Johannesburg City Council and the government publicly differed over the Western Areas Removal Scheme. It seemed as if the United Party-controlled municipality was standing in the way of the Nationalist government's zealous pursuit of urban segregation.[22] This party political partisanship is then all too often and readily read off on to other municipal-government relationships on the Rand. Thus the Nationalist-controlled Brakpan is assumed to be more in tune with the government while the United Party controlled-Benoni is the reverse. However, neither the United Party nor the Nationalist Party or their respectively politically affiliated municipalities were as politically homogeneous as this crude reading would suggest. The United Party had its progressive and conservative wings, while the Nationalist Party, as Posel has shown, was divided between the 'purists' and 'practical' tendencies. During the 1950s the Native Affairs Department was under the direction of the 'practical' minded Minister H.F. Verwoerd and the Secretary of Native Affairs, W.M. Eiselen. They advocated *stabilisation* of the African urban population and strict influx control. National Party municipal office bearers in Brakpan and Boksburg, and more specifically their Nationalist Party sympathising Non-European Affairs Managers (F.J. Language and A.S. Marais), by contrast were 'purist' in inclination and objected to African urbanisation and stabilisation. The ironic consequence of these intra-party divisions was that municipalities controlled by conservative United Party administrators (for example in

Benoni), often were more in sympathy and enjoyed more productive working relationships with the Native Affairs Department than did their counterparts in Brakpan and Boksburg.

Dr. F.J. Language, the manager of 'native affairs' in Brakpan had been a member of the neo-fascist *Ossewabrandwag* in the 1940s and consistently propounded the desirability for 'total separation' between whites and blacks. According to Sapire, the 'guiding principles' that were central in Language's thinking were the 'reconstitution of the original tribal order in the reserves', total separation between whites and 'natives' and 'the elimination of Africans from the white economic system'.[23] Both Brakpan and Boksburg, who employed the equally 'purist' A.S. Marais to manage its 'native affairs' had come under the control of the Nationalist Party much earlier than their neighbours,[24] which reflected the more conservative political views of their white populations and politicians. Language and especially Marais repeatedly declared their loyalty to the government. These towns placed greater emphasis on influx control because of their determination to limit and reverse the urbanisation of Africans. In Boksburg, for example, influx control had been tightened to such an extent that new arrivals found it almost impossible to secure houses and family accommodation.[25] The 'native administrators' of these towns tended to pay less attention to the development of their 'native' locations, than on imposing stricter control measures on the inhabitants of these locations. Consequently, conditions in Stirtonville and Brakpan location continued to deteriorate. In the early 1950s Brakpan also experienced a squatter problem, although not to the same extent as in Benoni. However, the municipality responded very slowly to the housing crisis. In 1954 it managed to build only between 8-10 houses a month for its African residents. In Boksburg only a few hundred additional houses were provided in the same period. Brakpan and Boksburg likewise lagged behind in the establishment of new townships, which was only commenced in 1957 and 1962 respectively.

By contrast the United Party sympathising Non-European Affairs managers of Benoni, Germiston and Springs emphasised the stabilisation of urban Africans, for

which solving the black housing problem and the building of new townships became imperative. As J.E. Mathewson pointed out to the 1953 IANA conference, "It has been demonstrated that the turnover in Native labour is very largely reduced where some semblance of permanence is introduced into employment... Experience has indicated that where satisfactory accommodation is provided for the employees to live with their families, the turn-over factor is reduced by two-and-a-half times."[26] Local industrialists enthusiastically endorsed these views and promised to raise £150 000 for African housing to avert labour shortages.[27] The Benoni Town Council was especially cognisant of the importance properly to house and control African labour because of the town's growing importance as an industrial centre. It was estimated that between 1947 and 1957 the local economy virtually trebled.[28] For the local economy to flourish the local African workforce had to be housed and controlled. This imperative resulted in an unusually co-operative relationship between a leading United Party municipality and the central government which was committed to the same aims. This contributed to the relatively uncomplicated process of establishing Daveyton.

Germiston and Springs were similarly concerned with the need to stabilise their African workforce. Germiston led the region's industrial development and by the mid-1930s the town's location, Dukathole, already experienced overcrowding. It had begun planning the development of a new township since the mid-1930, but the plans were held in abeyance due to the war. Eventually in 1949 Natalspruit was created to deal with the huge overcrowding in the old location.[29] The Springs Council established KwaThema in 1952 to accommodate the thousands of African workers that had been attracted to its burgeoning economy during the 1940s.[30] The local Chamber of Commerce fully supported the local authority in its efforts and noted that

> Inter-related with the industrial and mining development is the urgent problem of housing... We have to catch up on a cumulative position of shortage... As businessmen employing large numbers of natives, this position is of vital importance to us in that the natives cannot be

expected to seek employment and consequent spending power in a town where they cannot obtain suitable accommodation.[31]

The ideological differences between administrators were highlighted in the heated debates on the state of Advisory Boards and on the subject of African urbanisation at the 1958 IANA conference. Marais, in his address to the conference, lamented what he perceived to be the tendency among local authorities to dissociate themselves from government policies and to pursue ones that would ultimately clash with those of the government. A 'purist' and an ardent supporter of influx control, he insisted that Africans could only reside in urban areas on a temporary basis and accused industrialists of undermining this fundamental tenet of government policy by desiring the stabilisation of African labour in 'white urban areas'.[32] Mathewson, Bourquin (Durban) and representatives of the Chamber of Industries gave heated rebuttals to Marais' arguments. For them African urbanisation was an inevitable consequence of industrialisation. The representatives from industry insisted that African labour was necessary for the country's expanding economy: "If the industrialist wants to manufacture and produce he must have labour. In 1948 with the expansion, of necessity, of secondary industry... the only labour available was Non-European and had Industry not accepted this raw material but have requested the importation of experienced white labour, then... import control would have failed and [a] depression... would have resulted. We would have had no urban native problem... and, of course, we would not be enjoying the comfortable living we have today."[33] Mathewson supported this view and accused Marais of suffering from political myopia. He strongly favoured the permanent urbanisation of an African labour force to cater for the needs of secondary industry.

Mathewson and Daveyton

The building of Germiston's township of Natalspruit (later known as Katlehong) was underway by 1949, and the basic principles upon which this would

proceed had already been worked out. These partly conformed to the new government's evolving policy on group areas and township development, but were also partly at variance. In 1953 this created some friction between the local authority and the government over the latter's introduction of the site-and-service scheme.[34] Germiston had already begun building houses for its African population and viewed the new scheme as regressive. However, the dispute was speedily resolved and in 1954 building in Katlehong resumed. The planning of KwaThema also began in the late 1940s and thus preceded the adoption of new policies by the Nationalist government. Benoni had likewise resolved its first squatter crisis in 1949 with the building of Wattville. In 1950 however it was enveloped with another after the land invasion at Apex. It therefore had to fashion a programme with a Nationalist government already in power and once its plans for group areas had already been worked out. It succeeded on a scale greater than any other municipality and was widely viewed as playing a pioneering role in developing 'modern' African townships. A large part of this reason for this success was the role played by Mathewson.

Mathewson was appointed as Director of Non-European Affairs in Benoni in 1948 and over the following two decades played a key role in the affairs of the black population of the town. He established himself as a leading figure in urban 'native affairs' by the way he tackled the resolution of the squatter problem at Apex and the creation of Daveyton. Mathewson's political stance on the position of African workers in the urban areas and his views on the role of administrators in integrating Africans into urban society fundamentally shaped his approach to the development of Daveyton.

Mathewson was driven by paternalistic convictions, regarding his (and other whites) role as guardians of the 'bantu', responsible for their upliftment and 'civilisation'. Mathewson believed that "the destiny of our country depends upon the extent to and speed at which the Bantu are allowed to play their part in the administration of their own areas in accordance to the policy to which we and our descendants are irrevocably committed."[35] He saw the "urban centres, both in

European and Bantu areas, play[ing] a part of supreme importance in the political evolution of the Bantu."[36] He was convinced that as the Director of Non-European Affairs he and his department had a pivotal role to play in this process because for the time being "the state of development of the Bantu is such that the governmental system applicable to more civilised people requires modification, under the direction of officials whose training qualified them for administering Natives."[37] The new townships, Mathewson argued, should form a '"convenient training ground for the Bantu, provided the organisational set-up of urban native administration departments is so shaped as to prepare for the assumption by them of full control."[38]

Daveyton became Mathewson's personal fiefdom – his *empire* – the place where he could put into practice his notions of what was beneficial for the 'upliftment' of urban Africans. For him 'progressive' Benoni (read Mathewson and his political cohorts) had established a 'unique system of Bantu administration' based on the objective of developing administrative autonomy for Daveyton. Beyond that he saw a second tier of autonomous self-government for Daveyton's Africans in the form of self-governing 'homelands'. He castigated those local administrations that were content with only having African "labourers, drivers, teachers, clerks and traders". Daveyton's Africans, he boasted were being trained for greater things: "You must have every human material from which to form a governing class including professional men and politicians."[39] Thus the training of Africans in Daveyton was inextricably linked to the broader project of developing the 'homelands'.

Beneath this veneer of benevolence and apparent enlightenment there nevertheless lurked deep-seated convictions both about Mathewson's roles as supervisor and gatekeeper, as well as what Africans had to do to advance. "It is obvious", Mathewson lectured delegates at the 1956 IANA conference, "that for the foreseeable future the highest posts in a Bantu township will continue to be occupied by the more experienced and better qualified Europeans. While the entry to the upper grades should not be closed to the Bantu, it must not be automatic but earned by proven ability. The door of opportunity must be laid open to those Bantu who evince the required standards of efficiency, integrity and devotion to duty."[40] Thus in

Mathewson's view Africans were not yet capable of running their own affairs. Furthermore, those Africans who wanted to benefit from the benefits and opportunities available in Mathewson's fiefdom, had to convince white administrators of their reliability.

Mathewson jealously defended his *modus operandi*. In response to criticisms from other township administrators that his project was an unashamed exercise in 'empire building', Mathewson retorted imperiously: "I happen to be an Empire builder, and I have no intention of parting or doing away with my Empire. I am not Mr. Attlee, I am like Mr. Churchill. What I have got, I keep."[41] Despite these criticisms of his ambitions, Mathewson could confidently proceed with his plans because he enjoyed the support of the government. More than any other 'native' administrator, his views on township development, the objectives of which he argued were the "maintenance of the health of the occupants; environment designed to discourage social malpractices; permanence with a minimum of maintenance; and self-sufficiency"[42] coincided most closely with the government's policies.

As a result his 'empire', Daveyton, became the model of township administration, which other municipalities were urged to emulate. H.F. Verwoerd regularly praised Benoni's achievement in establishing Daveyton. Verwoerd's address to the 1956 IANA conference typified his attitude to the Benoni municipality:

> Benoni completely and totally under the control of people who hold a political view contrary to those of the present government, carried out and put into effect exactly what I have said here today [referring to apartheid urban policies] to be a basic principle of the legislation of our country and which forms part of the structure of the State. Its Town Council adopted the attitude that they were faced with a local problem in connection with Native Affairs more specifically poor and illegal housing and that they were prepared to ascertain what the Government's policy was in this respect and implement it with the Government's assistance. As a result of their willingness to carefully adhere to the country's policy and to co-operate in a spirit of

> friendliness, the Town Council of Benoni, notwithstanding their political difference, has in a short space of time made immense progress in the solution of its problem. In fact it has set an example to the whole South Africa not only of co-operation under apparently difficult circumstances, but also of such speedy progress that it behoves every town to go and inspect it.[43]

The government often threatened those municipalities (especially those under United Party control) which were perceived to be recalcitrant and slow in building new townships, but Benoni was seemingly excluded from the government's list of problematic local authorities. On the contrary, leading government officials singled out Benoni for its pioneering contribution to resolving the urban 'native problem'. The government's public support for Benoni allowed the municipality to build Daveyton relatively quickly and without any serious hindrances.

The Ethnic Division of Daveyton

Although the government concentrated on the implementation of 'practical apartheid' policies in the 1950, it did not entirely abandon the ideal of 'total apartheid'. The policy of 'separate development', which became the *leitmotif* of the 1960s, was already applied to urban Africans in the new townships from the mid-1950s. The government signalled its intention to promote and politicise ethnicity with the promulgation of the Bantu Authorities Act in 1951, which aimed to elevate the political status of 'tribal' leaders in the reserves. This piece of legislation did not apply to the urban areas, but was a harbinger of the fate awaiting urban Africans. A novel feature of the townships established in the fifties and sixties was their partition into ethnically defined areas. The government pursued this policy to give effect to its ideologically-driven decision to promote ethnic differences among Africans.

In 1956 H.F. Verwoerd motivated his government's decision to pursue this urban version of 'separate development':

> Another policy aspect which is important although it is frequently denied is the housing or establishment of the Native, including the urbanised Native, on an ethnic basis. Originally it was supposed to be a pipe dream, an absurdity or a source of conflict and strife. It has nevertheless been put into effect and where it has been or is being applied, only beneficial results have been experienced. It promotes better satisfaction among the Natives... Ethnic grouping has not been introduced capreciously (sic) or arbitrarily but to serve as the foundation for the advancement of essential services and control.[44]

The main purpose of ethnic zoning was to impose 'tribal authorities' on urban Africans. The sub-division of townships along ethnic lines would reinforce contact with 'tribal authorities' and consequently enhance their influence and authority among the urban populace. The Native Affairs Department expressed its hope that 'Such leaders will be inclined to maintain discipline and insist upon law and order similar to that in their home environments.'[45] For the government, therefore, 'separate development' and control of urban Africans were inextricably linked objectives. The Benoni Council's endorsement of this policy was a striking example of the extent of its political agreement with the Nationalist government.

Mathewson was one of the most ardent advocates of ethnic divisions and Daveyton became the first township to be partitioned in this way. Daveyton became known as the '£7 000 000 Ethnic Bantu Township'. Mathewson provided one of the most important and detailed expositions in support of ethnic grouping, which he contended held three key advantages. First, it would supposedly ensure proper administration because "It is axiomatic that the best representation of a group of people is by one who is a member of that particular group, for he can understand in full measure the needs and trends of thought of his electorate." Ward committees, led by an ethnic-based councillor and his supporters, were inaugurated to facilitate the new townships' administration. Second, it would enhance education because instruction in the 'mother tongue' would simplify teaching and result in higher

standards and lead 'to the development of an intensified community spirit.' Third, in Mathewson's 'expert' opinion, Daveyton was 'ethnologically planned to re-establish the natural pattern of Bantu life in which the social bonds of the ethnic groups have been taken into account.' Mathewson concurred with the government's view that urbanisation had various deleterious effects on Africans because it undermined their 'traditional' way of life, which was characterised by 'discipline and order in both family and tribal life.'[46] From the outset, therefore, Daveyton was planned according to the principles of ethnic divisions.

Critics of the proposed ethnic division of the townships argued it would intensify the threat of 'tribal clashes' and heighten antagonism between different 'races'. The Benoni Branch of the Congress of Democrats was especially vociferous in its criticisms. In a letter to the *Benoni City Times* they argued that,

> Up to now one has thought with pride that Benoni was determined to afford its African workers housing facilities and social amenities in a manner befitting a progressive town. This is apparently not the true position. We intend to divide these workers into racial groups substituting racial differences for feelings of common citizenship. We are to fall in with the Government policy of dividing people. Not only is there to be European against European: European against Non European: Non-European groups against each other but also African against African.[47]

Their fears seemed to be confirmed when Benoni experienced so-called 'tribal clashes' soon after the introduction of ethnic grouping in Daveyton. Between December 1956 and March 1957 sporadic clashes between youth from the Xhosa and Swazi/Ndbele areas took place, resulting in eight reported deaths and numerous injuries.[48] These clashes were triggered by the attack on a party in the Xhosa area by Swazi youth. A series of retaliatory clashes inflamed the situation, resulting in the mobilisation of scores of youth (although some adults were also involved) from the two sections. The township manager claimed reports of the clashes were exaggerated

and concluded a report on the disturbances by asserting that, "ethnic grouping was not even a contributory cause of the trouble."[49] His attempts to underplay the seriousness of the clashes were however contradicted by evidence in the report supplied by the authorities that nearly two hundred houses were damaged (97 in the Xhosa area and 100 in the Swazi/Ndebele area). On one occasion approximately one hundred Xhosas were mobilised. The municipality was especially keen to deny ethnic grouping as a factor promoting the clashes. Mathewson insisted that the main underlying cause of these clashes was the existence of 'unsatisfactory living conditions', itself an indictment of his claims that Daveyton was one of the best serviced townships in the country. The solution, therefore, was to provide adequate housing and "properly organised leisure activities and opportunities for the churches to exercise their influence."[50] The town manager blamed *tsotsis* from both areas. Whatever the underlying causes might have been, it is clear that once the initial clashes occurred residents from both areas mobilised along ethnic lines to defend their respective areas against attacks from the opposing ethnic group. The existence of 'tribal division' in the township would almost certainly have facilitated ethnic mobilisation.[51]

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Mathewson's approach was his rejection of the argument that urban Africans were 'detribalised'. Although he supported urbanisation as a necessary condition of modernity, he also agreed with apartheid ideologues that it was important to retain and encourage 'tribal' affiliations. Whereas at the IANA conferences Mathewson extolled the virtues of the urbanisation of Africans, emphasising the 'modernising' effects it would have on Africans (as against the Nationalist supporters who opposed urban migration), within the Benoni context he argued that it was erroneous to regard Africans as 'detribalised'. Apparently basing himself on observations of the local African population, Mathewson argued that recent immigrants preferred to reside among people from the same ethnic background because the 'Bantu in general' would disclaim any inference that they were 'detribalised'. There is no evidence that Mathewson even consulted residents of the squatter camps on this matter. Moreover, the majority of the town's

African population – the residents of the old location - had for many years chosen to live in a mostly integrated environment. Even the objections of the Advisory Board were ignored.[52] It was certainly true that new arrivals in urban areas sought out people from their rural homes for various reasons, including gaining access to resources and work. But the authorities used these practices as pretexts to cloak political imperatives.

Mathewson's enthusiasm exceeded even the government's support for its own policy. "Ethnic grouping was revolutionary", he claimed in 1959 and represented "a bold step towards restoring and preserving the dynamic forces considered essential in the building up of any people in order to take its rightful place in the hierarchy of nations."[53] Among the principal advantages of ethnic divisions were discipline and control: "delinquent practices are more effectively controlled, immorality is kept at a minimum, complaints are justly dealt with and tribal clashes, if any, are more easily controlled."[54]

The local authority paid detailed attention to the ethnic division of Daveyton. Surveys were conducted of the Apex squatter camp and of lodgers in the old location and statistics were compiled about the ethnic composition of the new township. Equipped with the necessary statistical information, the Council decided to divide Daveyton into the following ethnic proportions: 50% Nguni, 40% Sotho and 10% other . The latter miscellaneous group consisted mainly of Shangane and Venda, but it was felt that if the size of this group did not justify a separate area they could be absorbed into the Nguni group 'because of its ethnic similarity'.[55] This reveals the often-spurious basis on which people were grouped. Most curious was the municipality's arbitrary amalgamation of Ndebele/Swazi. Here people with little common cultural or political history[56] were grouped together primarily for pragmatic and political reasons.

After dividing Daveyton into Nguni and Sotho sections, the township was further subdivided into seven distinct ethnic areas, namely, Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Sotho, Swazi/Ndebele and Shangane . The concept of 'radial planning' was introduced in the township to ensure that any future expansion of the different areas

would occur independently of each other. In this way the primary aim of separate development would also be assured. Mathewson insisted the planning of townships had to operate from the premise that 'Each sector must be looked upon as an entity of its own and be provided pro rata with school, church and trading sites.'[57] By the mid-sixties, the ethnic division of Daveyton was proclaimed a resounding success. Benoni's official history declared that,

> By grouping the population on an ethnic basis each Bantu Councillor together with his Ward Committee, is able effectively to represent his ward in matters of day-to-day administration. It appears also to have reduced the incidence of such widespread social problems as tsotsi-ism and illegitimacy, and improved family cohesion... ethnic grouping has exerted a positive beneficial influence on family life in Daveyton and has contributed materially to the happiness and contentment of the community.[58]

In the late 1950s other East Rand towns followed Benoni's example. As early as 1954 the Brakpan Council decided it would divide Tsakane into eight ethnic sections.[59] The new sections of KwaThema and Katlehong were similarly divided despite objections from residents and in Germiston's case from its Manager of Non-European Affairs.[60] In Thokoza, which was laid out from 1957, ethnic divisions were imposed from the outset, leaving residents with little choice about where they would reside. In Vosloorus, which was the last near East Rand township to be constructed the Council's elaborate apartheid vision failed to be implemented. The Council had hoped to divide the new township into seven sections (Zulu, South Sotho, Xhosa, Swazi, Tswana, Ndebele and North Sotho) but only succeeded in creating two sections, namely, Nguni and Sotho. The sticking point was the pressure to remove Africans quickly from Stirtonville. As a result 'a methodical move of the families [along ethnic lines] was not possible'.[61] The authorities considered relocating residents into the abovementioned ethnic groupings after they had all been settled in

the new township but acknowledged that 'a further removal into tribal groupings would cause dissatisfaction amongst the settled residents'.[62]

The politics of laying out the 'modern' townships

From the outset the planning of Daveyton conformed to the principles enunciated by Verwoerd on the establishment of African townships. One of the first and most important issues that had to be resolved in the establishment of the new townships was where they would be located. The Benoni Council identified land on the north-east boundary of the municipality for Daveyton, which was sufficiently far from most white residential areas. There were nevertheless complaints from the Geduld branch of the Nationalist Party[63] and white residents of the surrounding areas, who objected to a 'black spot' being created in their area because it would devalue their properties.[64] Although the demand by some white residents that the new township be ring-fenced was not acceded to, the Benoni Council ensured that there were adequate buffer zones around Daveyton. Furthermore, access to the township was tightly controlled. On this issue Mathewson again concurred with the government's policies that access roads were crucial to controlling the movements of township inhabitants. Thus he insisted "there should be only one main road to a native township. This will depend largely upon local circumstances and the general flow of traffic. A separate access road should enter the nearest opening of the native township. The link road between the European area and native township should traverse the shortest distance between the two areas and be so located that it will be used principally by persons wishing to proceed to and from the native township only."[65]

Once the siting and layout of the townships were finalised, the issue of housing was tackled. The government's approach to the African housing crisis was to provide cheap accommodation as speedily as possible. In 1954 H.F. Verwoerd expounded the government's policy at a conference of the Federated Chamber of Industry. His starting premise was that building houses for **all** urban Africans would

be an 'impossible task' because of the exorbitant cost.[66] "What must be done?" he enquired from his audience, "Must we build for 5 per cent or 10 per cent and forget the other 90 per cent? Must we have them as illegal squatters or illegal lodgers either in Bantu residential areas or European backyards?" An 'alternative method' must be found, he contended, "by which we can aid the whole 100 per cent to some extent as rapidly as possible with the object of them effecting further improvements gradually." The solution was *site-and-service schemes.* According to W.M. C. Mocké, the Senior Urban Areas Commissioner, local authorities were patently unable to provide even the normally 'austere' housing to the burgeoning urban African population. Therefore even 'more austere standards' were necessary to resolve the 'gigantic [housing] problem'.[67]

The Benoni Council was one of the first municipalities to adopt this scheme as a means to deal with its local housing shortage for Africans. Daveyton was officially declared a township in July 1954[68] and less than a year later the first residents from Apex Squatter camp moved there. Within three months of the first arrivals Daveyton was transformed into the first township consisting entirely of site-and-service plots. Mathewson's description of early Daveyton paints a vivid picture of the site-and-service scheme to which residents were introduced:

> In Daveyton a site-and-service scheme has been introduced on a large scale. After the areas had been laid out as a model township, the sites surveyed, pegged and numbered, the necessary internal roads were graded. Water reticulation was lain on and standpipes interspersed at points approximately 1000 feet apart... The next step was to allocate a site 45 ft by 75 ft to a family who erected a temporary 'shack' of old (or new) corrugated iron or split poles in one corner of the site... Each site-holder was given a number to affix to his shack and issued with a refuse bin.[69]

The town's official history added that each plot "was supplied with a tap and latrine consisting of a superstructure with a seat over a large deep hole bored by a

drilling machine."[70] The provision of only such rudimentary services initially caused an outcry from opposition parties. Many of the large United Party-controlled municipalities opposed the site-and-service scheme, accusing it of falling far short of meeting the housing requirements of African families. Johannesburg, for example, refused initially to implement the scheme in Soweto.[71] The site-and-service schemes were criticised for perpetuating squatting (albeit controlled squatting) and viewed as a substitute for proper housing.[72] Verwoerd dismissed these objections and insisted that site-and-service was the "only method of facing the problem squarely instead of turning our back on it."[73]

Verwoerd's intransigence in the face of these criticisms is partly explained by deep concern of the authorities over the proliferation of squatter camps in the towns of the Witwatersrand. The rapidity with which the Apex Squatter camp sprang up on the outskirts of Benoni shocked the municipality and the government alike. Verwoerd took a personal interest in the matter and informed the municipality of his desire to see urgent action taken to remove the squatter camp.[74] He also promised the council his "whole-hearted assistance in the approval of the allocation of increased funds for Native houses"[75] if they acted expeditiously.

Benoni broke ranks with its political allies on the issue of site-and-service schemes because it endorsed Verwoerd's view that the introduction of such a scheme in Daveyton would be the most effective means to eliminate squatting and to overcome the huge housing backlog for Africans.[76] Besides the tremendous overcrowding in the old location, Benoni probably had the largest squatter population of any town on the East Rand. The Council's primary aims were to remove the 20 000 plus residents of the Apex Squatter and to eliminate the overcrowding in the old location. Other East Rand towns followed the example set by Benoni. For example, in 1955 the Germiston Council embarked on a massive site-and service scheme, albeit after initially objecting to the scheme.[77] The Brakpan Council also resolved in 1954 'to implement the policy of the Department relating to site-and-service as far as possible'.[78]

When the government first mooted the concept of site-and-service schemes it did not yet have in place the policies or mechanisms for the construction of large scale housing for urban blacks. Instead it proposed that the transformation of site-and-service plots to proper houses would be dependent on the ability of residents to pay for such development. As Verwoerd explained, "Those in need of homes are given the first essentials: a serviced plot, and can then systematically although gradually, improve their position under supervision and mostly with further assistance."[79] At this stage the government's priority was the immediate elimination of overcrowding and squatting, not the provision of houses. It was this formula for township development that caused the most consternation among opposition parties, who feared that urban Africans would not be able to afford to build houses and would consequently end up in similar conditions to the squatter camps from which they had been removed.

However, by the mid-fifties the government had set in place the mechanisms and unlocked the requisite financial resources to proceed with mass housing projects.[80] The site-and-service schemes were henceforth regarded only as temporary measures. Each plot was now earmarked for the erection of a municipal house. According to the Benoni Council, the "Scheme must be treated as an embryo native township and the residents given every encouragement and assistance to develop it decently... Control is of paramount importance to ensure that a site-and-service scheme develops into a proper Bantu township."[81] The timing of Daveyton's establishment was therefore fortuitous. Almost as soon as people were settled in Daveyton, the construction of the first major housing scheme of 8184 houses commenced. Mathewson proudly reflected on his Council's achievements:

> Concurrent with the move extensive home building activity was taking place by both the Council's building section and by private contract. No sooner had a family arrived and settled than building material was dumped on the site, excavations commenced and building proceeded. The psychological reaction on seeing one's

> future home being erected right on the spot with little or no delay can well be imagined. The site holder himself jealously guarded against the pilfering of building material which has been experienced on other housing schemes.[82]

The Council's housing department and a firm of contractors completed the housing programme in record time. For example, the private firm erected houses at the phenomenal rate of seventeen a day.[83] As a result it took just over three years for this massive housing programme to be completed. The significance of this achievement is apparent when one considers that in KwaThema only 6000 houses were constructed in eight years.[84]

The speed at which this mass housing programme was completed was facilitated by the various measures which the government introduced in the early 1950s. The Building Workers Act of 1951 and the Native Services Levy Act of 1952 in particular aimed at reducing the cost of African housing, raising funds from the private sector for infrastructural development and accelerating the construction of houses in the new townships. For example, the employment of African builders in place of white workers radically reduced the cost of erecting a house from anything between £300 and £800 to as little as £178.[85]

The Native Service Levy Act applied to those urban centres where the African population exceeded 20 000 and imposed a levy of 2/6 a week on employers of African workers as a contribution to the provision of services in the townships. Within the first four years of its application approximately £8,5 million was raised.[86] Between 1952 and 1960 expenditure of over £15 million was approved from the Levy Fund nationally. Benoni's approved expenditure was the fifth largest in the country at £968 634.[87] Some of the most important essential services provided in Daveyton from this source between 1955 and 1965 were Roads (R658 116), Water (R394 865), Sewerage (R871 610) and Electricity (R275 128).[88] The infrastructural development of the townships was immensely assisted by the annual income from the Service Levy Fund of about £80 000.[89]

Once these measures were in place the government's expenditure on African housing increased dramatically. Between 1949 and 1957 nearly R40 million was spent on housing from state funds alone.[90] The effects of this huge injection of funds into township development were evident in Daveyton. Between 1952 and 1962 a total of R13 364 754 (approximately £6, 7 million[91]) was spent on the township's expansion. Of this total approximately R4 million was spent on the construction of 8 184 houses, R3 million (£1,5 million) on the provision of electricity and sewerage networks.[92] Besides these core developments a further R332 000 (£166 000) was spent on the erection of a beer hall, R71 000 (£35 300) on the building of shops R50 000 (£25 000) for a clinic, R52 000 (£26 000) for a crèche and R6000 (£3 000) on the library.[93]

The government's decision to phase out state-subsidised or sub-economic housing in favour of economic housing for Africans was another important policy shift intended to make more funds available. From the outset all the houses constructed in Daveyton were on an economic basis. The state's refusal to continue subsidising housing for Africans meant that Daveyton's residents had to repay the interest on the loans, as well as the actual loans, at economic rental rates.[94] The effect was substantially higher rents in Daveyton compared to what residents had previously paid either in the squatter camps or backyards. For former Apex squatter residents rentals soared from 15s. to £3 a month[95], imposing increased hardships on already cash-strapped African workers.

The Benoni Chamber of Commerce was sufficiently concerned by the extra burden imposed on African workers to request the Assocom Congress of 1959 to adopt a resolution to the effect that African residents earning less than £20 a month should have their rents reduced and that Daveyton be converted to a sub-economic township to reduce the rental paid by residents.[96] The recommendation was supported by the Councils General Purposes Committee, which suggested the term of repayment be extended from thirty to forty years. The implementation of this policy, it argued, would result in a reduction of 2s. 9d. a month in the rents paid by Daveyton's residents.[97] These appeals for leniency by some employee organisation did not

however detracting from the implementation of the government's policy, which was to shift the financial burden of housing onto the shoulders of African residents. The government argued that if African townships were financially self-sufficient it could make more economic housing loans available to municipalities. The thirty-year loan agreement with the government also meant that income from rents primarily went to paying off the loan. The result was that very little, if any, income could be raised from this source for township development.

Stabilisation of the urban African population: housing

The provision of housing in the new townships represented progress to many urban Africans. For many of Daveyton's first residents, who had previously lived either in squatter camps or in backyards in the old location, the occupation of a house (albeit very rudimentary and of questionable quality) represented a marked improvement on their previous abodes. Although J.E. Mathewson's (Benoni's Director of Non-European Affairs) prediction made in 1955 that Daveyton would become a 'garden city' with its streets lined by trees[98] was unlikely ever to be realised, the township's early development nonetheless represented real progress. The Daveyton Advisory Board regularly commended the authorities for their accomplishments in relation to Daveyton. Thus when Councillor Moutloatsi claimed the Benoni Council had achieved a 'miracle' by converting 'dead stones into habitable houses'[99] he expressed a relatively popular perception of Daveyton at the time.

Positive sentiments about the new townships were fairly common among lodgers and squatters for whom these townships often represented an escape from unbearable overcrowding, lack of basic facilities and exploitation by rack-renting landlords in the old locations and squatter camps. African residents who had been sub-tenants 'were delighted by the ownership of houses' in the new townships. The application of the 30-year leasehold scheme also offered residents greater security of tenure.[100] A resident of Payneville remembers the rush by lodgers for houses in

KwaThema, because people 'would rather be a landlord somewhere in the *bundu* than be subservient to a landlord in the location'.[101] The insalubrious conditions in the old locations made the new townships attractive to young people. Banzi Bangani recalls that

> It was a relief when the Council said you are now going to get your own place. You'll have your own toilet and you can put in your own bathroom. People said this is nice. Young and middle aged people owned no stands in Payneville, and particularly those who lived in the backyards. All of them, they welcome the idea of coming to KwaThema township.[102]

One of the main attractions of the new townships was the possibility of home-ownership. In 1956 Verwoerd explained the government's policy regarding home-ownership for urban Africans:

> The Native cannot acquire any property rights in the European area and therefore also not in the Location or Native Township. He cannot acquire any freehold rights there because that would clash with the basic principle of separation and separate development. On the other hand he can certainly acquire certain forms of possession which do not have any characteristics of permanency, such as home ownership and even home ownership based on a lease of the land on which the house is erected for a guaranteed number of years. He can acquire this because there is nothing in it which imports to it anything of the essence of permanency such as property ownership.[103]

Notwithstanding the ambiguities in the government's policy, home-ownership provided urban Africans with a degree of security. There were three types of tenancy available in Daveyton. First was the renting of municipal-built houses, which meant

that the Council retained ownership of the house and let it to tenants on a monthly basis. These tenants were given residential permits and had to pay rents ranging from R4,70 to R5,20. The second form of tenancy was leaseholding. Under this system tenants purchased the right of occupation of a house for a period normally of thirty years (the so-called thirty year leasehold agreement), which was the most common form of tenancy. An advantage of leasehold tenancy was that occupation could be transferred subject to permission from the local authority. Tenants in Daveyton were expected to pay ten percent of the purchase price as a deposit and pay the outstanding amount over a thirty year period in monthly instalments of approximately R4,50.[104] Finally, residents had the option of building their own homes, albeit according to specification determined by the authorities.

Initially the demand for owner-built houses was very low in Daveyton. Until 1961 only forty-four such houses were built, ten of which churches erected for their ministers.[105] A Council survey in 1955 of the lodgers in the old location and squatters of the Apex Emergency Camp found that less than one percent of them preferred to build their own homes and only 11,75% were interested in purchasing the houses built by the Council. The overwhelming majority therefore indicated a preference for renting municipal houses.[106] This situation remained virtually unchanged until the mid-1960s. A Council campaign to promote home-ownership attracted only four buyers in eighteen months in 1964-65.[107] The relatively low income earned by Daveyton's residents diminished their capacity to invest in their own homes. The depressed demand for home-ownership also suggests that the slow emergence of a better-off elite was during the first decade of Daveyton's existence. It was only when residents from the old location were relocated to Daveyton that the demand for home-ownership increased dramatically.[108] These people were often home-owners in the old location and were paid compensation for these houses, which meant many of them could afford to pay a deposit for a new house.

Stabilisation of the urban African population: employment

The 1960s also witnessed further transformation of the East Rand. The continuing industrialisation of the region caused a steady increase in population: between 1960 and 1970 the region's overall population grew by nearly 80% from 504 513 in 1960 to 909 680 in 1970 (see tables below). This large increase was primarily due to the continued influx into the region by Africans and whites to meet the growing demand for industrial jobs.

Table Four

East Rand population, 1960[109]

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Male	221 965	4 736	3 301	80 352	310 354
Female	107 572	4 613	3 243	78 731	194 159
Total	329 537	9 349	6 544	159 083	**504 513**

Table Five

East Rand Population, 1970[110]

	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Male	319 739	9 478	5 746	164 904	499 867
Female	230 379	10 139	5 716	163 579	409 813
Total	550 118	19 617	11 462	328 483	**909 680**

A comparison of these figures reveals a number of important shifts in the demographic patterns of the region. Firstly, the African population increased, although at a slower rate than in the previous period. Secondly, the white population more than doubled during the 1960s rising from 31,5% to 36% of the overall population compared to a 5% in the contribution of the African population. Expressed differently the region's white population amounted to less than 50% of the African population in 1960, while a decade later it had increased to nearly 60%. Although African urbanisation into the region had neither been halted nor reversed, the government's objectives of reducing the rate of African urbanisation and simultaneously increasing white urbanisation had thus achieved a measure of success.

These statistics, however, conceal even more important shifts in the character of the population of this region than those that they disclose. In 1960 mining still retained its pre-eminence in the region's economy, employing more African males than in other industry (96 681 out of 145 040 labourers).[111] By 1970 mining in the region had experienced a precipitous decline, which was reflected in its shedding of nearly two-thirds of its African male employees to an historic low figure of only 33

613.[112] Despite this massive reduction in mining employment, the total number of African male labourers grew from 145 040 to 165 238 during the decade, reflecting the huge leap in the number of African males employed in industry from under 50 000 to 131 628.[113] By the early 1970s African and coloured workers constituted over 80% of production workers in the metal industry on the East Rand.[114] These figures confirm the growing dependence of industry in the 'white economy' on African workers.

The official employment statistics for Daveyton likewise show a steady increase in male employment throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. In 1962 the number of registered African males employed in Benoni stood at 19 754 and by 1973 the figure had increased to 27 877.[115] A parallel decline in the rate of African male unemployment was also registered, dropping to less than ten percent and at the height of the economic boom in the mid-sixties to between 1,5 – 3,0%.[116] African women also benefitted from this trend as their numbers in formal employment grew from 34818 in 1962 to 10 382 in 1969. They nevertheless remained the most vulnerable to the vagaries of the economy and were the first to be adversely affected when the economy began to slow down in the early 1970s. Thus in 1973 the number of registered African women employed in Benoni had declined to approximately 8000.[117]

Perhaps the most significant change that occurred during the 1960s was the massive expansion in the number of African males in semi-skilled occupations in industry. This was taking place nationally but was particularly pronounced on the East Rand. Crankshaw and Sitas have argued that in the late 1960s the shortage of white artisans led employers to accelerate the fragmentation of skilled trades, hitherto monopolised by white skilled workers who used their craft unions to block the entry of black workers into these grades, and to promote African employment in the newly created operative jobs. [118] Crankshaw's seminal study reveals the entry nationally of African workers into the existing and newly created semi-skilled occupations. This pattern of upward mobility as Crankshaw emphasises was restricted to specific classes previously dominated by white workers.[119] The statistics for the East Rand

largely confirm Crankshaw's analysis but suggest that the rate of upward mobility by African workers on the East Rand was probably more advanced than in other parts of the country. A number of semi-skilled categories in the region's industries seem to have experienced a particularly huge influx of African workers. Tables four and five show some of the changes that occurred in the course of the 1960s.

Generally, the figures for 1960 show that white males overwhelmingly occupied skilled and semi-skilled jobs. In none of these categories did the number of African male workers exceed 25%. The differences between the 1960 and 1970 figures are striking. Although white workers continued to play a pivotal role in industry, dominating skilled jobs, their position in many semi-skilled categories showed a precipitous decline. In those categories where some direct comparison is possible, such as Welder and Cabinet Maker, the proportion of African workers increased seven-fold and nearly four-fold respectively. The chemical industry's robust expansion on the East Rand is reflected in the huge increase in its employment figures. The predominance of African workers in this relatively skilled sector of the economy was also marked. Similarly, the high proportion of Africans who were tool-makers indicate their centrality in the metal industry.

Until the 1960s African women played a negligible role in the secondary industry of the East Rand. In 1960 only 977 African females were employed in the formal secondary economy. Domestic work remained the most important sector of employment for African women, absorbing 18 514 out of 29 896 economically active African female workers. A much larger proportion of coloured and Indian females (33,8% and 60% respectively) was employed industry compared to African and white females (3,2% and 8,1% respectively), which was probably consequent upon the huge exodus of white female employees from the garment and textile industries. However, during the 1960s the numbers of African women employed in industry in various occupations ranging from cleaners to operators increased more than nine-fold.

Table Six

Male employment in the main industrial occupations on the East Rand, 1960[120]

	Total	African (%)	White (%)
Fitter and turner	4 459	330 (7,4%)	4 038 (90,5%)
Furnacemen	1 241	103 (8,2%)	1 111 (89,5%)
Mechanic	1 613	92 (5,7%)	1 498 (92,8%)
Welder	2 170	135 (6,2%)	2 009 (92,5%)
Carpenter	1 464	224 (15,3%)	1 145 (78,2%)
Bricklayer	1 698	417 (24,5%)	1 221 (71,9%)
Chemical Worker	872	59 (6,7%)	697 (79,9%)

Table Seven

Male employment in the main industrial occupations on the East Rand, 1970[121]

	Total	African (%)	White (%)
Machinery Fitter	14 505	4 184 (28,8%0	9 930 (68,5%)
Welder/Plumber	12 082	5 385 (44,6%)	6 121 (50,6%)
Chemical Processor	8 027	7 052 (87,8%)	728 (9%)
Bricklayer	12 008	7 829 (65,2%)	3 938 (32,8%)
Cabinet Maker	1 520	887 (58,4%)	336 (22,1%)
Tool Maker	13 455	9 149 (68%)	3 150 (23,4%)
Electrical Fitter	8 300	3 316 (40%)	3 595 (43,3%)
Glass Former	3 850	3 243 (84,2%)	312 (8,1%)
Transport Equipment Operator	17 496	13 571 (77,6%)	3 216 (18,4%)

In 1962 the Bureau for Market Research conducted a survey on incomes among African people living in Benoni. The findings of the survey highlighted several developing trends. Firstly, it confirmed the high proportion of Africans who had settled permanently in the urban area. In September 1961 the African population of Benoni stood at 91 300 of which approximately 80 000 were living under 'household conditions', that is, they were residing in family accommodation in one of the three townships of the town. Only 6 000 African males were still accommodated in mine compounds, which reflected the demise of the mining industry and the consequent displacement of the local migrant population.[122]

More than 40% of African household heads in all three townships of Benoni were employed in the manufacturing sector, confirming the industrial character of the African population.[123] In comparison only 16,4% of Pretoria's African workforce was employed in the manufacturing sector, which highlights the extent of industrialisation on the East Rand and Benoni specifically. The proportion of semi-skilled workers residing in each of the three townships varied somewhat. Daveyton had a higher proportion of unskilled workers than Wattville and BBT (69% compared to 55,4% and 65,8% respectively), and a smaller proportion of semi-skilled workers (14,9% compared to 21,8% and 16,5% respectively).[124] This was because Daveyton's population consisted primarily of relatively new migrants in the urban area who had entered industry at the lowest employment rungs. The older locations had far more established urban populations who had worked in industry for longer periods and were thus more likely to have acquired experience and skills.

The differences in occupation skill levels affected the average incomes in the different townships. The discrepancy between wages earned by semi-skilled and unskilled workers was huge: the former earned an average of R50,32 compared to only R31,20 by the latter. By contrast the average earnings of skilled workers (R54,14) differed only marginally with the earnings of those doing semi-skilled workers.[125] These wage differentials affected household incomes in the townships. The average monthly income per household in Wattville was R66,42 compared to only R47,68 in Daveyton.[126] Although comparative figures for Benoni Old Location

were not provided in the survey, it may be assumed that the average income in the old location would have been between than of the other two townships.[127] The survey found that the average monthly income of household heads (as opposed to households) in Benoni was R36,31, implying that their incomes was supplemented by an average of R15,85.[128] As most household heads were male, it may be assumed that these supplementary incomes were mainly derived from their wives, who in many instances were employed as domestic workers but were also at the point of entering industrial occupations.

The survey showed African households in Benoni as spending approximately 72% of their income on basic necessities (42,4% on food alone and as expending their entire income each month.[129] Any unexpected expenditure or sudden increase in one of the basic necessities was thus liable to throw residents into debt from which they found it difficult to escape. The survey fails to factor in differential transport costs, flattening them out to average R5 when most residents from Wattville and Benoni Old Location walked to their workplaces and therefore spent very little on transport. Residents of Wattville and Benoni Old Location were clearly better off than their counterparts in Daveyton. As the *Benoni City Times* reported

> Daveyton might be a model township with a handsome civic centre, modern brewery and an all-Native town council – but it was also a city of people existing on starvation wages.[130]

The lower income earned by Daveyton's residents was reflected in the high rental arrears that accumulated during the first few years of the township's existence. The monthly rental of £3 proved too expensive for many, resulting in a high proportion of under-payment or non-payment during the first few years of Daveyton's existence. Up to a thousand residents were interviewed a month by the township superintendent for being in arrears.[131] By the early 1960s the total arrears for the township stood at R60 103.[132] However, over the following few years this figure declined to an all time low of R33 181 in 1965[133] before increasing again to R63 706 in 1966.[134] Overall,

therefore, the arrears figures increased by only about R3000 in the mid-1960s, which suggested a modest increase in prosperity and contrasted sharply with increases in rental arrears registered in the late 1950s. The improvements in income levels were also reflected by the decline in the number of electricity cut-offs in the mid-1960s. In the early 1960s an average of up to thirty households a month were affected by electricity cut-offs due to non-payment, but by 1965 that number had decreased to only nine households a month.[135] The lives of the residents of Daveyton had improved discernibly since the establishment of the township in 1955. In this respect, their experiences mirrored that of many urban Africans during this period. Despite these material improvements, urban Africans generally remained poor and their incomes and standard of living lagged far behind those of their white counterparts.

As the populations of the new townships became more settled, social differentiation among them emerged more clearly, albeit unevenly. The entry of more Africans into semi-skilled and skilled jobs in industry, the expansion of township administrations and the initial opportunity to secure of home-ownership, among other factors, contributed to the emergence of new and the reinforcement of old forms of social differentiation. These incipient class divisions manifested themselves unevenly in the different townships on the East Rand. For example, home-ownership and the type of house being occupied, which were important markers of social differentiation affected townships very differently. In Natalspruit/Katlehong some of the class differences were transplanted from the old location. Site-holders and lodgers from Dukathole were relocated in separate sections. The former were generally given larger plots and encouraged to build their own houses. In this way a visible social differentiation was imposed from the outset in the new township.[136] Brandel-Syrier's study of the elite in this township noted that "social differentiation was expressed and emphasised in residential differentiation".[137] The situation in Daveyton, where there were very few home-owners, differed markedly from this. It seems that initially there was a greater social differentiation between the different African townships of Benoni, than within Daveyton. According to Brandel-Syrier, the 'managerial elite' formed an important component of the new township elite. In this category Daveyton

(where only 1,5% of household heads were categorised as being managerial) also lagged behind Wattville (6,9%).[138]

Daveyton was thus not marked by the same degree of social stratification as those of other townships, whose residents were drawn primarily from the old locations. The relative social homogeneity of residents was reinforced by the high percentage of unskilled workers among them. As a result it took much longer for class divisions to make a serious imprint on Daveyton's population. The influx of residents from the Benoni Old Location in the mid-1960s certainly contributed to a greater social heterogeneity in Daveyton's population.

However, even before that the process of social stratification was already under way. By the early 1960s there was a relatively well established, albeit small, entrepreneurial class in the township. There were already thirty trading sites (primarily trading stores), that were owned by the new residents.[139] This was significant because in the other townships, traders from the old locations were usually able to acquire trading sites in the new townships and thus continue their monopoly of trading there.[140] Mathewson's insistence on establishing a large township administration in Daveyton created more scope for the emergence of a 'new elite of public servants'.[141] As a result, Daveyton boasted a higher proportion of public administration staff than either Wattville or Benoni Old Location.[142] Daveyton's fifteen schools, twenty-one churches, clinic, post office and two banks[143] would also have contributed to the growth of a professional stratum in the elite. Here again Daveyton outstripped the longer established Wattville.[144] Daveyton lagged behind other East Rand townships in a number of respects in so far as the prestige and well-being of its population was concerned. However, it was also catching up fairly quickly. Daveyton, perhaps more than any other township in the region, was the best example of the state's success in stabilising sections of the urban African population (squatters and lodgers), which had previously caused it serious concern.

The government's objectives set out in the 1950s to stabilise and control the urban African population was largely achieved in the early 1960s. The repression following the Sharpeville massacre played a huge role in achieving this aim.

However, the creation of the large modern townships also contributed significantly to this process. Notwithstanding the comparatively low quality accommodation and services provided to urban Africans as well as the severe social dislocation accompanying the disestablishment of the old locations, the move to the new townships was improved conditions for many. Daveyton and other townships became what the government set out to achieve: urban reservoirs of reliable labour. The process of stabilising the African working class was reinforced by its improved status in the economy as many were drawn into semi-skilled jobs. As a result of this wages improved, although they remained low in comparison to the earnings of their white counterparts. But, as the policies of 'practical' apartheid policies began to bear fruit, the government began introducing important policy changes designed specifically to undermine the achievement of creating a permanently urbanised and stable African working class.

ENDNOTES

[1] D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, pp.4-6

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[3] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni: Son of my Sorrow*, Town Council of Benoni, 1968, p.122

[4] Central Archives Depot (CAD), Municipality of Benoni (MB) 2/3/46, Ad2 (1), Management Committee Minutes, October 1963

[5] *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 26.12.52

[6] Government Publications (GP), University of the Witwatersrand Library(UWL), *Mentz Committee Report*, 'Verslag Van Die Komitee Aangestel Om Die Vraagstuk Van Woongebiede Vir Naturelle In Die Omgewing Van Die Witwatersrand En Vereeniging Te Ondersoek', 1954

[7] CAD, Municipality of Springs (MSP) 1/3/5/1/42, Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Affairs Committee, 'Annual Report of the Manager of Non-European Affairs, 195859'

[8] See for example the Deputy Minister of Bantu Affairs, 'Blaar' Coetzee's address to the Daveyton UBC in Historical and Literary Papers (HLP), UWL, Report of Daveyton UBC, 22.07.66, Minutes of a special UBC meeting, 21.06.66

[9] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual Conference of the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs (IANA), September 1956, Opening Address by H.F. Verwoerd

[10] S. Parnell and A. Mabin, 'Rethinking Urban South Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.21, no.1, March 1995, p.46

[11] Ibid

[12] D. Van Tonder, "Sophiatown: Removals and Protest, 1940-1955", M.A. Thesis, Unisa, 1990

[13] H. Southworth, 'Strangling South Africa's Cities: Resistance to Group Areas in Durban during the 1950s', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24,1, 1991

[14] S. Bekker and R. Humphries, *From Control to Confusion, The changing role of Administration Boards in South Africa, 1971-1983*, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1985, p.3

[15] D. Van Tonder, 'Sophiatown'

[16] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual Conference of the IANA, September 1956, Address by H.F. Verwoerd

[17] Ibid

[18] Ibid

[19] The Native Urban Areas Act of 1945, Section 22, stipulated "No officer so appointed or assigned shall assume the duty of such management until he has been licensed as prescribed. The Minister may, at any time on good cause shown, after reference to the urban local authority concerned, withdraw any licence so granted."

[20] Record of proceedings of the eighth annual Conference of the IANA, September 1959, Address by De Wet Nel, Minister of Bantu Affairs and Administration

[21] D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid*, p.247

[22] Van Tonder has shown that, notwithstanding this public dispute, there was considerable continuity between Nationalist government and United Party-controlled Johannesburg Council policies regarding urban segregation. D. Van Tonder, "'First Win the war, then clear the slums', The Genesis of the Western Areas Removal Scheme, 1940-1949", in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds), *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935-1962*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1993

[23] H. Sapire, 'Apartheid's Testing Ground', *Journal of African History*, 35, 1, 1994, p.102

[24] Ibid, p107 for Brakpan. The NP won five out of ten seats in Boksburg in 1954.

[25] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus – A History*, Maskew Miller Longman, Johannesburg, 2001, p.48

[26] Record of proceedings of the second annual Conference of the IANA, July 1953, Address by J. Mathewson

[27] *Benoni City Times*, 08.05.53

[28] *Benoni City Times*, 22.02.57

[29] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, pp. 5 & 18

[30] N. Nieftagodien, 'The Making of Apartheid in Springs, Group Areas, Forced Removal and Resistance', M.A. Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1995, pp. 113-116

[31] Statement from the Springs Chamber of Commerce quoted in D. Gilfoyle, 'An Urban Crisis: The Town Council, Industry and the Black Working Class in Springs', Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1983, p.43

[32] Record of proceedings of the seventh annual Conference of the IANA, August, 1958, Address by A.S. Marais

[33] Ibid, Contribution by Mr. Wakely-Smith of the Chamber of Industries

[34] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, p.20

[35] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual Conference of the IANA, September, 1956, Presidential address by J.E. Mathewson

[36] Record of proceedings of the ninth annual Conference of the IANA, September, 1960, Address by J.E. Mathewson on "The Role of Urban Bantu Administration as a Basic Component of the Policy of Separate Development"

[37] Record of proceedings of the second annual Conference of the IANA, July 1953,Address by J.E Mathewson, p.37

[38] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual Conference of the IANA, September, 1956, Presidential address by J.E. Mathewson

[39] Ibid

[40] Ibid

[41] Record of proceedings of the eighth annual Conference of the IANA, September 1959, J.E. Mathewson's reply to paper by Professor P.W. Hoek , 'A Non-European Affairs Department within the framework of a local authority'.

[42] J.E. Mathewson, *The Establishment of a Bantu Township*, Pretoria, 1957, p.1

[43] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual Conference of the IANA, September 1956, Address by H.F. Verwoerd

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[45] CAD, MB 1/4/22, Minutes of Non-European Affairs Department, 16.09.54, Circular to municipalities from the Secretary of Native Affairs Department

[46] J.E. Mathewson, "Ethnic Grouping, With particular reference to its application in Daveyton Bantu Township, Benoni", Address to Benoni Rotary Club, 29.03.55, printed in *Bantu*, July 1955, pp. 25- 27

[47] Intermediate Archives Johannesburg (IAJ), N2/25/1, vol.3 'Letter from the South African Congress of Democrats', 19.03.54

[48] CAD, Files of the Department of Native Administration and Development (BAO) 24, 436/332, Benoni Town Council to The Native Commissioner, 'Disturbances: Daveyton Bantu Township', 18.03.57

[49] Ibid

[50] Ibid, pp.22-23

[51] A similar clash between Basotho and Zulus in Johannesburg in 1957 was also blamed on ethnic grouping by the African National Congress and the Institute of Race Relations

[52] *Benoni City Times*, 5/3/54

[53] J.E. Mathewson, "Ethnic Grouping in Daveyton" *Bantu*, September 1959, pp.5

[54] J.E. Mathewson, "Ethnic Grouping", *Bantu*, July 1955, p.14

[55] J.E. Mathewson, *The Establishment of a Bantu Township*, p.46

[56] P.Bonner and R. Lambert, "Batons and bare heads: the strike at Amato Textiles, February 1958" in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, Longman, London, 1987, p.343

[57] J. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, p.48,

[58] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p. 129

[59] CAD, Municipality of Brakpan (MBP) 2/2/859, 14/6/25, Minutes of the Non-European Affairs Department, 27.09.54

[60] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus,* pp.21-22

[61] CAD, BAO 1048, A14/ 1077, Boksburg Bantu Affairs Commissioner to The Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, 25.0365

[62] Ibid

[63] CAD, Files of the Department of Native Affairs (NTS) 916, 125/3/3/, Letter from Nationalist Party, Geduld, to Mr. Mentz, Native Affairs Commision, 18.06.53

[64] CAD, BAO H19/1050/1 [125/313 (N)(2), "Daveyton Lokasie:klagtes deur bewoners van Putfontein, Hillcrest and Lilyvale', 15.10.57

[65] J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, p.41

[66] H.F. Verwoerd speech to the Federated Chamber of Industry, 26.05.54, quoted in J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, pp. 114-5. Verwoerd claimed that the cost of building a house for an urban African family ranged from £600 - £800 despite the reduction in construction costs with the employment of African builders.

[67] W.M. C. Mocké, 'Site-and-Service Schemes: The realistic approach towards resolving the Bantu housing backlog' in *Bantu*, September 1955

[68] CAD, MB 1/4/22, Minutes of Benoni Native Affairs Committee, 12.08.54

[69] J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, pp. 121-122

[70] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, p.124

[71] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual conference of IANA, September 1956, Verwoerd speech, pp. 108-9

[72] A.J. Archibald, (Director of Housing, Johannesburg), response to Mr. W.M. C. Mocké's paper in *Bantu*, September, 1955, p.27

[73] H.F. Verwoerd speech to the Federated Chamber of Industry, 26.05.54, quoted in J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, pp. 114-5.

[74] CAD, NTS 916, 125/3/3/, 'Memorandum on Daveyton Bantu Township', Town Council of Benoni, 1954, p.5

[75] CAD, NTS 916, 125/3/3, Town Council of Benoni to The Secretary of Native Affairs, "Interview with various Ministers of State re: the establishment of Daveyton Bantu Township', 7.06.54

[76] J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, p.117

[77] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, p.20

[78] CAD, Municipality of Brakpan (MBP) 2/2/859, 14/6/25, Minutes of the Council, 27.09.54

[79] H.F. Verwoerd speech to the Federated Chamber of Industry, 26.05.54, quoted in J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, pp. 114-5.

[80] These included the Bantu Building Workers Act, The Native Service Levy Act and the decision to phase out sub-economic houses, which freed more finances for the construction of houses.

[81] J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township* p.120

[82] Ibid, pp. 121-122

[83] Ibid, p.133

[84] N. Nieftagodien, 'The Making of Apartheid in Springs', p.138

[85] C. Mocke, 'Bantu Housing with special reference to Site-and-service schemes'

[86] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual conference of IANA, September 1956, Verwoerd speech

[87] "Approved Expenditure from Native Services Levy Fund", *Bantu*, February 1961, p.71

[88] D. Humphriss and D.G. Thomas, *Benoni*, pp.127-8

[89] *Benoni City Times*, 07.01.55

[90] P. Hendler, *Politics On The Home Front*, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1989, p.55

[91] The official exchange at the time when South Africa changed currency in 1961 was £1 = R2

[92] CAD, MB 2/3/46, Ad2 (1), *Management Committee Minutes*, October 1963

[93] Ibid

[94] South African Institute of RaceRelations (SAIRR), *Survey of Race Relations*, 1957-58, p. 122

[95] P.Bonner and R. Lambert, "Batons and bare heads", p.359

[96] *Benoni City Times*, 11.09.59

[97] *Benoni City Times*, 04.09.59

[98] *Benoni City Times*, 7.01.55

[99] CAD, Municipality of Benoni (MB) 1/4/27, Minutes of the Daveyton Advisory Board, 23.04.57

[100] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, p.18

[101] Interview, Jimmy '5000' Jacobs, 20.06.95, Geluksdal

[102] Interview, Banzi Bangani, 01.07.95, KwaThema

[103] Record of proceedings of the fifth annual conference of IANA, September 1956, Verwoerd speech

[104] C. De Coning, *Income and Expenditure Patterns of Urban Bantu Households: Benoni Survey*, Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1962, p.19

[105] Ibid

[106] J.E. Mathewson, *Bantu Township*, p.13

[107] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, 22.01.65

[108] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, 21.03.67, Minutes of the UBC meeting, 28.03.67

[109] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, 1960

[110] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, Metropolitan Areas, East Rand, 1970

[111] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, 1960

[112] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, Metropolitan Areas, East Rand, 1970

[113] Ibid

[114] A. Sitas, 'African Worker Responses on the East Rand to Changes in the Metal Industry, 1960-1980', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1983, p.224

[115] These statistics are taken from the various reports of Daveyton's Advisory Board and Urban Bantu Council during the period 1962 -1974

[116] Ibid

[117] Ibid

[118] O. Crankshaw, 'Race, Class and the Changing Division of Labour Under Apartheid', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1994, p.15 and A. Sitas, 'African Worker Responses', pp.140-2. Sitas especially shows how concerned industrial employers were about the serious bottlenecks of skill shortages.

[119] Ibid, p23

[120] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, 1960

[121] GP, UWL, *South African Population Census*, Metropolitan Areas, East Rand, 1970

[122] C. De Coning, *Income and Expenditure Patterns*, 1962, p.14

[123] Ibid, p.36 The figures for the three townships were Daveyton (43,7%), Wattville (42,6%) and BBT (43,4%)

[124] Ibid, p.35

[125] Ibid, p.46

[126] Ibid, p.43. The huge discrepancy between the average income of the two townships was due of course to the higher real income earned by semi-skilled workers. However, Wattville's higher average was also partly accounted for by the fact that there were more earners per household in the township than in Daveyton, namely, 2,01 compared to 1,65.

[127] This assumption is based on the proportion of semi-skilled workers in BBT *vis-à-vis* Wattville and Daveyton.

[128] Ibid, p.44

[129] Ibid

[130] *Benoni City Times*, 08.12.61

[131] P.Bonner and R. Lambert, "Batons and bare heads", p.359

[132] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, September 1962

[133] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, June 1965

[134] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, November 1966

[135] UWL, HLP, Report of the Daveyton UBC, May 1965

[136] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, p.21

[137] M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown Elite*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1971, p.18

[138] C. De Coning, *Income and Expenditure Patterns*, p.31

[139] Ibid, p.20

[140] For example Brandel-Syrier comments that shop-owners from the old location were given "the pick of trading sites" in the Natalspruit. See M. Brandel-Syrier, *Reeftown*, p.16

[141] Ibid, p.13

[142] C. De Coning, *Income and Expenditure Patterns*, 3,1% of Daveyton's household heads was employed as clerks or administrators compared to 1% of Wattville's household heads.

[143] Ibid, p.20

[144] Ibid, p.31 4,3% of Davetyon's household heads compared to 3% of Wattville's household heads were categorised as professional

CHAPTER FIVE

High apartheid in the 1960s: the decline of 'modern' townships and urban rights

From the late 1950s the government introduced changes to central aspects of its policies, which inaugurated a period that Posel has described as 'apartheid's second phase'.[1] The government embarked on the road of 'high apartheid' because of the perceived failure of its previous policies to stem the tide of African urbanisation and to limit the dependence of the 'white' economy on African workers. The black proletariat's political militancy in the late 1950s exacerbated these dilemmas for the ruling class. Whereas in the earlier period of apartheid the government insisted on a strict differentiation between 'detribalised' (urbanised) and 'tribal' (rural) Africans, now it abandoned this distinction and assigned all Africans to one or other rural-based ethnic group.[2]

A renewed emphasis on ethnicity therefore characterised the decade of 'high apartheid'. The promulgation of the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act in 1959 signalled the government's intention to politicise ethnicity. Henceforth all Africans would be tied to a 'tribal' community and authority. Two implications flowed from this piece of legislation. The first was that Africans were denied a permanent status in the urban areas and, consequently, also any urban rights. The second was that the different 'races' or 'nations' of South Africa had to develop separately. This concept of 'separate development, according to Posel, 'was largely the ideological means to legitimise the denial of the franchise to Africans.'[3] A central aim of these new policies was to reverse African urbanisation. As a result in the 1960s various pieces of legislation were introduced to push Africans back to the

reserves. In the words of a leading government minister, M.C. Botha all 'natives without work or who, as approved workers, have misbehaved, must disappear out of white South Africa, back to the reserves.'[4] Many of the main 'concessions' made to Africans in the 1950s, such as Section 10 rights and home-ownership, came under attack in the 1960s. African women found their position in the urban areas rendered even more precarious and vulnerable to being 'endorsed out' of the towns. The promotion of 'homelands' also resulted in a massive re-allocation of resources away from the urban areas to the reserves. As a result, from the late 1960s African townships in the urban areas suffered from neglect and entered a spiral of socio-economic decline.

This chapter again focuses on the fate of Daveyton in this period. The reasons are the same. If any township should have been a model of 'separate development' it was Daveyton. Daveyton was laid out from the beginning according to apartheid principles. The government and the Benoni municipality worked in close harmony over township issues, which ensured in the early days that Daveyton would be relatively well funded. Finally, the overwhelming bulk of Daveyton's population were relatively recent arrivals in the urban areas. If any urban black community should have been amenable to the government's 'separate development' project, it should have been this.

Local authorities brought under control

J.E. Mathewson's address in 1960 to the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs (IANA) conference entitled 'The role of Urban Bantu Administration as a basic component of the policy of separate development' explicitly aimed at reconciling his aims of utilising the administration of Daveyton as training for Africans with the government's 'homelands' policy. He also seemed persuaded by Verwoerd's declaration that 'homelands' would have their own cities "where self-rule will apply in the towns, with the management entirely in the hands of

the Bantu."[5] Thus Mathewson's concern that Africans be urbanised seemed to be catered for in the government's 'homelands' strategy. This ideological convergence marked a further consolidation of the relationship between Benoni's Council and the government and ushered in a period of unprecedented co-operation.

This rapprochement between the municipality and government should also be viewed in the context of the United Party's shift to the right and consequent conciliatory attitude to the ruling party. After the split in the United Party (UP), which resulted in the formation of the Progressive Party in 1959, the UP remained the official opposition but proved even more supportive of Verwoerd than critics in his own party.[6] The United Party partly justified its label as 'Loyal Official Opposition' by arguing that the government's introduction of Urban Bantu Councils amounted to an adoption of policies it had been advocating since the early fifties. It believed the NP's new policies acknowledged the permanent urbanisation of Africans and township residents' ability to handle certain aspects of their own local governance.[7]

The fracturing and weakness of the parliamentary opposition was inversely proportionate to the growing strength and authority of the Nationalist Party (NP). While the 1958 elections consolidated the ruling party's hold on white politics, the successful crackdown against the black opposition movement after 1960 significantly reinforced its power. This trend was confirmed by the success of the republic referendum and subsequent elections, nationally and locally. The East Rand was a good example of the growing domination of the NP. Until the mid-fifties the UP not only controlled most of the local authorities but also won most of the areas' parliamentary seats. However, the balance of power began to shift in the NP's favour and by the mid-sixties it held the political sway. Benoni was one of the last towns on the East Rand to succumb to the NP electoral juggernaut, remaining a UP parliamentary seat until 1966. The NP won the parliamentary seats in Brakpan in 1953, in Boksburg in 1958 and in Springs in 1966.[8] This meant that political co-operation by local authorities was almost guaranteed.

The ruling party's increasing control over local authorities was further enhanced by changes to the structure and functioning of Transvaal's municipalities.

The Local Government (Administration and Elections) Ordinance of 1960 centralised authority in the hands of smaller and less accountable Management Committees.[9] Until then Councils operated by means of various standing committees which were responsible for carrying out different municipal functions. From the beginning of 1961 the functions of these standing committees were all taken over by the Management Committee. The running of Council business became the responsibility of the five members of the Management Committees who were elected by the Councillors after each municipal election. Under the new system council election were to be held only every five years, instead of the existing three years, thereby reducing the influence the electorate might have on Councillors'

The avowed aim of these changes was to introduce greater efficiency at local government level. It was argued that the longer period of office for Councillors would give them more time to carry out their mandates efficaciously. However, these changes also tended to make them less responsive to the electorate. More serious perhaps was the concentration of power in fewer hands. Although the Council retained the power to pass a motion of no confidence in the Management Committee, the latter tended to act as a cabinet without regular reference to the rest of the Council. Meetings of the Management Committee were closed affairs unless it gave other councillors permission to attend. In early 1961 there was considerable enthusiasm about the new system.[10] However, by the end of that year the editors of *Municipal Affairs*, a prominent magazine for local authorities, complained that "The statutory powers given to management committees are such that they easily become dictatorial powers - indeed, signs of a dictatorial attitude here and there have not been wanting."[11] The centralisation of authority in the councils mirrored the concentration of power in the higher echelons of the state. In both instances opposition was consciously marginalised and rendered increasingly ineffective. At a local level, the NP's electoral advances plus the creation of Management Committees tended to transform municipalities into compliant executors of government policy.

The effects of the national political realignment were of enormous consequence for Benoni, especially its African population. Notwithstanding the

continuing existence of differences between Benoni and the government, the municipality proved to be an even more reliable local arm of the state than it was in the fifties. When confronted by critical enquiries from the Daveyton UBC, Mathewson retorted that "An Act of parliament could not be changed by the Council no matter how it felt nor could it be changed by him even if he liked to do so... It was his duty to carry out the State's policy and he could not fight against it."[12] For his co-operation with the government, Mathewson continued to win accolades from his Nationalist opponents. Blaar Coetzee, the Minister informed the UBC that they were fortunate to have "at their disposal [someone who] was looked upon as one of the most capable administrators in Bantu Affairs in South Africa."[13]

The primary consequence of the growing collegial relations between the local authority and the government was that control over urban Africans became easier to effect. Government policies affecting African townships and their residents were henceforth implemented virtually without opposition from the municipalities.

Urban Bantu Councils

Advisory Boards were established to serve as mechanisms of liaison between location residents and the authorities. They were explicitly denied any real power and their overall functions were limited to an advisory capacity. In addition local authorities were neither obliged to consult the Advisory Boards nor take into account any recommendations by them. The usefulness of Advisory Boards depended on the willingness of local authorities to consult them on township administration matters.[14]

During the 1930s the conservative-dominated Advisory Boards were able to perform their perfunctory roles without too much opposition. In the subsequent two decades the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and the African National Congress (ANC) sought to utilise the Advisory Boards as platforms from which to propagate their views and to mobilise residents in campaigns to demands improvements from the authorities. As a result, from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s

in numerous townships Advisory Boards ceased to function according to the government's prescription.

Under the pressure of these struggles conservative township politicians and some municipalities began to call for Advisory Boards to be given more powers. There was also a growing disquiet among municipalities that a main "grievance among the Bantu is that they are not always consulted on matters affecting their interest."[15] Benoni's answer to this problem was to engage in 'constant consultation' with the Daveyton Advisory Board. "It is imperative" Mathewson insisted, "to avoid placing the advisory board in a position where the members have no function but to sit back and criticize knowing that there is little possibility of their being called upon to face any repercussion arising from the implementation of the policy they may enunciate."[16] But even the more liberal and paternalist Benoni Council had no intention of allowing the Advisory Board to influence important policy decisions. The issues Mathewson had in mind for them were "many matters of a non-contentious nature which could with advantage be referred to advisory board for their views and bring them 'into the picture'. A feeling is thus created that they form part of the machinery responsible for the progress of their own town."[17]

Arguments to abolish the Advisory Board system were vented more frequently in the late 1950s. Local officials attending IANA conferences regularly bemoaned the failure of the Boards. Even Eiselen admitted that "The urban Bantu population is not even interested in the election of its Board members – in Pretoria for example only between 33,4% and 36,4% of the registered inhabitants make use of their voting rights." The government openly acknowledged the pervasiveness of 'malpractices' in the Advisory Boards. These included "pre-election promises, [the] use of delaying tactics when amendment of regulations or estimates are considered, [the] influence of Shebeen Queens on elections [and the fact that] supporters of the majority group are almost exclusively recommended for the granting of business licences."[18] In Verwoerd's view this was a recipe for disaster: "Any Advisory Board which has no responsibility must of necessity become a body which makes all kinds of demands, and requests and cherishes all kinds of expectations. The greater the

demands made by such a body are, the better their chances are for re-election to membership thereof... This naturally forms a basis for agitation and strife."[19] The government openly distanced itself from the Advisory Boards when it refused to attend the annual congress of the Advisory Boards in 1956 on the grounds that these congresses were discussing political matters. A consensus was developing among state and municipal officials that the Advisory Boards system was inadequate and had to be replaced. Precisely what should replace them became the subject of much debate in the late fifties and early sixties.

Initially, when the alternatives to the Advisory Boards were being considered it seemed that the granting of some urban representation and more substantive powers to the successors of the Boards might be possible. In the immediate aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre when a wide spectrum of white politicians, including prominent members of the NP, and leading Afrikaner businessmen attempted to impress on Verwoerd the necessity of making concessions,[20] there seemed a real chance that the ruling party might choose the road of reform. Once Verwoerd recovered from the first assassination attempt on his life this was quickly quashed. Probably, the most important change in the direction of the government's policy was the decision to promote and develop the 'homelands'.[21] The ideology of 'separate development' had little to do with the actual physical, social and economic development of the reserves. Its main aim was to deny Africans political rights in 'white South Africa' by creating ethnically defined political entities where all Africans would supposedly have the opportunity to exercise the franchise. From this point on the government was determined to associate, by whatever means, the political aspirations of African people to the ethnic 'homelands'.

The parliamentary debate on the Urban Bantu Council Bill revealed both the government's objectives in establishing UBCs and the flaws inherent in them. In his motivation for the Bill, the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development argued that the government was "creating the possibility for the Bantu to take the initiative themselves to a very large extent in matters relating to their residential areas". He added that municipalities would have the authority to delegate powers to

the new Councils and urged them to fulfil this responsibility.[22] Even now it was apparent that the proposed powers, which were to be delegated to the UBCs, would be severely circumscribed. The Minister explained that the UBCs would be given powers to "co-operate in the laying out of streets, the improvement of streets, etc. and in future we hope also in connections with the provision of electric light, etc. and that they will also be able to co-operate in respect of the laying out of playgrounds."[23] The opposition Progressive Party dismissed the new Bill as being merely "a façade which pretends to give administrative powers to the urban Bantu" because any power that a local authority might agree to confer to the Bantu Council would have numerous conditions attached to it, effectively rendering it powerless.[24] Despite these objections the government pressed ahead with its plan

The government's emphasis on promoting 'homelands' profoundly influenced the form of representation it was prepared to offer urban Africans. Verwoerd insisted that any new local authority for urban Africans must be defined "on an ethnic basis because the greatest success is achieved where the relationship with traditional custom and the Native's respect for his traditional authority is retained... It is necessary for them to revert back to this system for the sake of peace and order and especially for the welfare and good progress of the Native himself."[25] As early as 1954 at a meeting with Pedi chiefs Verwoerd suggested these aims might be achieved by installing 'tribal representatives' in urban townships.[26] The government claimed that chiefs were becoming concerned about their 'children' in the cities who had 'drifted away from the tribe'. Verwoerd outlined his two-pronged plan to address these concerns: "The one is to allow your 'children' to live together as a community in one portion of the urban area (ethnic grouping). The tribal chiefs must [also] have representatives in the cities who will be in constant touch with their people so that they may know where their 'children' can be found."[27]

Even though the government acknowledged serious shortcomings among Advisory Boards, its initial suggestions to create new bodies with substantial powers to administer the townships were shelved in favour of what turned out to be little more than a name change. In practice the only material change to the Advisory

Boards was the provision made for chiefs' representatives. This was partly because Advisory Boards had mostly lost their radical character by the late fifties and were of less concern to the authorities. The silencing of the opposition in the early sixties also meant the government was under considerably less pressure to create township administrative authorities with any real powers. Under the circumstances, the government opted for minimal change

The UBC Act was finally promulgated in 1961, but elicited very little public interest. On the East Rand a division emerged in attitudes towards the UBC between those townships created in the fifties and sixties and the old locations. Daveyton, KwaThema, Thokoza and Vosloorus established UBCs, while Payneville, Benoni Location and Katlehong refused to do so. The Payneville Advisory Board complained that the creation of UBC was a step in the wrong direction. Expressing a widely held view (or hope) among township Councillors at the time the Board said it "was looking forward to the time when Native Councillors would sit side by side with their White Counterparts and not a Council elected on a tribal basis to implement tribalism."[28] Similar attitudes were articulated by the politicians of the other old locations. The remaining residents of the old locations had generally resided there for many years and in the parlance of the time were thoroughly detribalised. In addition many of them were also standowners who were involved until the mid-sixties in opposing the government's forced removals schemes.

The Daveyton Advisory Board by contrast seemed oblivious to the flaws in the UBC system and was the first to apply for the creation of an Urban Bantu Council, which was instituted in November 1963. Many were recent residents in the urban areas and had come to Daveyton via lodging or squatting in the Apex squatter camp. At the time the Councillors appeared convinced that a new era had dawned for the administration of Daveyton, namely, that they would be given increasing authority to run the township. This belief was derived from an over-optimistic interpretation of the legislation and faith in the willingness of the Benoni Council to delegate significant powers to the UBC. Contrary to the expectations of the township Councillors, the inauguration of the UBC was not followed by an extension of its

powers. Instead the 1960s witnessed a struggle by the UBC to win even basic powers from an increasingly reluctant local authority.

The struggle for more powers

The Benoni Council's instant endorsement of the Advisory Board's proposal to establish a UBC heightened expectations that the new body would differ substantially from its predecessor as did its inauguration in December 1963 which was accompanied by much fanfare and praises from the authorities. The UBC Councillors harboured these hopes despite clear signs to the contrary emerging during the parliamentary debate on the UBC Bill.[29] The UBC approached its supposedly new role with considerable enthusiasm. Within months of being inaugurated it began to insist on the delegation of additional powers. The UBC's first request was that the Benoni Management Committee should consult it on all matters pertaining to Daveyton **before** taking any decisions. Councillor Bookholane argued that "In order that his Council should get some status it should decide on what action should be taken. The Town Council should not first consider matters and refer them to the Bantu Council."[30] Mr. S.M. Sinaba, the Daveyton resident elected to the Transkei Parliament, was even more forthright and appealed to Councillors to "claim for their rights and those of their people... The Daveyton Bantu Council had to claim for administrative rights. When this Council was established it was said it would have extra powers; but it did not seem to exercise them."[31] The Management Committee nevertheless refused to commit itself to prior consultation with the UBC and proved extremely reluctant to relinquish any power to the UBC. From this point on the UBC experienced one disappointment after another in its attempts to acquire additional powers. The UBC was confronted by what proved to be insurmountable hurdles in the shape of the BAD, Provincial Administration and the local authority. Before new powers could be delegated to the UBC the support of these different state authorities was required. Even if the local authority proposed a transfer of power, the Minister had the final authority and could, if he wished, rescind any such measure. The

legislation explicitly stipulated that the delegation of additional powers to the UBC could occur only with the permission of the Minister, acting on the advice of the Provincial Administrator, and with the concurrence of the white local authority.[32]

Despite their initial disappointment, the UBC persisted for several years along the same course. In 1965 it requested to "be empowered to appoint and to promote members of the Daveyton Bantu Graded Staff".[33] The Management Committee again rejected this proposal, insisting that the UBC could only "have the right to make submissions and recommendations through the Director of Non-European Affairs for consideration and approval."[34] On this matter Mathewson supported the UBC. He argued that such a measure would allow the UBC to acquire "a new and deep sense of responsibility in respect of the administration of their particular sphere."[35] In so doing, he believed, the UBC would assist the Management Committee in dealing with difficulties it encountered in administering Daveyton. However, even Mathewson proposed that a 'licensed officer'[36] supervise the execution of these responsibilities and who could refer matters to the Management Committee for review and final decision if in his opinion the UBC did not comply with certain standards in appointing or promoting staff.[37] Notwithstanding Mathewson's proposed compromise, which was supported by the UBC, the Management Committee refused to accede. By mid-1965 it was apparent that an impasse had been reached between the UBC and the Management Committee. The Chief Bantu Commissioner's support for the Management Committee further aggravated the difficulties confronting the UBC.[38] For a while the UBC continued to plead its case but still without any success. Early in 1966 the Management Committee made appointments without even consulting the UBC whose objections were reduced to expressing 'dismay' it being informed about appointments and dismissals only after the Management Committee had taken such decisions. The Management Committee remained unperturbed and operated on the basis of inviting UBC members to interview applicants only when it deemed it necessary.[39]

This episode revealed the enormous difficulties a relatively compliant UBC would encounter in acquiring even the most limited powers. It also highlighted the

difference in approaches between Mathewson and the Management Committee. The former preferred to delegate some powers to the UBC as long as they did not undermine the fundamental power relations between the two bodies. He also believed such measures would train Africans in municipal management and, in so doing, prepare them to run their own affairs and thus assist the white authorities in managing the townships. The Management Committee, however, adhered strictly to the legislation and the hegemonic views in the state by refusing to delegate any substantial political authority to urban Africans.

Despite these early rebuffs the UBC still attempted to secure some influence over the important question of finances in Daveyton. The UBC routinely recommended expenditure items for the budget of the local authority, regarding this as an integral part of its responsibility. Although they were allowed to submit proposed items of expenditure the opinion of the UBC on this vital matter was usually not seriously considered. For example, the UBC's proposals for the 1964/65 and 1965/66 budgets were totally omitted from the official budgets drawn by the Council. All they could hope for was that their proposals would be considered the following year.[40] Even on trivial matters such as entertaining Ward Committee members, the UBC found it did not have the authority, let alone the finances, to proceed without the permission of the Benoni Council.[41]

By 1966 the UBC seemed to have resigned itself to its continued impotence and adopted a different tack. Instead of attempting to gain more power, it tried to convince the Benoni Council to consult more with it. Its powerlessness was revealed in a timid plea to be consulted in April 1966: "In order to have first hand information concerning the running of our affairs by the Town Council, we wondered if we could not have periodic meetings with the Management Committee from May 1966."[42] Some Councillors were however prepared to voice stronger objections. Councillor Myataza complained bitterly in a meeting with the Mancom that "There was a feeling that the Management Committee ran the affairs of the Bantu Council in Daveyton and that in doing so, it ignored the Council. Things had been done without the Council's knowledge... The Management Committee seemed to treat the Councillors as 'toy

councillors'."[43] Councillor Bookholane echoed these sentiments. According to him misunderstandings were inevitable in a system where there was 'dual control'. He wanted the UBC and Town Council to be independent of each other and suggested "The Bantu Council should be directly responsible to the Department of BAD."[44] Others were more conciliatory. Councillor Khumalo, for example, placed his faith in better contact between the two councils and asked the Mancom to offer the UBC explanations when its requests were turned down.[45] The authorities, however, remained unmoved by the demands of the UBC and, in a certain sense, reverted to the largely non-consultative relationship that had existed prior to the forties.

In a manner which was not entirely dissimilar from the 1930s and 1940s many Councillors fell back on the one limited area in which they could play a meaningful role: settling township disputes. Those who were called on to intervene in domestic problems, resolve squabbles between neighbours or discipline errant youth were usually people of some authority in the township. One of the main unofficial functions of the ward committees was to act, together with the councillor, as mediators in their respective wards. Elected councillors, who had the support of at least some, usually older and conservative residents often played the leading role in township dispute resolution. The authorities had an ambivalent attitude to this form of 'township justice.' On the one hand, it recognised the importance of the issue and regularly encouraged the 'respectable' residents to ensure peace in the township. On the other hand, it was opposed to giving black residents too much authority over important matters such as control and security. In the late sixties this ambivalence was resolved in favour of further restricting the role of the UBC as township mediators while at the same time permitting some scope for selected councillors to play a limited mediating role.

The first step in this direction was to shift more of the responsibility for local dispute resolution to the selected councillors. This change was also influenced by the government's desire to bring into line urban local government with the aims and objectives of its 'homelands' policy. Selected councillors, as previously explained, were supposed to represent the interests of 'homeland' leaders, the kings or chiefs.

These urban 'tribal' (chiefs) representatives required the agreement of the local authority to serve on the UBC, but unlike the nominated councillors of the Advisory Boards, they also had an independent source of authority derived from their links to a 'tribal' leader. And, most crucially, they had the support of the government which was determined to cultivate these 'tribal' connections and augment the influence of 'tribal authorities' in the urban townships at the expense of elected Councillors. This strategy further marginalised elected councillors, which created enmity between them and selected councillors.

In 1967 these matters came to a head. At first there were complaints that selected Councillors, especially the Zulu representatives, were not confining their activities to their particular wards but were 'just grabbing anybody anywhere'. Councillor Khumalo also accused these selected councillors of becoming increasingly unco-operative.[46] The government was, however, unsympathetic to the concerns of the elected councillors. Mr. P.S. van der Merwe of the BAD responded to the complaints by emphasising the government's support for urban 'tribal' representatives:

> the Government of RSA considered all Bantu people in urban areas as subjects of some chief or other. There was no Bantu person who belonged to a municipality. As far as he was concerned a chief's representative who was a selected member of the Council had two sets of functions and duties. In the first place, he had a duty to his chief who appointed him. As a representative of a chief he had to work for the people whom the chief may have in a certain urban area and he was responsible to the chief and this Council at home as regards all the problems of the subjects of that particular chief. A selected member was also a chief's representative; but whilst serving on the Council he undertook the functions and duties of the Council. In one instance he was the representative of the Chief and his Council (kgotla) at home, and in the other he was a selected member

> of a council the functions and duties of which he had to adhere to as a member of the council.[47]

The government also formalised the mediation role of the 'tribal representatives' by establishing local 'tribal' boards. The Tswana Board was the first of these to be created and was specifically authorised to settle disputes among Tswana.[48] In 1970 the Benoni Council endorsed a government decree[49] which denied elected Councillors the right to settle disputes without the permission of the Township Manager. This new directive utterly disempowered the UBC as the Manager would heneceforth decide whether or not a dispute warranted reference to the police, Welfare Department of the Bantu Affairs Commissioner.[50] The UBC was incensed by the latest diminution of its role. Councillor Phosa, who drafted a lengthy statement in response to this decree, claimed the whole community would be adversely affected if Councillors could not settle marital disputes or discipline children. He contended that the

> Advisory Boards and the new UBC have been working hand in hand with both the Township Manager and the SAP – but how is it going to be now that the UBC has to put is hands off such an important matter as the settling of disputes – How is our Township going to look like?... Over weekends when the Township Manager will not be available and when people have over-enjoyed themselves somehow poor victims have nobody to run to for help.[51]

Phosa displayed a strong chauvinism when he argued that in cases where husbands assaulted their wives it would be improper to sentence them to jail because such a measure would mean, 'he no longer qualifies to be in the area and the next thing he and his family will be endorsed out of the area.'[52] The UBC thus wanted to retain the right to dispense 'traditional' justice, which the government had previously endorsed. Phosa claimed "There is no Bantu in the world who wishes to have his

domestic affairs settled in court. All cases of dispute are dealt with by his own people and it is only when no solution is forthcoming that the matter is reported to higher authorities."[53]

However, the government was no longer interested in having any township structure mediate between it and township residents on political and judicial matters. By the late sixties crime in the townships was on the increase, especially among youth, and the authorities were not convinced of the ability of UBCs to stem the growing tide of youth delinquency. It was equally concerned that if the UBC were successful in mediating all disputes in the township, an alternative, albeit informal, judicial system would develop that would not necessarily be under its control. Such a system would also be a source of power for the UBC or any other authoritative forum leading it. Reports that councillors were charging residents to settle disputes confirmed these fears.[54] The Bantu Affairs Commissioner, Mr. Evans, was adamant that the UBC would have to comply with the Department's directive and instructed them not to interfere in administrative matters. He confirmed that no one in the township would be permitted to settle disputes until proper boards were established for that purpose. Councillors were even deprived of the right to refer or accompany people to the Commissioner's office.[55] The ever-tightening grip of authoritarian rule was being felt at every level of urban African society. Not content with smashing the radical opposition, the Nationalist government systematically diminished the political space within which the compliant and conservative township politicians could operate, rendering them virtually ineffective.

The attack on residential and urban rights

In the late 1960s the government, whose political and coercive powers increased considerably throughout the 1960s, launched fresh attacks against the few rights enjoyed by urban Africans. For example, the Physical Planning and Utilisation of Resources Act of 1967 placed restrictions on the use of African labour in a conscious attempt to reduce the white-black ratio in industry.[56] This piece of

legislation, together with a host of others promulgated in the late sixties, aimed at limiting the number of Africans working and living in 'white' urban areas. The Minister of BAD, M.C. Nel, appealed to local officials to rally behind the government's programme to reverse the tide of African urbanisation:

> One of the chief aims of my Department is to bring to fruition the State policy of reversing the stream of Bantu to the White areas and to bring about an exodus of these Bantu to their homelands.
> I want to mobilize everyone into an active and effective taskgroup that will co-operate on this national goal. I ask all of you to widen your horizons to become nation builders instead of township builders.
> You as my licensed officials, are not only legally obliged but also morally bound to promote the policy of my Department and I take it as granted that I can fully rely upon you in this respect.
> Large numbers of Bantu employees are engaged with no approved accommodation for them or without efforts even having been made to provide the accommodation.
> Engagements without compliance with documentary and registration requirements are no rarities.[57]

The Benoni Council concurred with the overall strategic approach adopted by the government. In response to enquiries from the UBC about the government's policies, Mathewson cautioned the township Councillors not to criticise the government's policies.[58] He informed the UBC that "The *Minister* looked upon Daveyton and Wattville as being in a White area. Executive power could be in the hands of the Bantu in their homelands. It did appear that the *Minister* did not want a

Council to talk about matters outside its jurisdiction. Matters of policy were not to be discussed."[59]

By the early sixties when the population was more settled the demand for home-ownership, especially from the elite, increased. The UBC proposed the creation of a scheme to raise loans to assist these residents to build their own houses. Councillor Bookholane explained the dilemma faced by most of Daveyton's population: "There was no one in a position to build a house on his own. Quite a number of people were prepared to raise loans to build their own homes. If the National Housing Commission did not provide for such loans then the Council should take the initiative to do so." The Council insisted loans would only be considered once at least three hundred applicants were received.[60] National legislation governing housing loans to Africans also effectively excluded almost the entire urban African population from qualifying for such loans. Individuals could apply for State loans of £250 if the cost of the house did not exceed £450. The balance of the price had to be paid by the prospective home-owner to the state. Anyone who wanted to build a house costing more than £450 had to be rich enough to bear the entire cost. Qualifying for loans from building societies was also completely ruled out as these institutions could only grant loans to people who actually held the title to the land, which effectively excluded residents of the new townships.[61]

Residents from Benoni Old Location were especially affected by these restrictions. Many of them were home-owners in the location and wanted to purchase houses in the new township. Some of them wanted to (and could afford to) improve their homes with the money received as compensation for the loss of their houses in the location. The UBC was understandably incensed and cognisant of the disappointment felt by many old location residents "who still looked forward to buying the houses they now occupied in Daveyton." Councillor Ratale reminded the Council of the significance of purchasing house: "By buying a house", he told the local authority officials present at a UBC meeting, "residents were being enabled to invest in a small way. They then felt that they owned something and that even if they had to leave the areas, they would be compensated. They improved the houses

because they knew the houses belonged to them."[62] The government of course intended exactly the opposite and was determined to undermine any sense that Africans might develop that they would be permitted to live permanently in the urban areas.

African homeownership in the urban areas suffered a crippling blow in 1967 when the government decided not to allow any further house purchasing by urban Africans. The Department of Bantu Administration and Development, apparently after consideration of the increasing demands for the allocation of sites by 'Bantu falling within the higher income group for self-building purposes' set out new prescriptions that undermined the already limited rights enjoyed by urban Africans. In particular, local authorities were instructed that, "All dwellings in urban Bantu residential areas should, ... , be made available to the inhabitants on a letting basis only." To ensure compliance the government warned local authorities that it would not consider any application for the "erection of new housing schemes where the right of occupation of dwellings is to be sold to Bantu". Furthermore, houses acquired by the municipalities due to payment default could not be resold to Africans.[63] These restrictions were directed particularly against 'professional Bantu' who the government at the time wanted to discourage from settling permanently in the urban areas. Local authorities could build better houses for these professionals but they only occupy such dwellings on a letting basis. The government's policy was that "Bantu falling within the higher income group, should in all circumstances, be encouraged to erect houses of a higher standard in Bantu Township in the Homelands of their ethnic group and where they can obtain title for the land."[64] Thus the government's determined pursuance of its homeland policy continually and adversely affected African urban residents.

Virtually every aspect of township life was subjected to tighter control and brought into line with the homeland's policy. Previously an important component of the government's strategy in dealing with opposition was to foster the development of a reliable township elite or middle class. In the sixties though little effort was made to nurture the growth of a township-based entrepreneurial class. On the contrary, the

government consciously discouraged such a development and increasingly pressed town councils to persuade emerging businessmen or professionals to ply their trade in designated 'homelands'. According to this policy "trading by Bantu in White Areas is not an inherent primary opportunity for them, but should be allowed only where necessary, within the urban Bantu residential area for the benefit of the Bantu."[65] In reality this was a highly qualified right. In conformity with group area policies only Africans were allowed to trade in African townships. However, township businesses were restricted to meeting only the basic needs of residents. "The establishment of Bantu businesses", the government instructed local authorities, "which do not confine themselves to the provision of the daily essential domestic necessities of the Bantu which must be easily obtainable must not be allowed."[66] African traders were not even allowed to own more than one business in the same urban area, whether it was of the same type or not. Again the government's directives in this regard were explicit:

> The establishment in the White areas of Bantu companies and partnerships with the object of combining their resources in order to enable them to embark upon larger and more extensive business propositions is against policy and they must not be afforded trading facilities in urban Bantu residential areas.[67]

It was the government's policy to encourage and if necessary, coerce, African entrepreneurs to establish themselves in the homelands. A flourishing middle class, it hoped, would enhance the economy of the 'homelands' and lend it some legitimacy. "Moneyed Bantu and Bantu companies", insisted the government, "ought to establish themselves in the Bantu homelands where they can invest their capital on a permanent basis to the advantage of their people and own homeland."

This left Daveyton bereft of shops to cater for the needs of residents. For example, in 1964 there was only one green grocer catering for the whole township.[68] Shopkeepers in the township also faced competition from outside traders. In 1965 the

UBC voiced its alarm "at the amount of hawking by non-Bantu that takes place on the roads leading to Daveyton and also in the Township. We wish to urge that a stop be put to this practice."[69] However, the Council was unsympathetic to their pleas arguing that these traders operated from land that fell outside the Council's jurisdiction and could therefore not be prevented from trading. As the removal from the old location gained momentum and the population of Daveyton increased, the demand for extra trading also mounted. Under these circumstances the shortcomings in the existing policy became more apparent. The UBC accused the Benoni Council of treating townships unfairly by, for example, not allowing African businessmen to establish garages or dry-cleaners. Local traders, they argued, were prejudiced because the small shops provided by the Council made it impossible for them to store large quantities of goods. They were therefore unable to buy in bulk to lower their prices in order to become more competitive.[70] Consequently, many township residents preferred to shop elsewhere, using township traders only as 'stop gap measures'. The restrictions of the sixties therefore left no sector of the townships untouched. Workers, entrepreneurs and even the conservative elite were subjected to various forms of oppressive measures that made their existence in the urban townships increasingly precarious and despairing.

The marginalisation of African women

An important aspect of the state's strategy in the fifties and sixties was its pursuit of control over African women, especially, although not exclusively, by extending influx control measures to them. Pass laws for women were implemented more strictly in the fifties. In the sixties the government tightened its grip on African women by imposing a series of restrictions on them. The offensive was serious enough to cause the usually compliant Daveyton UBC openly to criticise the government. In 1974 Councillor Mnyanda expressed his outrage at the restrictive legislation affecting widows and their families. In unusually strident terms for a

township Councillor he blamed the regulations for 'the destruction of the people' and described it as 'oppression'.[71]

Walker has argued that the state was especially anxious to control African women. In her view, "what concerned the state most about African women in this early period of apartheid was their presence in the urban areas, and the growing permanency of the African community that it revealed."[72] In addition, the NP wanted to "bolster the myth of the reserves as the true 'homelands' of the African people", which aim required that women be coerced into residing there in large numbers.[73] These arguments are especially apposite to the second phase of apartheid.

A primary concern of the state in the fifties was the apparent disintegration of the African family.[74] 'Loose unions' and 'illegitimacy' were blamed for the decline in social mores and as important contributory factors to the general lawlessness in the locations. Tsotsism, for example, was explained primarily as the outcome of the supposed lack of parental control and authority in the townships. In his assessment of urban African life, Eiselen enumerated what he believed to be the prominent social ills afflicting townships: "the social life is vitiated by loose morals, the incidence of illegitimacy is very high, parental control is ineffective, juvenile delinquency is prevalent, drunkenness is on the increase and life is made insecure by the unsavoury and dangerous activities of rival gangs." The underlying problem (and therefore solution) seemed quite obvious to Eiselen. "What is lacking", he averred, " is the steady influence of a happy home life, strong family units and a healthy community spirit, factors which played such an important part in the tribal life of the Bantu."[75] The necessity of establishing stable urban African family units became an important theme in the government's overall policy to control urban Africans.

On the one hand, the authorities encouraged 'urbanised Bantu women' to settle down because their "presence had a stabilising effect on the family and on the community in general."[76] On the other hand, 'undesirable' or 'loose women' who did not contribute to building stable families became the main targets of influx control and 'endorsement out' of the urban areas. Influx control was especially problematic for those women engaged in the informal location economy. Their very livelihood

was threatened and their options progressively limited. For the overwhelming majority who were not prepared to return to the rural areas, there were only two options available to qualify legally to stay in the urban areas – either find formal employment or marry a man with section 10(1) rights.[77]

In the old locations men, and especially single women, could live without detection as lodgers or squatters. Under these circumstances their continued presence in the town was not dictated by whether they were part of a family. In the new townships, however, it became virtually impossible to avoid marriage. Women were not allowed to own houses, which were allocated only to male family heads. As a result, they became more dependent on men for housing, which caused them to be subjected to another level of control, namely, male domination. Although women were also subjected to patriarchal domination in the old location, it was relatively easier to escape without the danger of losing the right to remain in the location. The precarious existence of women in the new townships became increasingly evident during the sixties.

The Daveyton UBC routinely raised its concern about the plight of women in the township. Of particular concern was the apparently high incidence of men deserting their marital partners. In 1963 the Administration Committee of the UBC raised its concern 'that certain men stayed with women out of wedlock and eventually surrendered their residential permits, when they no longer wished to live with them thus leaving such women and their children in the lurch.'[78] Many cases were reported of men who, after entering into a union with a woman in order qualify for a house, evicted her from the premises. Some of these men would enter into new marriages and insert the names of their new wives on the residential permit. The result was that the evicted woman, often with her children, were left destitute and without any prospect of finding a house.[79] The UBC proposed that "where a man wished to do away with the woman with whom he had lived out of wedlock and with whom he had obtained housing, he should be ejected from the house and apply for another with his new woman."[80] The authorities held very different views and placed the responsibility on women, arguing that it was the responsibility of women to ensure

that they married the men they lived with. D. Henwood, the deputy Director of Non-European Affairs in Benoni, confirmed that unmarried African women who lived with a man had no residential rights. Only women who were in legal unions could consider making claims for residential rights

Many women in these positions did not qualify for section 10 (1) rights and were therefore especially vulnerable to being 'endorsed out' of the township to the 'homelands'. The UBC's hoped to save some women from being forced to live in a 'homeland' by differentiating them according to the length of time they had lived in the urban area. It contended that many women had no option but to remain in the towns because they had very little connections with the rural areas. However, their proposals also implied that those women who retained contact with their 'homeland' could justifiably be denied a house and be sent back to the 'homeland'.[81] The UBC also urged the government that "All widows whose names are reflected on residential permits as the wives of the deceased registered tenants be permitted to continue to occupy their houses."[82]

The state further tightened the noose on women in the early 1960s by the introduction of new restrictions. The 1964 Bantu Laws Amendment Act prohibited African women from entering the urban areas, except on a visitor's permit. In September 1967 the Secretary of BAD sent the following directive to municipalities:

a) No Bantu woman, whether a widow or otherwise, or whether qualified in terms of section 10 of Act NO.25, or not, may be placed on a waiting list for accommodation on a family basis.
b) A Bantu widow, who was widowed while occupying a house with her husband and family who is qualified in terms of section 10(1)(a) or (b) of the said Act to be in an urban area, may, if there are no other obstacles under hereditary law or other law, be permitted to continue occupying the house with her family provided she is able to pay the necessary rental.

c) A Bantu widow who occupies a house as above, and who originally qualified in terms of section 10 (1)(c) of Act no.5 of 1945, but subsequently became qualified in her own right in terms of section 10 (1)(b) may, as in the cases in (b) above, remain in the house.[83]

Many women did not qualify in terms of section 10 (1) rights, which tended to increase their dependence on males. Councillor Lerutle explained the enormous burdens faced by African widows who found it almost impossible to find accommodation for themselves and their dependants. He pleaded that the policy be relaxed in order to permit the allocation of houses to the widows of deceased tenants, who would within a reasonable period after their bereavement acquire the necessary qualifications.[84] Even those widows who qualified in terms of Section 10 (1) were forced to remain in the prescribed area where they were married. Failing to do so meant they could lose their urban rights. Again, Councillor Lerutle explained that this restriction prevented widows from returning to her own family's place for a period bereavement. Women who were married by customary rites only also faced enormous problems when they were deserted by their spouses or widowed because they could not qualify to become tenants of the houses they occupied. The government however remained unperturbed by the plight of African women. Mr. Gray, the Chief Bantu Affairs Commissioner, explained the state's attitude on these matters:

> The Department's policy is to persuade such widows to settle in the Bantu homelands. He disagreed with the statement that the Bantu homelands are primitive... in terms of the law, females who transfer from one prescribed area to another lose their qualifications in the former area. Widowed daughters may return to their original places of domicile but they will not qualify as tenants of houses... the directives of the BAD left no doubt about the intention that houses should not be allocated to divorcees. Officials are also unable to assist females, who were married by Bantu Custom, whose husbands

– being tenants of houses – choose to get married to other females by Civil Rites.[85]

The particularly precarious existence and plight of African women in urban townships reflected in the starkest terms the extent and callousness of apartheid. By the late sixties as the arrogance and power of the Nationalist Party ballooned, urban Africans experienced the most intensive control of almost every facet of their lives. The consequences of 'high apartheid' however extended beyond the attack on urban rights. It increasingly also undermined the living conditions of the inhabitants of the 'modern' townships.

The Housing Crisis Develops

The government's decision to promote the 'homelands' also resulted in a re-allocation of resources to the reserves. Whereas in the 1950s and early 1960s state expenditure on Africans was concentrated on the creation of urban townships, from the mid-1960s state funds were increasingly channelled to develop the 'homelands'. As a result housing construction came to a standstill and living conditions deteriorated. The experiences in Daveyton in the late 1960s were symptomatic of the general decline that afflicted most urban townships.

In the early sixties Daveyton appeared to be a resounding success for the authorities: more than eight thousand houses had been built, the provision of a further two thousand was being planned and basic amenities and facilities had been provided. In addition a number of public buildings (including a beer hall and brewery, the Lionel Kent Centre, administration offices, shops and a sportsground) were completed at cost of nearly R1 million.[86] By 1963 there was also a growing anticipation that the old location would shortly be removed, for which project Council applied for a government loan of R3 265 000 to construct 1653 flats and 1918 houses. The proposal to build flats in an African township was unusual but was fully supported by the National Housing Commission because it would increase

population density and decrease the costs of providing essential services.[87] The proposal to build flats was later rescinded without explanation and the Council proceeded instead to build 2387 four-roomed houses.

These developments, however, represented the apogee of development in Daveyton. The construction of new houses represented the last major investment in the township's development during this period. Until the early sixties there was little evidence to suggest an impending housing crisis. However, the building of the new houses catering for the displaced residents of the old location brought to the surface the growing discontent over this issue. As soon as the Council made public its plans to build the 2387 new houses, demands surfaced for more houses among existing residents. This exposed a central flaw in apartheid's urban project. Although a decade had passed since the government last built houses in Daveyton, there were no plans to provide additional accommodation to cater for the natural increase in population. As a result, by the mid-sixties the UBC was coming under public pressure to address the problem of the shortages of houses. In a letter of complaint to the Benoni municipality, Councillor Ratale highlighted the obvious dilemma facing many residents : "When a son got married, the family grew. It was not unusual to find young couples living with their parents in three-roomed houses."[88] The shortage of houses was so acute in the Zulu section that the UBC was forced to request that Zulu-speaking applicants be accommodated elsewhere in the township.[89]

The UBC also requested that the new houses as well as those that became vacant be offered first to existing Daveyton residents. The Benoni Council refused both requests. The UBC wanted, at a minimum, that new arrivals be located in a separate section (Daveyton Extension) rather than in the main township.[90] Councillors Myataza and Khumalo went so far as to accuse the municipality of treating the old residents of Daveyton unfairly by depriving them of access to the new houses. They contended that these residents, some of whom had been lodgers for up to eight years, should be given first preference.[91]

The authorities were unyielding and proceeded to allocate the new houses to residents from the old location. The UBC reluctantly acquiesced but continued to

press the authorities to address the issue of overcrowding. In early 1966 the UBC conceded "that the removal of the BBT (Benoni Bantu Township) has to be made as speedily as possible" but also requested "that, because the number of applicants for houses now residing in Daveyton was large, there be a proportionate division of these houses."[92] The authorities relented, at least verbally, and agreed that of the 2387 new houses two thousand would be allocated to residents from the old location and the rest (387) would be available for occupation by lodgers.[93] In the light of this apparent concession the UBC attempted to secure a watertight commitment from the authorities by proposing "that houses be allocated to the Daveyton lodgers simultaneously with the residents from BBT. Taking into account the fact that 387 houses have been earmarked for Daveyton lodgers, we see no need that those houses should be occupied only after all the BBT people had been housed. As and when houses become available, a number of the 387 houses should be set aside for Daveyton lodgers. We feel that even the old houses which are being vacated should be made available to Daveyton lodgers."[94] However, the authorities were unwilling to commit themselves to any plan that could jeopardise the expeditious removal of the old location.

A second and even more urgent concern of the Councillors was the allocation of existing houses which became vacant. This threatened both to produce civil dissension in Daveyton and to discredit the UBC. As Councillor Myataza put it: "the Council was not against the removal of Benoni Bantu Township (BBT) nor that residents there should be accommodated here. A situation has been created, however, which indicated that Daveyton people did not want the people from BBT. At one time it had said that the BBT residents would be accommodated in Holfontein and in Daveyton Extension; but now they were being accommodated in Daveyton. Councillors had become liars because of the many changes that were taking place without their knowledge."[95] How far any of these concerns was accommodated is unclear. What is certain is that the UBC regularly raised concerns about the lack of housing but failed to convince the authorities to address the situation.

In 1971 the UBC urged the authorities to recognise that it had become 'extremely urgent and necessary' to build more houses in Daveyton. According to the UBC overcrowding was ubiquitous because many of the approximately eleven thousand dependants under 18 who moved to Daveyton in 1955 had married and had raised their own families. The situation had deteriorated to such an extent that it was quite common for up to three families to live in a small house.[96] As a result the official waiting list was at least 200 long to which names were daily being added.[97] Three years later the UBC again raised the alarm. "Overcrowding prevails", it declared. "It is not uncommon that each single room in a house is used as a bedroom... there is a great demand for houses."[98] Housing shortages affected all African townships. This was mainly due to the government drastically reducing its expenditure on housing for Africans in the late 1960s. Between 1968 and 1975 expenditure plunged by 80%.[99] In 1967/68 the state spent R14 369 000 on African housing in urban areas. By 1970/71 this figure was nearly halved to R7,7 million and by 1976/77 to a dismal R2,6 million.[100] During this period the main new form of accommodation erected in the townships were hostels for migrant workers.

In the 1960s the use of migrant labour was encouraged as part of the government's strategy to counter the reliance of industry on urbanised Africans. These workers did not qualify for houses in the urban areas and were housed in hostel complexes that were erected in most of the East Rand's townships from the mid-1960s. In Daveyton the construction of a hostel to accommodate 1330 single males was approved in 1964 to cater for the 'increased demand for labour particularly in the less popular types of employment.'[101] The hostel was only completed at the end of the 1960s. Until 1969 the hostel population of the township numbered less than a hundred, but by 1970 the number had increased to 1328. The expansion of the hostels added a few hundred more over the following three years.[102] Huge hostel complexes accommodating up to 31 000 inmates were also constructed in Vosloorus, Thokoza and Katlehong.[103] The hostels were also segregated along ethnic lines.

A perennial problem faced by most township residents was the low quality of houses provided by the state. The amount spent on each house for Africans was tiny.

In the fifteen years following the war the authorities spent £3 million on building 10 000 houses for Africans in Benoni. At face value this appears to be a huge amount. But when compared to the £2,5 million spent during the same period on building only 1000 municipal houses for whites, the wide disparity in investment per house is apparent, ten times more being spent on the average white municipal house.[104] This financial prescription for African housing permitted the construction of only the most elementary structures, namely, the so-called NE 51/9 type. The Benoni Council outshone itself again with its frugality and spent only £211 per house, which consisted of one bedroom, a kitchen, a shower cubicle and a living room that was intended also to serve as a second bedroom. Mathewson concurred with the state's policies of only providing the most basic structures and that the cost of any extensions to these houses would have to borne by residents.[105] Such cost cutting precluded the provision even of such basic facilities as internal doors and resulted in generally poor-workmanship. By the early sixties complaints were streaming in as walls began to crack and other defects became more apparent. A widespread problem was the absence of proper ventilation because, as the Council's chief engineer, Mr. Cuthbert explained, it was too costly to install the correct airbricks. Instead, in some instances, it was decided to leave a space between the roof and the wall.[106] These 'cost-saving' plans were implemented without any consideration of the well-being of the occupants.

Despite the mounting criticisms of the quality of the first housing scheme, the new houses constructed in the mid-sixties for residents from BBT suffered the same defects. However, this new generation of residents, who were moved from the old location, was much less tolerant. They often came from better and more spacious houses and alerted the UBC to problems almost immediately. Among their complaints was that

many of the new houses were fitted with lavatory doors shorter than the standard size door. The UBC expressed its "distaste" and urged the Council either to fit longer doors or to lower the existing ones. The municipality dismissed these objections and seemed totally oblivious of the ignominy involved. The Department of Community

Development had allocated only R500 per house, including the costs for installing water and sewerage reticulation. This amount, according to Mr. Cuthbert, was equivalent to the £250 spent on each house built in Daveyton ten years before. Cost cutting was thus inevitable and if residents wanted proper doors they would have to purchase them at their own expense.[107] In addition, none of the new houses had bathroom facilities, which, Mathewson explained, was not only because of the limited finance available but because "shower cubicles which were provided before were used as storage space and few Africans make use of a bath."[108]

Initially, residents were not allowed to make structural improvements to their dwellings unless they made a clear commitment to purchase their houses. In practice this meant they had to put down a deposit.[109] The absurdity of this policy became evident when residents of the old location were moved to Daveyton and were accommodated in houses that were considerably smaller than the ones in the old location. Numerous cases were reported where people could not fit their furniture into their new four-roomed houses. Once confronted by this ludicrous situation where residents were forced to leave furniture outside their new houses, the authorities relented and allowed residents to alter their houses without needing to purchase them.[110]

However, the structure of the houses was of such a nature to make it virtually impossible to effect substantial improvements. These houses, in the words of Mathewson, were "a slightly modified version of the National Housing and Planning Commission plan type NE 51/9 [and] consist[ed] of two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom, but [was] incapable of further extension without major structural alterations."[111] The ongoing deterioration of the houses was reflected in the monthly report of maintenance and repairs to houses. For example, in September 1970 no less than 155 housing complaints were attended to and 106 cracked walls were repaired. In addition 214 street light complaints were also attended to.[112] A similar list of repairs was reported on a monthly basis from the late sixties.

The deterioration of social conditions

Other social services suffered similar declines in the sixties. Mathewson's boasts about Daveyton being a 'modern' and autonomous town were frequently exposed as being mere political posturing over his personal role in the township's establishment. One of the facilities promised to the new 'modern' town was a hospital, which was included in the original plans of Daveyton. At that point the Council agreed to donate land to the Provincial Administration for this purpose. Over the next fifteen years the people of Daveyton waited in vain, as the local and provincial authorities reneged on one promise after the other. Five years after the opening of Daveyton the Provincial Administration could report only that it had commenced with the planning of the hospital.[113] By 1964 nothing had materialised from these promises, but the UBC remained hopeful that a hospital would eventually be built. This was partly based on the indications received from Mathewson and the municipality about negotiations over the siting of the hospital. Councillor Bookholane urged the Council to build the hospital in the buffer strip because it would be more accessible to the majority of Daveyton's residents. Mathewson however required that the hospital would be built at the entrance of the township to allow white doctors to visit the hospital.[114] By 1970 even the UBC had accepted that Daveyton would not have its own hospital. As a result Daveyton residents had to travel 20 miles to the Boksburg-Benoni Hospital. Not only was the long distance a burden, but the inadequate ambulance service created further inconveniences for residents.[115] Even more disconcerting to the councillors was the state's opposition to African doctors practising in urban townships, preferring them to ply their trade in the homelands.[116] Local authorities had to apply for permission to allow African doctors in the townships, placing limits on the number of doctors available in Daveyton. In 1963 Mathewson rejected a request by the UBC for a nurse to be in attendance at the local clinic over weekends because acceding to it would entail the employment of more staff. He suggested that serious cases be referred to the three doctors operating

in the area, again abrogating responsibility for the provision of services by the local authority. Instead he lectured the UBC about needing to 'educate residents not to assault one another.'[117]

Schooling in Daveyton also reached crisis proportions in the sixties. During the initial phase of development eighteen primary schools were built in the township. Eleven of these were Lower Primary schools and six were Higher Primary. The total number of pupils in 1965 was 10369, of which 6927 were in Lower Primary and 3 272 in Higher Primary. Only 440 were in high school.[118] Interestingly, the government did not view a High School as a necessity. The high school, which consisted of ten classes, was eventually built only as a result of pressure from the local chapter of Rotary Club, which also raised half the money for the building, with the government providing the rest.[119] In the late sixties the demand for more high schools increased significantly as the large number of pupils from the lower standards progressed and due to the influx of pupils from the old location. Daveyton's only secondary school clearly could not cope with the increased demand. Councillor Lerutle pleaded for another school and explained the adverse consequences of students being unable to find accommodation at the secondary school. According to him "It was not possible for many parents to send their children to boarding school with the result that those who had passed the Standard VI Examination and who could not gain admission to the secondary school were forced to roam the streets."[120]

By the early seventies, Daveyton and other townships across the country were rapidly sliding down a spiral of poverty. The roots of this crisis were inherent in the early development of the townships, even when the most significant progress and expansion occurred. The government's huge expenditure masked a policy of deliberate under-development, dictated by racist ideology and political imperative. Thus, in the sixties, when South Africa was experiencing its most dramatic economic boom, African township development ground to a halt. The enormous amount of resources generated by the boom went overwhelmingly to further the upliftment of the white population. The contrasts in the urban areas were stark: as leafy suburbs and

shopping malls sprang up in white areas, African townships sank deeper into a mire of poverty.

Transport Crisis

The transport provided in the new townships was generally inadequate and became a source of contention between residents and the authorities. Residents of the old locations lived within walking distance from their places of work. The new townships by contrast were located up to ten miles away from the industrial areas, which confronted residents with the inconvenience of having to commute daily to work, as well as having to incur the extra transport costs. In some cases, such as in Katlehong, Thokoza, Daveyton and KwaThema, the authorities provided rail transport between the townships and the industrial areas of their respective towns. However, Vosloorus did not benefit from this and its residents were almost entirely dependent on one bus company, Putco, for transport.[121] Even where railways were provided, as in Daveyton, numerous problems arose.

From the outset the rail transport in Daveyton was beset with difficulties, the most vexing of which was the cost of tickets. The municipality estimated a third class monthly season ticket would cost commuters £1 4s. 11d., compared to 13s. 4d. paid for a similar distance by commuters travelling between either Natalspruit and Germiston or Orlando and Johannesburg. In addition, the initial monthly cost of the internal bus service was expected to be 13s. Thus commuters could expect to pay £1 18s. a month on transport, a figure the authorities conceded most African workers could not afford.[122] Conditions were therefore set for confrontation over transport. Within two months of the first residents settling in Daveyton commuters' anger at the inadequate transport service boiled over. In early June 1955 commuters attacked buses in Daveyton to protest the lack of proper transport facilities.[123] Three weeks later buses were again stoned, this time for arriving late.[124] The volatile situation propelled the government into action. In the aftermath of the riots against the poor transport facilities, the General Manager of the railways announced that £1,3 million

would be spent on electrifying the rail system between the township and Benoni's industrial areas.[125]

However, similar expenditure on transport was not forthcoming in the late 1960s. Thus when residents from the old location moved into Daveyton Extension, the transport crisis came to a head. The influx of the new residents immediately increased the number of daily commuters by 1800. In 1965 the UBC requested an extension to the railway line to cater for the new residents, but the South African Railways replied it would be too expensive.[126] Residents from the old location now had to walk more than a kilometre before they could get a train to take them to work. Even more serious was the unbearable congestion created at Daveyton station, a situation that was to have tragic consequences for commuters.

Despite repeated warnings by the UBC the authorities refused either to improve the facilities at the station or provide a second station. In August 1966 it was estimated that 10 990 commuters used the train in the morning peak hours and presumably a similar number in the afternoon peak hour. More than half a million commuters every month used the line between Daveyton and Benoni.[127] A single station, with a single pedestrian bridge, serviced this enormous volume of human traffic. A disaster was waiting to happen. The UBC warned of the chaos prevailing daily when, during peak hours, two trains arrived simultaneously at the station 'causing a congestion on the one and only bridge'.[128] Inevitably tragedy struck when in July 1967 seven commuters were trampled to death as they rushed to get to the trains on time. The UBC was understandably furious and repeated its demand for improvements. Under the pressure generated by the tragedy the Council claimed the UBC's requests for improvements had not been rejected and were still under consideration. It also proposed to establish a commission of enquiry to investigate the incident.[129] However, these proved to be mere symbolic gestures to placate the irate UBC and commuters. Six months after the disaster neither the inquest nor improvements to the facilities had been initiated. The Daveyton UBC was reportedly 'impatient at the delay' and appealed for urgent action to be taken.[130] But the

authorities displayed little interest in the matter once the anger of the community had subsided

Despite the inadequate public transport system and the consequent growth in public demand for taxis, the authorities opposed the expansion of the taxi industry. The Railways jealously guarded their stranglehold over transport in the township and attended Road Transportation Board meetings specifically to oppose applications for taxi licences.[131] Moreover, it was against government policy to encourage entrepreneurship in the urban townships. As a result the number of taxis allowed to operate in the township remained small and thus incapable of meeting the demands of the public, forcing them to continue using the trains. At the time people preferred using taxis because they were considered safer than the trains, especially in the light of the various tragic incidents at Daveyton station. The Benoni Management Committee acknowledged that the "transport requirement of Daveyton are to a certain extent met by taxis and an unknown number of pirate vehicles", but its Traffic Department continued clamping down on unauthorised taxis.[132]

To make matters worse for commuters the bus service was equally inadequate. Until 1964 only five buses served the whole of Daveyton. The "Daveyton Bus Service" complained the UBC in 1963, "is unable during peak hours to fully meet the demands of the Daveyton residents and many passengers are left behind. The position is particularly bad whenever there is a breakdown or one of the buses is out of action for one reason or another."[133] Two years later the situation had worsened considerably. Even the Benoni Management Committee admitted that "The Daveyton bus service is at present scarcely able to cope with the ever increasing number of passengers in the peak period and consequently a certain amount of overloading occurs and many would-be passengers are left at the bus stops."[134] The extent of the problem was revealed by the fact that daily about 364 passengers were left stranded due to the lack of space on buses that were already overloaded. Mathewson supported the UBC's proposal for the purchase of an additional bus, but considering that the maximum capacity on a single-decker bus was about seventy this measure was clearly inadequate.

Furthermore, it was realised that the inadequacy of the existing fleet of seven buses would "be further aggravated during 1966 when families from BBT start moving to Daveyton and Daveyton Extension ... This will necessitate the introduction of two new bus routes to serve these two widely separated areas."[135] The Management Committee agreed to acquire four new buses, which were introduced in August 1966. Although the extended bus fleet brought about much needed improvement in the bus service, in October 1966 the Manager of Daveyton already reported that "the present fleet is still far from adequate. The four additional vehicles served, mainly, to overcome a long felt need for sufficient transport but do not provide adequately for the increase in population/passengers due to resettlement of BBT residents", which had resulted in the number of passengers carried on buses every month increasing from 248 744 to 291 673.[136] At the end of 1966 Daveyton had a bus fleet of eleven with a proposal to increase it to thirteen. But even this proposal soon proved insufficient and in 1967 the Council approved a recommendation to increase the fleet to twenty buses.[137] Although this measure signalled a significant improvement of the commuter bus system in Daveyton, the overall transport situation in the township remained crisis-ridden.

During the first decade of its existence, Daveyton was revered as *the* model African township, and for good reasons. From the point of view of the authorities it closely conformed to the government's main policies and achieved the two main aims for which it was created, namely, the *stabilisation* and *control* of urban Africans. However, even as the residents of Daveyton began to experience improvements in their lives from the early 1960s, the government began introducing policies that would eventually undermine these gains. The government's promotion of the 'homelands' system in the 1960s and the post-Sharpeville repression stripped urban Africans of most of the limited 'freedoms' and 'rights' which they had previously enjoyed. Women especially bore the brunt of the government's tightening of controls on urban Africans. Even the compliant and conservative political elite who functioned in the UBCs found the authorities unwilling to vest any substantive powers in them, which rendered these bodies ineffectual either as representatives of

township residents or as mediators between residents and the authorities. The government's single-mindedly promotion of the 'homelands' system occurred at the expense of urban African residential areas. One of the main consequences of this policy was that by the end of the 1960s Daveyton began to experience a decline in its social conditions similar to that experienced by African townships all over the country. The government's unwillingness to fund further development in the townships created the basis for the township revolt that erupted from the mid-1970s.

ENDNOTES

[1] D. Posel, *The Making of Apartheid, 1948 - 1961: Conflict and Compromise*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, See Chapter 9

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[4] Quoted in J. Lazar, 'Verwoerd versus the "Visionaries", The South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (Sabra) and Apartheid, 1948-1961'p.381 in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds), *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935 –1962*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1993

[5] Record of proceedings of the ninth annual conference of the Institute of Administrators of Non-European Affairs (IANA), 1960

[6] Amongst other issues, the UP supported the NP's banning of the ANC and PAC, as well as the declaration of a state of emergency in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre. See D. O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994*, Ravan Press,, Johannesburg, 1996, p. 103

[7] Government Publications, University of the Witwatersrand, *Hansard*, National Assembly Debates, 15 June 1961, columns 8214-8217, Mr. Ross, MP (Benoni)

[8] R and S Weide, *Die volledige verkiesings uitslae van Suid-Afrika, 1910-1986.* The conservatism of the Brakpan white electorate was shown by the strong showing of arch-rightwinger, B.J. Vorster, in the 1948 elections when he lost by a mere two votes to the UP candidate.

[9] *Municipal Affairs*, 26, 305 (January 1961), p.5

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[12] University of the Witwatersrand Library (UWL), Historical Papers (HLP), Report of the Daveyton UBC, 20.03.64, Minutes of the Daveyton UBC, 25.02.64

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[19] Record of the proceedings of the fifth annual conference of IANA, September 1956, Address by H.F.Verwoerd

[20] D, O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years*, pp.101-103

[21] The Promotion of Bantu Self Government Act was passed in 1959

[22] Minister of BAD address to parliament, *Hansard*, Assembly Debates, 15.06.61, cols. 8141-8142

[23] Ibid, col. 8143

[24] Ibid, contribution to the debate by Helen Suzman, col.8165

[25] Record of the proceedings of the fifth annual conference of IANA, September 1956, Address by H.F.Verwoerd

[26] Record of the proceedings of the seventh annual conference of IANA, 1958, Quoted in speech by W.M. Eiselen

[27] Ibid

[28] CAD, Municipality of Springs (MSP), 1/2/1/10, Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, Report of the Payneville Advisory Board meeting held on 21.11.61

[29] *Hansard*, Assembly Debates, 15.06.61, cols. 8141-8142

[30] UWL, HLP, Records of Daveyton Urban Bantu Council, 24.04.64

[31] UWL, HLP, Records of the Daveyton Urban Bantu Council, 11.12.64

[32] UBC Act, Act 79 of 1961, Section 4(2)(e)

[33] CAD, BAO14/1050, 14, Letter from the Town Council of Benoni to The Bantu Affairs Commissioner, 30.11.64

[34] Ibid

[35] CAD, BAO14/1050, 14, Minutes of the Management Committee, January 1965

[36] Such a licensed officer would be empowered in term of section 22 (1) (a) of Act no.25 of 1945

[37] Ibid

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CHAPTER SIX

Separate (Racialised) Development for coloureds and Indians in the 1960s

In the late 1950s and early 1960s the state re-examined a number of its principal policies relating to the black population. This was prompted to a large extent by the mounting of radical black opposition movement in the late 1950s. Even as the National Party was consolidating its electoral position, the government was racked by internal controversies over the efficacy of existing apartheid policies and the future direction thereof. A key outcome of this review process was the shift by the government towards the policy of *separate development*. According to this policy the different African ethnic groups had to 'develop' separately in their designated 'homelands'. A variation of this approach was adopted towards coloureds and Indians. Instead of *separate development*, the government proposed a policy of *community development* for these groups, the key objective of which was to promote the development of 'racial' communities in the group areas set aside for them.

This chapter discusses the shifts that occurred in the government's policies towards coloureds and Indians from the late 1950s. It highlights the changes in official policy towards Indians, which was the subject of vigorous debate in the state and between the government and industry. The government's policies towards coloureds and Indians, which were implemented in the 1960s, amounted to a more sophisticated elaboration of racialisation than had hitherto been the case. Whereas in the 1950s the government focused on the promulgation of group areas, in the 1960s and 1970s it attempted to offset adverse effects caused by the displacement of people by some development of the group areas. This development was directed both at effecting social improvements and at instituting

racialised political structures. One of the main objectives of these policy changes was to engender an affinity among coloureds and Indians for group areas. However, these efforts enjoyed little success during the period of 'high apartheid' in the 1960s. In the 1970s the government won some support for its policies mainly because it embarked on mass housing projects in the coloured group areas and to a lesser extent also in the Indian group areas. From the early 1960s the government created parallel political structures for coloureds and Indians. The first of these was the local Consultative Committee, which was the local equivalent of Urban Bantu Councils. 'Racially' exclusive national councils were also created to provide coloureds and Indians with parallel political structures, but these only had limited powers. An associated development was the government's attempts to assert greater control over the affairs of coloureds and Indians.[1] This chapter explores each of these developments and also assesses the socio-economic development of the coloured and Indian group areas on the East Rand during the 1960s. It focuses primarily on the Indian population of the East Rand because of the availability of an important study on them that was conducted on behalf of the Benoni Council in the late 1960s.

'Racial' Community Development

In the late 1950s the government undertook a serious review of the functioning of the main bodies responsible for the establishment and development of group areas, namely the Group Areas Board (GAB), the Group Areas Development Board (GADB) and the Housing Commission. It appeared at the time that the government had come a long way to resolving the main dilemmas and shortcomings that had impaired the effectiveness of group areas legislation. The passage of the Group Areas Development Act (GADA) of 1955 and the Group Areas Amendment Act (GAAA) in 1957 strengthened the legislative capabilities of the government in pursuance of the implementation of group areas. In the late 1950s the GAB and GADB seemed to have made considerable progress in meeting their objectives. For example, from April to December 1959, the GAB proclaimed

66 group areas compared to only 170 in the period from 1950 to March 1959.[2] The GADB had also begun to register success: the GADA was applied to 14 centres between April and December 1959, compared to only 15 in the years since its inception. Similar successes were recorded in the rate at which various permits (for example, for occupation and property acquisition) and trading licences were being issued.[3] In almost all respects, therefore, the Boards responsible for creating and developing group areas improved their functioning.

These bureaucratic successes however belied a far more fundamental problem facing the government. The majority of black people continued to be stridently opposed to the GAA and often mobilised protests against it. For them the GAA meant forced removals, displacement and the imposition of a coercive racialised order. The implementation of group areas seemed to hold no prospect of a better life. On the contrary many people faced the prospect of losing properties, without adequate compensation. Black people, most particularly traders and stand and property owners, viewed the government's promise that group areas would lead to an improvement in their living conditions as no more than empty rhetoric and propaganda. As a result, the authorities found it extremely difficult to convince them of the supposed benefits of group areas. The government realised by the late fifties that its single-minded emphasis on segregation and removals had created deep animosity and resentment among blacks. It could no longer simply dismiss the objections to group areas as either irrelevant or politically motivated.

Despite the improvements in the functioning of the GAB and GADB, the government began to express serious misgivings about the future of the GAA. In 1961, P.W. Botha, the Minister of Community Development, sketched a very gloomy picture of the functioning of the Act: "Over the past ten years", he bemoaned, "we have not achieved anything positive, we have lost the support we initially enjoyed, and have gained a constant and growing opposition. Even our own people are hesitant and suspicious because apparently there is no control over the actions of the GAB, and the Board is not making progress in a way that can be defended."[4] The government invariably attributed the negative public perceptions about the group areas to widespread misunderstandings about the real intentions of

the Act [5] and to the agitation by Indian political leaders.[6] Recalcitrant municipalities were also blamed for failing to co-operate with the government in the implementation of group areas. Even the GAB and the GADB were criticised for giving undue consideration to the financial implications of implementing group areas: "This type of influence", the Minister warned, "could be dangerous. Group areas is a matter of principle and cannot be undermined by economic considerations."[7]

Even as the government was asserting its authority through coercion there remained a number of its policies that continued to provoke opposition. Nationally, African, coloured and Indian residents were continuing to mobilise against forced removals and the creation of 'racially' exclusive residential areas.[8] The government admitted that there was a 'stigma' attached to group areas and that the GAA had caused considerable suspicion and animosity among black people.[9] Such pervasive rejection of the GAA also inhibited the government's efforts to gain support for its programme to develop 'racial' communities. Although the creation of group areas was not facing a debilitating crisis, it had become apparent that the government required a new approach to effecting residential segregation.

In August 1961 the government established the Department of Community Development in order to address these problems. In so doing, it signalled an important shift in approach and policy towards coloureds and Indians. Whereas before the emphasis was on the implementation of group areas, now the government sought to set in place policies that would focus on the 'separate and parallel' *development* of these areas.[10] The government also envisaged that the new Department would enhance the functioning of those bodies responsible for the GAA, by bringing them under the control of a single department, and thus improve the co-ordination between them. According to the government

> Community Development is a term which is receiving ever-increasing recognition in the international sphere. In the Republic it connotes the series of processes aimed at uniting a community's own efforts with those of governmental authorities to improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate the various

> communities of each population group into the life of the nation as separate but interdependent social and economic units, and to enable a community to contribute to its own as well as the general welfare and national progress. The process is made up of two essential elements, namely, on the one hand, territorial planning, i.e. the demarcation of the areas which will meet the needs of each group, the provision of a variety of aids, namely physical development, technical assistance, stimulus to economic activities, educational facilities, etc., so as to stimulate and foster a sense of initiative, self-help and mutual help, and on the other hand, participation by the community itself so that it may through its own initiative contribute to the improvement of its level of living.[11]

Thus, unlike *separate development, community development* did not aim to develop separate 'nations'. Rather, it applied to Indians, coloureds and whites, who were perceived to be part of the South African nation, albeit as separate and unequal 'racial' *communities*. Previously the government did very little other than proclaim the existence of different 'races'. Now it began to make conscious efforts to instil political and social content to those categories. The objective was to engender a positive association with group areas and 'racial' identities. To this end the Department of Community Development was thus established, to employ "the various media of the State's existing machinery to stimulate, supplement and support the efforts of the community to improve its standard of living".[12] As we have seen, the Department was entrusted with task of activating and co-ordinating programmes "to develop communities into independent and, as far as possible, self reliant socio-economic units in their own areas."[13] However, the Department also had to deal with the apparent abstention by local authorities in the development of group areas. In this regard, the government proposed that the Department take over the powers and the role of local authorities to develop group areas. Thus the primary responsibility of the Housing Commission, which now also fell under the authority of the Department, was to assist local authorities by granting loans for building purposes, and secondarily to undertake building itself. The GADB was primarily concerned with the development of 'affected properties' in group areas,

and secondarily to develop group areas where local authorities were not assuming that responsibility.[14] These bodies increasingly used their powers to become more directly involved in the development of group areas.

Housing and Development

By the end of the 1950s the government began to acknowledge that housing provision for coloureds and Indians was inadequate. In 1959 the government appointed an inter-departmental committee to investigate the extent of this shortage. The committee comprised key figures involved in the creation and management of group areas, namely, J.H. van de Walt (chair), J.J. Marais (Group Areas Board), I.D. du Plessis (Coloured Affairs), W. Heckroodt (Group Areas Development Board) and S.D. Mentz.[15] Over the following two years the committee interviewed those municipalities which had Indian and coloured populations to ascertain their respective housing needs. The committee's report, which was submitted to the Minister of the Interior in 1961, confirmed the serious housing shortage among coloureds and Indians nationally.[16] The housing problem was especially acute in the Western Cape and Durban, where the majority of coloureds and Indians respectively resided. The committee also found that that the majority of coloureds and Indians were very poor, and could not afford to build their own houses. The report painted a dismal picture of the government's programme of housing provision for coloureds and Indians. For example, between 1955 and 1960 the state spent over R110 million on housing of which only about R10 million and R2,5 million was spent on coloured and Indian housing respectively.[17] It was estimated that the number of houses needed by poor coloureds and Indians was 44 296 and 52 794 respectively (a total of 97 090), although it was recognised that this was probably an underestimate.[18]

The committee recommended that the poorest coloureds and Indians would have to be provided with houses in accordance with the standard of houses provided for Africans. Those who commanded higher incomes (namely, those who earned more than R140 per month) would be provided with houses equitable to

those for lower income whites. According to the report many coloureds and Indians competed with whites for jobs, but their incomes were considerably lower than those earned by their white counterparts. It was estimated that only 9,6% of coloureds earned more than R80 per month.[19] It proposed that measures be instituted to make it easier for coloureds and Indians to gain access to housing loans. The existing rules governing housing loans stipulated that coloureds and whites could get loans up to a maximum of R4500, whereas Indians were only entitled to a maximum of R3500 because they were perceived as a higher risk group.[20] The committee recommended the elimination of this discrepancy in order to make it easier to convince Indians to comply with group areas and removals. The committee was of the opinion that there were many Indians (and to a lesser extent also coloureds) who could afford to finance their own houses but refused to do so because of opposition to the group areas, and proposed that they also be provided with economic houses. It thus recommended the state should take financial responsibility initially for the provision of houses for all those who were to be relocated to their specific group areas. Unless the state undertook this responsibility, the committee warned, the removal of residents to group areas would not be effected. The committee proposed that the government should spend an additional R8-10 million per annum on housing for coloureds and Indians, which would increase the annual total to between R26-30 million.[21]

The committee recommended that the government introduce measures similar to those used to facilitate the construction of mass housing programmes for Africans, such as the introduction of a service levy and the use of coloured and Indian labour to build houses in their respective group areas.[22] Both white unions and industrialists rejected these proposals. White unions[23] in the building industry argued that there was already a surplus of building workers and that an increase in their numbers would lead to a reduction in wages. White workers were especially concerned that the training of coloured and Indian artisans would pose a threat to their monopoly of skills. The Associated Chamber of Commerce (Assocom) objected to the introduction of a service levy for coloureds and Indians on the grounds that it would increase production costs.[24] The Association argued that in

the case of Durban, where the committee proposed a limited service levy be introduced, employers would use it as an excuse to replace Indian workers with cheaper African labour. Furthermore, the burden of a service levy would fall on only a handful of employers because of the limited number who employed Indians.[25]

The negative responses from these institutions reflected a much broader lack of urgency among the authorities to deal decisively with the housing shortage experienced by coloureds and Indians. Despite the government's rhetorical commitment to development, little was done in the 1960s on the East Rand to effect significant improvements in the lives of these people. The region's Indian population especially lived under appalling conditions. In 1961 a local survey conducted of the Indian Section in the Benoni Old Location painted a graphic picture of the pervasive squalor there:

> Pinched between the solid brick houses of the Indians are the squalid tin shacks of the squatters of Benoni. Here the very nadir of human existence is being eeked (sic) out in a welter of foulness – a foulness compounded of stagnant water, decaying refuse, human excreta and flies.
>
> The stench percolates into every corner of this ghetto in a way that all the perfumes of Arabia cannot mask. It is a stench that clogs the nostrils, that permeates every stitch of clothing. It stays with one long after this wretched place has been left.[26]

Over the following years the authorities promised to remedy this situation. From the outset, however, the government's focus on the removal of Africans and coloureds from the old location delayed the implementation of any plans to improve conditions in the area. The Benoni Council and its Indian Affairs Sub-Committee in particular were involved in protracted negotiations over matters such as the compensation to be paid to African and coloured homeowners, the process of allocating houses vacated by the aforementioned groups to Indian residents from other parts of the region and which body would be responsible for

financing the programme of forced removals.[27] Notwithstanding the government's earlier self-criticism of its emphasis on removals, in practice little changed during the early 1960s. As a result coloureds and Indians being relocated to their respective group areas invariably found themselves in places where virtually no development had occurred.

By 1965 the Indian population of Actonville stood at 5273, comprising 933 families living in 638 houses. The influx of people from other East Rand towns, especially from Boksburg, was not matched by concomitant housing development. As a result overcrowding, especially among poorer residents, was ubiquitous. This problem was especially evident in Actonville Extension No.2 where 3 300 people (578 families) were crammed into only 265 sites.[28] This meant that on average at least twelve people (two families) were living on one site. By the end of 1966 the situation had improved only marginally. No new houses were built in Extension 2, but the number of residents living there had declined to 2 547 (424 families). Some of this overcrowding was however displaced to Extensions one and three.[29] At this point the removal of coloured and African residents had virtually been concluded. It appeared that the promise of development might now eventually come to fruition in the new Indian group area. The Benoni Town Council had earlier in 1966 outlined its plans for the development of the area:

> It is anticipated that once the movement of the Bantu families from the Benoni Bantu Township to Daveyton Extension gets under way, the tempo of the Indian Development will increase and its hoped that by 1968 the area will be fully developed with a civic centre planned on modern lies comprising attractive shopping centre, library, Municipal offices, cinema and town hall. Nearly 500 houses designed by architects appointed by the Town council, will have been built together with modern blocks of flats. In addition, some 90 larger residential sites will be developed by the more affluent members of the Indian Community.[30]

The Council announced at about the same time that it would spend R4 million to upgrade Actonville (R1 million on shops and offices and R3 million on houses).[31]

These plans resonated with the ideas that informed the planning of Daveyton as a 'modern' township. But there was a discernible lack of urgency in the way the authorities approached the development of Actonville. Instead of experiencing a spurt of developmental growth, the Indian group area seemed to regress. Poorer residents especially suffered under these circumstances. In 1967 residents being relocated from Boksburg refused to move into the houses allocated to them because they lacked bathrooms and running water. Their complaints prompted the Council to admit that "The houses are in a poor condition and as in the case of the houses set aside for Boksburg residents, they are steadily deteriorating."[32]

In 1969 an even more trenchant critique of the housing situation in Actonville came from the Health Inspector, who had conducted a survey of the state of housing in Extensions two and three. He found that 54% of houses in those areas ranged from being in a state 'that they require substantial repairs and renovation' to 'being so dilapidated... that they are no longer fit for human occupation'.[33] By this time the population of the area had risen to 6500, with only a few additional houses being built.

In response to the Health Inspector's report, the Medical Officer of Health delivered a devastating judgement on the consequences of the authority's neglect of Actonville's poor community. He reminded the Council's Management Committee that "Benoni is experiencing remarkable prosperity and expansion". This contrasted sharply with the abject conditions in the Indian group area, where there were

> slums so appalling that the average Benoni citizen would vomit if he were to visit them. Overcrowding exists to an extent that beggars the imagination. Children play in the rutted streets amongst raw sewage and slop water. Few houses have running water inside the house... Each room in each of the corrugated iron shanties houses at least one

> family. On one property there are not less than forty people living, crowded into the house, the garage and other outhouses of various sorts. There was one lavatory pail for these forty people... Mothers cope as best they can. Their bedroom, kitchen, pantry and bathroom are all in one room... At night the parents sleep in the one bed usually with the two youngest children at the foot of the bed. All the other children sleep on the earth floor."[34]

The Director of Non-European Affairs indicated that plans were afoot to construct more houses and flats to accommodate poorer residents. But it seemed that even when new accommodation was provided, it did not benefit those who needed it most. In 1970 poor Actonville residents complained that the new houses and flats being built were too expensive for them to afford. At least 67 families faced evictions because they could not afford to pay the rents. According to one resident, "Some people are living in broken-down cars, while some landlords have many properties in the township."[35] By 1971 the housing situation remained desperate. The *Benoni City Times* reported that "Many Indians feel that the lower income bracket people were not taken care of and houses were allocated to those in the higher income bracket... People are desperate. They have to rent a house, it is impossible to find accommodation."[36] These problems were aggravated by what appeared to be a common practice in the area, whereby rich residents bought multiple houses and leased them to poorer residents. Tenants were often charged R50 and more per month to occupy these houses.[37]

For the majority of the East Rand's Indian population the promises of social improvement contained in the government's policy of *community development* did not materialise. A detailed survey commissioned by the Benoni Town Council in the late 1960s on the region's Indian population found that nearly 60% were living in overcrowded conditions.[38] The researchers found a strong antipathy to forced removals: 87,4% of respondents living outside Benoni and 95% of households living in the peri-urban areas[39] of Benoni were opposed to moving to Actonville. The majority of these people wanted new and better houses to be built for them in their existing residential areas. Two thirds of household

heads expressed dissatisfaction with their existing accommodation.[40] Many of the people who had been removed from Boksburg paid lower rents in Benoni, where they occupied municipal houses. In their previous abodes these people often had to pay rentals of up to R25 to unscrupulous landlords, whereas rents for the municipal houses ranged between R5,25 and R7,55. However, houses constructed in the late 1960s in Actonville were considerably more expensive, with rents ranging from R31 to R40. Most people could not afford these higher costs.[41] Moreover, the majority of residents who had previously lived outside Benoni continued to work in the towns of their origin, which meant they incurred additional transport costs.[42]

A similar pattern of neglect was also emerging in Reiger Park, the East Rand's coloured group area. There too development was initially retarded by the government's focus on removing African people to Vosloorus and relocating coloureds from other parts of the region to the group area. Thus in the early 1960s no attention was given to providing new houses for the poorer sections of the coloured community. The only housing programme initiated during this period was for those people who could afford to buy their properties. By 1965 the housing situation in Reiger Park had reached crisis proportions. The Boksburg Council admitted that approximately two thousand houses were required to accommodate the people already living in the area. In addition 1400 houses would have to be built for those people being relocated from other areas.[43] At the time the majority of coloured residents were living in single rooms, huts or shacks. In Stirtonville, 640 families were living in single rooms.[44] To make matters worse, the authorities proceeded to convert most houses from being sub-economic to being economic units. As a result families occupying two and three room houses saw their rents soar from R5,50 and R6,00 to R14, 42 and R17,72 respectively.[45] The Council introduced these increases even though it acknowledged that most coloured families could not afford economic rentals.[46] By the late 1960s the Council noted that

> The Coloureds have been resettled for approximately four years now, and it is quite clear from conversations with Coloureds and

> discussions at a meeting of the Consultative Committee, that the Coloured community at Reiger Park is becoming extremely discontented and dissatisfied with the slow progress being made in regard to the establishment of Reiger Park Extension No.1.[47]

In general, therefore, very few coloureds and Indians benefited from the implementation of group areas or from its more reformist incarnation, *community development*. Instead of experiencing social development and economic advancement, poor coloured and Indians, who formed the overwhelming majority of their populations, suffered further hardships and impoverishment during the 1960s.

Indian traders

Indian traders, especially in the Transvaal, presented a perennial and most vexing dilemma to the authorities. From the end of the 19th century successive governments had attempted to impose restrictions on the activities of Indian traders. The Nationalist Party in the 1950s sought finally to solve this issue and to relocate all Indian traders from the city centres into Indian group areas. In so doing, the government aimed to eliminate all forms of intra-racial interaction, whether in business or residence.

The government's insistence on undermining Indian trade provoked widespread opposition, ranging from the radical South African Indian Congress (SAIC) to the pro-apartheid Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK). The SAIC was the most prominent and consistent opponent of the government's policies. Its provincial chapters, the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) and the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC), were in the forefront of the struggles against the introduction of the GAA. Throughout the 1950s these organisations successfully mobilised Indian communities, especially traders, to frustrate the implementation of the government's plans. Even the government acknowledged their success in this regard.[48]

The South African Indian Organisation (SAIO), which was established by

conservative Indian politicians who had become disgruntled with the SAIC's radicalism, also condemned aspects of the GAA. The SAIO made it clear that it did not oppose residential segregation in principle. In July 1959, its president, Mr. A.M. Moolla, told the GAB that his organisation's attitude was that "under reasonable conditions, there can be no objections to the acceptance of residential separation, provided it was done with justice and in keeping with the needs of the various communities."[49] He nevertheless warned the GAB that it was too pre-occupied with establishing residential segregation, and "did not pay sufficient thought to how he (the Indian) was going to live and how he was going to earn his livelihood to pay for the house that would be provided for him".[50] Moolla appealed to the government to set aside special trading areas for Indians. The SAIO argued that the introduction of this proposal would not make any difference to the 'general concept of apartheid', especially because in other economic spheres there already existed substantial interaction.[51] According to this proposal Indian traders would enter commercial areas during the day and then return to their group areas at night. In this way, the SAIO argued, Indian traders would be no different from other black workers who commuted to and from their group areas on a daily basis.[52]

The SAIO suggested that the GAB make a positive overture to the Indian traders, not only to save them from economic ruin, but also because it would be the best way to undermine the SAIC's opposition to the GAA. The SAIO hoped that by striking a deal with the government along these lines it would enhance its position in the Indian community *vis-à-vis* the SAIC The SAIO committed itself to "fight extremism as far as possible", meaning of course the SAIC, and impressed on the government that "if you want us to fight extremism, then you must grant us some concessions."[53] This offer seems to have made little impression on the GAB, whose chairman, Mr. J.J. Marais, was sceptical about the SAIO's capacity to challenge the SAIC's support in the Indian community. Specifically it doubted Mr. Moolla's promise to fight extremism because it was convinced that most Indians actually did hate the GAB and the government.[54] According to Marais, the "Indian community as a whole has declared war against the Group Areas."[55]

In 1959 the Assocom added its voice to the growing criticisms about the

adverse effects group areas was having on Indian traders. The Association supported the concept of group areas but was anxious about the potential negative effects of the government's policies on the 'normal functioning' of the economy.[56] Assocom appealed to the government that in the implementation of the Act, "every effort should be made to avoid the erosion of the competitive capitalist system by actions which introduce risks and uncertainties which are not inherent in the system."[57] Assocom aired its criticisms in the context of the economic difficulties that faced the country in the late 1950s. It urged the government to act decisively to alleviate the situation because, "Until the uncertainties are removed from the minds of all of us, we cannot again make progress. Investment is being withheld because of uncertainties. And so our perturvasion (sic) arises very considerably out of that fact."[58]

Among the issues with which the Association specifically expressed anxiety was the possible detrimental effects the removal of Indian traders would have on white wholesalers, many of whom depended on Indian traders for their business. Assocom complained that many wholesalers were forced to close down because of loss of business or due to uncertainties of the future, a situation that was exacerbated by economic downturn at the time. As a solution to these problems, the Association proposed that the government should implement the GAA gradually, so as to minimise disruption to the traders. It proposed that trading rights be removed incrementally and that current licensed owners should be allowed to retain trading rights during their lifetimes.[59] It supported the implementation of residential segregation but questioned whether trading segregation was either central to apartheid or urgent.

The NGK provided another important source of criticism of the group areas policies towards Indians. This conservative religious ally of the government drew attention to the adverse effects that forced removals of Indians from Johannesburg to Lenasia would have on Indian workers. In a memorandum to the Minster of Interior, the NGK highlighted the economic difficulties endured by Indian workers, especially service workers, who had to travel long distances to be at work.[60] The NGK also criticised the government for neglecting the housing needs of poor

Indians, who it claimed were living under the most atrocious conditions in the city. It appealed to the government to provide sub-economic housing in Johannesburg for lower income Indians employed in the service industry to make it easier for them to commute to work.[61] The church also accused the government of mishandling the issues of Indian traders. It argued that it was incorrect for the government to confine Indian traders to their group areas and urged the government to establish a special trading area for Indians in Johannesburg. The church contended that "To expect trade only between Ahmed and Ishmail and Ishmail and Ahmed in Lenasia is not the Christian thing to do."[62]

The government's first reaction, as might be expected, was to defend its policies. In its written reply to Assocom, the government reiterated its commitment to remove all Indian traders from white urban centres because it argued, among other things, the presence of Indian traders had a deflationary effect on property values and was thus detrimental to surrounding white businesses.[63] While acknowledging that Indians in the Transvaal would be the most adversely affected by group areas because of their disproportionate involvement in commerce, the government nevertheless insisted that Indians only had themselves to blame for the dilemma with which they were confronted. Indians, especially Moslems, were accused of not wanting to do any other work.[64] More positively, the government claimed that Indian traders would benefit from apartheid policies, as they would have security of tenure and be able to trade in their own areas without any competition from other groups.[65] Having satisfied itself of the virtues of its own policies, the government rejected all the proposals of compromise raised by Assocom as impracticable. To accept the principles enunciated by Assocom, the memorandum concluded, "would be the negation of Apartheid as practicable policy."[66] However, this reluctance notwithstanding the government registered concern about these criticisms by two such important constituencies in the white community.[67]

Shifts to more unworkable policies

One of the first signs of possible changes to aspects of group areas policy emanated from a most unlikely quarter, namely the Transvaal National Party. At the time that the government was involved in discussions with various groups about the impact of group areas on Indian traders, the provincial chapter of the ruling party circulated a memorandum to local authorities, adumbrating the notion of separating residential segregation from commercial segregation. The memorandum, written in June 1959 and signed by Piet Koornhof (the assistant secretary of the provincial party), argued that, "Residential segregation of Indians is *absolute*, in other words when a group area is declared for Indians, then all Indians of a town or city are removed to such a proclaimed area." But unlike residential segregation, continued the document, "Commercial segregation of Indians is *relative*."[68] The memorandum affirmed the Transvaal National Party's unwavering commitment to residential segregation and even berated those municipalities that were not complying with group areas legislation. But it suggested that where reasonable trading opportunities were not available to Indians in their group areas, then facilities should be provided to them in the urban centres.[69]

The discussions within the GAB during 1959 and 1960 give some indication of the shift in the attitude of the authorities. The GAB was centrally involved in the discussions about the future of Indian traders because it was ultimately responsible for the implementation of the government's group area policies. Any doubt that it might express therefore necessarily suggest uncertainty at higher levels of the state. An early indication of these came in late 1960 when it noted that:

> The Indian is a trading community that makes a living out of trade. However, they must be moved and resettled, but in such a manner that they are not cut off from their clients. Their means of survival must not be taken from them because they could become a burden to the

> state at a later stage. The government has a moral obligation to secure their survival and therefore the problem must be addressed realistically - not with emotion but with reason.[70]

A few months later, the chairman of the GAB, J.H. Niemand, admitted that existing legislation affecting Indians hindered their ability to develop alternative means of employment. He argued that the government would be dealing a serious blow to the economic viability of the Indian community if it undermined their trade.[71] What gradually emerged in the GAB position therefore was that it would allow Indian traders to continue operating from their existing sites until a permanent resolution could be found to the wider problem. However, the Board was wary of setting a precedent on this matter and insisted that this concession would apply only for a limited period. The government was by this stage willing to make some concessions to Indian traders but was equally desperate not to give the impression that it was caving into the demands of 'extremists'. The Minister of the Interior made that much clear in his talks with the SAIO when he insisted that if he permitted Indian traders to occupy existing sites for limited periods of time this change in the government policy should not be misconstrued as a sign of weakness on its part.[72]

The government now proposed a number of long term schemes to address the issue of Indian trading in white areas. The first of these was the proposal to establish huge trading complexes – 'Indian Bazaars' - in the main urban centres. In contrast to the old 'Asiatic Bazaars', the new Bazaars were to be modelled on the Bazaar in Durban and those in East Africa.[73] Traders were to be given stalls in a single complex, which was located in the town centre. In 1960, the government set up a special committee to investigate the viability of establishing such a Bazaar in Pretoria where numerous Indian traders were located in Princess Street.[74] After a brief investigation, the committee concluded that the Bazaar system would not work in the Transvaal, and especially not in Pretoria. It observed that the Durban Bazaar was well supported by 'all groups'. The committee argued that in the Transvaal there was a stigma attached to shopping at Indian centres. It questioned whether Afrikaners would frequent the same shops as Africans.[75] This was a

strange conclusion to reach considering that all and sundry frequented Indian shops in the city centres. More importantly, Indian traders also opposed the new Bazaar system because it would not stop their relocation to a group area. As a result of these objections, the new Bazaar system was not introduced in the 1960s. However, the concept was reintroduced in the mid-1970s when the government used it as a means to overcome the resistance by Pageview traders against their removal from 14th Avenue.[76]

The government's next proposal was to remove Indians from their existing sites to new areas that would be accessible to potential shoppers from other group areas. But the government realised such a plan would also create dilemma of its own. According to the GAB, it was faced with a "choice between three evils".[77] It could not locate an Indian group area close to a white area because the white population and the Chamber of Commerce, which would view it as a threat to white business, would reject such a plan. The government would also not agree to having Indian traders in close proximity to a coloured group area because its policy was to assist the development of coloured economic autonomy, which would only have potential for success if coloured businesses were not confronted with competition from Indian traders. Thus, the government concluded that Africans were the only potential clientele for Indian traders.[78] It therefore proposed that Indian shops be built either on the outskirts of townships or along the main roads connecting townships and the industrial areas. In this way, it suggested, Indians could attract African customers. This strategy would also not compromise the government's policies of separate development. The authorities argued that African businesses in the urban areas could not expect to be protected from competition as they were in the 'homelands'[79] But this proposal failed to engender any support from the Indian community, who remained fundamentally suspicious of any plan to remove them from their existing trading sites.

In the end, the government was unable to bridge the chasm that existed between its determination to remove Indians to group areas and the Indian community's opposition to any proposal perceived as a threat to their livelihoods. None of the government's proposals could allay the Indian traders' fears that being

removed from their existing sites would not adversely affect them. As a result the authorities on the East Rand either continued to insist that Indians be removed or left them in their existing areas, under strict conditions. In either case, Indian traders were generally worse off than before. This was especially the case because a relatively high proportion of Indians on the East Rand depended on trading. Close to 50% of Indians were employed in commerce compared to only 30,5% in industry.[80] 84,3% of traders were entirely dependent on trading for their income.[81] Moreover, there were few alternative job opportunities available to these people and there was a very high degree of unemployment among Indian women.[82] The majority of residents in Actonville were Muslim and were mostly employed in commerce, whereas Hindus and Christians were more evenly spread between commerce and industry. Tamils were mostly employed in industry.[83] Two-thirds of traders also lived on their business premises,[84] which made the prospect of removals particularly objectionable to them.

By far the most serious problem that affected traders and over which they had no influence whatsoever, was the implementation of group areas upon Africans which resulted in the loss of most of their clientele. In the old locations Indian traders had a huge client base, comprising primarily the local African residents. The removal of Africans to the new townships therefore struck a serious blow to Indian businesses. The GAA determined that Indians would only be permitted to trade in Indian group areas. Yet, less than a third of Indian traders depended on Indian customers for their business.[85] According to the researchers of the survey on Indians on the East Rand,

> Traders in Actonville faced bleak times. Most of the Indian traders' clientele was African, and although Wattville would continue providing a customer base, this would now be spread among a much greater number of traders. The increase in the number of Indians living in Actonville was unlikely to have significant positive effects, as most Indians preferred shopping at large departmental stores.[86]

The adverse consequences of the government's approach to Indian traders were profound. In 1965 the Benoni Council announced a plan to establish the country's first 'all-Indian industrial area' as part of a strategy to make the Indian community economically self-sufficient.[87] However, as with other developmental plans, the implementation of this one was also delayed. The central government was not enthusiastic about the proposal and even the Council was divided over where to locate such an industrial area.[88] From a socio-economic perspective, the government's much lauded shift to *community development* in the early 1960s therefore had negligible positive effects on Indian residents. On the contrary, traders especially appeared to have experienced a deterioration in their conditions throughout the sixties. The other main prong in the strategy of community development was that of 'parallel' political representation. It is to this issue that the chapter now turns.

Indians recognised as 'citizens'

Until the early 1960s the government's approach towards Indian people was based on the policy of repatriation.[89] According to this policy Indians would eventually return to their rightful homeland, India. In that sense they were viewed as 'temporary sojourners' in South Africa. The government did not actively pursue this repatriation policy but it nevertheless had a material effect on Indian people's political status as well as their social conditions. Little attention was given to the governance and socio-economic development of the Indian population. Since Indians were not officially recognised as citizens of the country no attempt was made to incorporate them into any official political structures. Even the qualified franchise or indirect representation, which applied to Africans and coloureds in different parts of the country, was not extended to Indians. Official relations between the government and Indians were mediated through the Departments of Welfare and Interior. Within the latter department, the Directorate of Immigration and Asiatic Affairs was responsible for administering and controlling the internal and external movement of Indians.[90]

In 1961, nearly a century after the arrival of Indian labourers in the country, the government officially abandoned the policy of repatriation. In May 1961 leading cabinet member, Jan De Klerk, conceded in the House of Assembly that the country had to take responsibility for its 'Asiatic' population.[91] Later that year the Prime Minister, H.F. Verwoerd, publicly approved the view that Indians should be regarded as an 'independent community... in the Republic'.[92] The government now introduced a variety of reforms. In February 1961 the Asiatic Affairs Division was created within the Department of the Interior, the purpose of which was to "serve as a channel through which the rightful needs of the Asiatic community can be brought under the attention of the Government."[93] By August 1961 Asiatic Affairs Division was upgraded to the status of a government department. The main objective of the new Department of Indian Affairs was to give special attention "to the economic and social development ... as an independent community ... of the Indian group in the Republic."[94] A month later W.A. Maree was appointed the first Minister of Indian Affairs. These rapid changes signalled the government's commitment to place its relations with the Indian population on a new footing. However, it was still not prepared to concede genuine political rights to Indians or give the new department any substantive powers. Indeed, the new ministry did little more than take over the responsibilities performed by the Departments of Welfare and Interior in relation to the Indian population. The Department was thus bereft of any real power to intervene in matters affecting Indians on a daily basis. The government's most important and frequent interaction with the Indian population still occurred through the Department of Community Development, which was concerned mainly with the implementation of the GAA.

The next step in the evolution of these relations was the government's decision to establish a body which would "act as a channel of consultation between the Government and the Indian community."[95] One of the government's main concerns was that Indians were almost wholly alienated from the state. There were few, if any, official mechanism available for the Indian community to engage the government. This contributed to the propensity for Indians to voice their concerns through protest actions, which occurred primarily under the banner of the SAIC.

The repression in the early 1960s, which debilitated the SAIC, created the space for the government to promote conservative Indian politicians. In 1963 the government met some of these personalities to discuss the establishment of a National Indian Council, which would serve as a liaison between the Indian community and the government. The government declared that the Council was the first 'recognised mouthpiece' of Indians. It nevertheless nominated all the members of the Council, which compromised its legitimacy from the outset. The SAIC rejected the establishment of the Council and even the authorities admitted that the body had very little support among Indian people.[96] The new Council operated in almost complete obscurity over the following five years and made little impression on the politics in the Indian areas. In 1968 the government announced that the Council would be converted into a statutory body known as the South African Indian Council. This body was intended to be the equivalent of the Coloured Representative Council (CRC), which was supposed to represent the interests of coloureds nationally. Unlike the CRC, however, the Indian Council would not comprise of any elected members. The Minister of Indian Affairs nominated all twenty-five members[97] of the Council to ensure that the body would remain loyal to the government. Despite the name change and improved statutory status, the new body continued to serve primarily to be a liaison body.

Coloured 'franchise' vitiated

When the NP came to power it immediately set about removing coloureds from the common voters' roll. Until the 1950s coloureds had remained on the common voters' roll in the Cape Province, where they participated in elections. However, their franchise was qualified and they could not stand as candidates, which meant they could only elect white representatives to the country's governing body.[98] Notwithstanding their numerical weakness, the coloured electorate in a number of Cape constituencies was large enough to influence the outcome of elections. This was the main reason behind the NP's assault on the coloured vote. As early as 1951, the government passed the Separate Representation of Voters'

Act, which removed coloured from the common voters' roll. The Act was widely criticised and its validity was challenged in the courts, which delayed its implementation. The government, however, was equally determined to proceed and used various constitutional manoeuvres to achieve its aim.[99] In 1956 it eventually succeeded in promulgating the Act and, in so doing, removed the last group of black people from the common voters' roll.

While the government proceeded to disenfranchise coloureds, it also began to create liaison bodies between it and the coloured population. Prior to this the Coloured Advisory Committee (CAC) had been established to advise the pre-Nationalist governments on matters affecting the coloured people.[100] However, the CAC was widely condemned as representing a step towards the final removal of the coloured franchise. As a result this body was stillborn. In 1951the government established a sub-department in the Department of the Interior, known as Coloured Affairs, to take over the functions of the CAC. The responsibilities of Coloured Affairs increased little over the years, as the government transferred some routine responsibilities from other Departments to Coloured Affairs, such as the administration of public funds for grants to be allocated to sports facilities, and educational and cultural activities.[101] This sub-department was directly accountable to the Minister of the Interior and was staffed exclusively by white civil servants.

The Separate Representation of Voters' Act of 1951 had provided for the establishment of a Union Council for Coloured Affairs (UCCA), which would be a liaison body run by coloureds.[102] But, as with its predecessors, this body was devoid of any real authority or legitimacy, and was under the strict control of the government. Of the twenty-seven members serving on the Council, the governor-general nominated fifteen, and the remaining twelve were elected by eligible coloured voters. The government created the UCCA as an alternative to the coloured (qualified) franchise and it was probably for this reason that the elections to this body attracted only negligible interest. Save for the participation of some conservative coloured organisations such as the Coloured People's National Union, which was led by George Golding, few others were prepared to be associated with this body.

The failure of these bodies to attract any substantial support led the government to review its political relationship with coloureds. In 1960 the government appointed the Niemand Committee to investigate the participation of coloureds in local government. The committee recommended that separate and parallel political institutions be created for coloureds, in line with those existing for Africans. These recommendations were embodied in the Group Areas Amendment Act of 1962.[103] Although these proposals were initially intended to apply to local government, the principles underpinning them were extended to the national arena. Thus in 1964 the Coloured Person's Representative Council Act was promulgated, which set the scene for the transformation of national coloured politics. In terms of the Act, the UCCA was to be replaced by the Coloured Representative Council (CRC). However, it took another five years before the recommendations embodied in the Act came to fruition.

The CRC was eventually established in 1969, and according to the government the purpose of this body was "to enable the Coloured people of the Republic to exercise their democratic rights, to conduct their own affairs and afford them an ever increasing tempo of self determination."[104] Unlike its predecessors the CRC would have a majority elected members, and possessed the powers to make laws but only "within the ambit of its functions". These functions and powers were delegated to it by the government and remained very limited. In addition, the CRC had to submit any laws it wished to promulgate to the Minister of Coloured Relations for approval. The State President also had to agree with all proposed laws before they could be promulgated. Thus even within the limited scope provided for the CRC, very strict procedures were set in place to ensure compliance with overall government policy.

The government carefully managed the process leading to the establishment of the CRC, by ensuring that its closest ally, the Federal Party (led by Tom Swartz) would be the majority party in the CRC. Although the body was made up of a majority of elected seats, the government could appoint twenty members, who were all taken from the Federal Party. The Labour Party, which enjoyed majority support among coloured voters, participated in the CRC but was

also critical of its limited powers. Leading Labour member, David Curry, contended that "The Government has given representation without giving the Council responsibilities. The Council has a built-in frustration complex... We are becoming convinced that the CRC was created so that we can just blow off steam."[105] Nevertheless, the Labour Party participated in these elections and lent some legitimacy to the CRC. For the majority of coloureds, however, especially those from the Western Cape, the CRC represented a reversal from the qualified franchise they had previously enjoyed. As a result, only a minority participated in the 1969 elections. The government was unable to persuade those people who had been on the common voters' roll to accept the vitiated franchise offered to them in the late 1960s.

Racialised local governance

The South African Indian Council and the Coloured Representative Council were created to provide the space for Indians and coloureds to develop 'racial' political identities on a national basis. In similar fashion, the government established semi-autonomous and 'racially' distinct local structures in the 1960s. These institutions were key elements in the government's plans to legitimise the creation of group areas. Provision was first made for the creation of these 'racially-based' local political structures in the Group Areas Amendment Act of 1957.[106] However, these proposals were only implemented after the establishment of the Department of Community Development. The authorities set out a three-phase plan for the introduction of local authorities for coloureds and Indians.[107]

The first stage consisted of the creation of Consultative Committees in group areas where communities did not yet have the necessary experience to take charge of their own affairs. According to the government Indians and coloureds required training and time to acquire the requisite skills to run their own affairs.[108] Consultative Committees consisted entirely of nominated members. Five members appointed by the Provincial Administrator. Two of these members were nominated by the Department of Community Development, two by the Administrator and one

by the relevant local authority.[109] In this way the authorities ensured that only compliant people would serve on these bodies. Local authorities were legally required to liaise with Consultative Committees on issues relating to that particular group area, for example, on matters such as the provision of housing, welfare, recreational facilities, roads and health care. Budget proposals and local legislation that affected a particular area also had to be discussed with the Consultative Committee. The second phase in the development of local representation consisted of the establishment of Management Committees. A community qualified for the creation of a Mancom once the government was satisfied that the inhabitants of a particular group area had proven its ability to take on the responsibility of running their own affairs. Members of the Consultative Committees also had to prove their competency as reliable political representatives and conduits for government policies. Precisely what criteria were used to determine the progress made by communities or the Consultative Committees is unclear. Management Committees were also unelected bodies and enjoyed only advisory powers. In addition to having the same responsibilities as Consultative Committees, the Management Committees also had the right to inspect public buildings in its area of jurisdiction, to report and make recommendations on matters concerning coloured workers and local laws affecting people in its group area. The municipality also had to consult it on the financial management of its group area.[110]

The final stage in the evolution of these group area local committees, was the establishment of fully-fledged local authorities. The government envisaged that such committees would take on the responsibility of managing a particular group area. The establishment of such a committee could only occur with the permission of the relevant minister, and the Administrator would still appoint its members. The government's policy of developing 'self-reliant communities' along these lines was consolidated in the Group Areas Amendment Act of 1962.[111] By December 1962 the Transvaal Provincial Administration passed an ordinance conforming to the government's proposal and set about establishing consultative committees in a number of group areas. By 1965 seventeen Advisory Committees and fifteen Management Committees had been established in the Cape Province, whereas in

the Transvaal only three Advisory Committees and one Management Committee had been established.[112] The authorities did not regard the East Rand's group areas as developed enough to qualify for Management Committees.

The establishment of these committees also signalled the coming of age of collaboration politics. The politicians who were active in these bodies owed their political advancement more to the government than the people who they purported to represent. In the 1960s the government's attempts to create legitimate parallel political structures in the coloured and Indian group areas enjoyed uneven support. There was little enthusiasm for these bodies, which had limited powers and comprised mostly people handpicked by the authorities. Most importantly, the living conditions of many coloureds and Indians either stagnated or declined during the 1960s, which further alienated these people from the government and their local acolytes. Therefore, the two main prongs of the government's *community development* programme largely failed to make a favourable impression on the people it was supposed to benefit. As a result few people developed a positive association to group areas.

ENDNOTES

[1] Government Publications (GP), University of the Witwatersrand (UW), Report on the activities of the Department of Community Development for the period 1st August, 1961 to 31st December, 1962, pp.5-7

[2] Central Archives Depot (CAD), Group Areas Board files (GGR) 114, 74/6 (1), Group Areas: Public Motion (By the Minister to the Senate), 1960

[3] Ibid

[4] CAD, GGR 174, 88/1, Groepsgebiede, 20.04.61

[5] CAD, GGR, 48, 15/4, Memorandum on the Group Areas Act, 1958. This memorandum was a response to a critical article which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, and intended to show that the provisions of the Act "were designed to temper as far as possible the application of the Ac so as to ensure that as little dislocation and loss as possible take place."

[6] CAD, GGR 174, 88/1, Groepsgebiede, is one of numerous references to Indian agitation against group areas.

[7] Ibid

[8] CAD, GGR 113, 74/2, Group Area Board Meeting, Besprekings, 25.07.61, p.5. See the final chapter for a detailed discussion of the opposition to the group areas on the East Rand.

[9] CAD, GGR 113, 74/2 (2), Besprekings: Ondersekretarisse, 25.07.61, p.13

[10] Ibid, p.2

[11] GP, UW, Report on the activities of the Department of Community Development for the period 1st August, 1961 to 31st December, 1962, p.1

[12] Ibid, pp.1-2

[13] Ibid, p.2

[14] Ibid, pp.5-8

[15] CAD, GGR 144, 79/3, 'Verslag van die interdepartementele komitee insake die agterstand in behuising vir die Kleurling- en Indiersgroep in die unie', 24.05.61

[16] Ibid

[17] Ibid

[18] Ibid

[19] Ibid

[20] Ibid

[21] Ibid

[22] Ibid

[23] The following white unions were consulted: Federasie van Bouewerkbase, Blankebouwerkersunie and the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers of South Africa.

[24] CAD, GGR 144, 79/3, 'Verslag van die interdepartementele komitee insake die agterstand in behuising vir die Kleurling- en Indiersgroep in die unie', 24.05.61

[25] Ibid

[26] *Benoni City Times*, 04.08.61

[27] Intermediate Archives, Johannesburg (IAJ), Town Council of Benoni Records (TCB), Box 209, G1/4. vol.4. Minutes of meeting of the Indian Affairs Sub-Committee, Benoni, 26.08.63

[28] IAJ, TCB, Box 212, G1/4, vol.8, J.E. Mathewson (Director of Non-European Affairs) to Benoni Town Clerk, 'Progress and Population Report: Actonville', 30.04.65

[29] CAD, Municipality of Benoni (MB) Ac7 (1), Minutes of the Management Committee, 15.11.66

[30] IAJ, TCB, Box 214, G1/4, vol.12, Minutes of the Management Committee, July 1966

[31] *Benoni City Times*, 08.04.66

[32] IAJ, TCB, Box 216, G1/4, vol.16, Minutes of the Indian Affairs Sub-Committee, 17.10.67

[33] IAJ, TCB, Box 220, G1/4, vol.25, Report of the Management Committee, 24.06.69

[34] IAJ, TCB, Box 220, G1/4, vol.25, Report of the Management Committee, 24.06.69

[35] *Benoni City Times*, 15.05.70

[36] *Benoni City Times*, 02.04.71

[37] IAJ, TCB, Box 216, G1/4, vol.16, Minutes of the Management Committee, 13.11.67

[38] G.G. Maasdorp and P.N. Pillay, 'The East Rand Indian Community: A socio-economic survey conducted for the Benoni Town Council', University of Natal, 1970, Vol.1, p.52

[39] This was reflected by the increase in the peri-urban areas' Indian population from under 300 in 1960 to nearly a thousand in 1969. See Ibid, p.3

[40] Ibid, p.56

[41] Ibid, p.82

[42] Ibid, p.81

[43] Boksburg Council Records, Boksburg Library, Management Committee Minutes, Vraelys om woningsbehoeftes te bepaal, August 1965

[44] Ibid, Report of the Town Treasurer, April 1965

[45] Ibid

[46] Ibid, Report of the Director of Non-European Affairs, October 1964

[47] Ibid, Report of the Town Clerk, February 1968

[48] CAD, GGR 174, 88/1, "Groepsgebiede"

[49] CAD, GGR 152, 81/1/5 (1), Discussions with the South African Indian Organisation held on Friday the 30th July 1959

[50] Ibid

[51] Ibid

[52] Ibid

[53] Ibid

[54] Ibid

[55] Ibid

[56] CAD, GGR 146, 80/6, Interview between the Group Areas Board, the Minister of the Interior and the Associated Chamber of Commerce of South Africa, 24.08.59

[57] Ibid

[58] Ibid

[59] Ibid

[60] CAD, GGR 150, 81/1 (Vol.I) Memorandum van die sendelingse van die Ned.Geref Kerk onder die Indier in die Transvaal ter voorlegging aan sy edele die Minister van Binnelandsesake, (undated)

[61] Ibid

[62] Ibid

[63] CAD, GGR 146, 80/6, Memorandum on letter addressed to the Minister by the Associated of Chamber of Commerce dated 13.04.59

[64] Ibid

[65] Ibid

[66] Ibid

[67] CAD, GGR 155, 81/4 (III), "Ligging van groepsgebiede vir Indiers in verhouding tot Bantoewoongebiede", 23/02/61, Document by J.H. Niemand

[68] CAD, GGR 146, 80/5, General Principles and Guidelines with regard to group areas, (National Party of the Transvaal), June 1959. My emphasis

[69] Ibid

[70] CAD, GGR 157, 81/4/5 (3), "Notule van vergadering in verband met die hervestiging van Indierhandelaars", 12/08/60

[71] CAD, GGR 155, 81/4 (III), "Ligging van groepsgebiede vir Indiers in verhouding tot Bantoewoonbuurtes", 23/02/61

[72] CAD, GGR 152, 81/1/5 (1), Discussion with the South African Indian Organisation held on Friday the 30th July 1959

[73] CAD, GGR 157, 81/4/5 (3), Notule van besprekings gehou te Pretoria op 15 November 1960 in verband met die hervestiging van Indierhandelaars

[74] Ibid

[75] CAD, GGR 157, 81/4/5 (3), "Notule van besprekings gehou te Pretoria op 15 November 1960 inverband mdet die hervestiging van Indierhandelaars"

[76] C. Cachalia, 'Pageview: The Uprooting of a Community, 1890 - 1980', Unpublished MA Dissertation, Essex University, 1985

[77] CAD, GGR 155, 81/4 (III), "Ligging"

[78] Ibid

[79] Ibid

[80] G.G. Maasdorp and P.N. Pillay, 'The East Rand Indian Community', Vol.1., p.39

[81] Ibid, p.79

[82] Ibid, p.37

[83] Ibid, p.41

[84] Ibid, p.72

[85] Ibid, p.72

[86] Ibid, p.85

[87] *Benoni City Times*, 30.07.65

[88] *Benoni City Times*, 06.09.66

[89] CAD, Records of the Department of Community Development (GEM) H8/1/8, Vol. A, W.A. Maree, the Minister of Indian Affairs, 'The Indian in the Republic of South Africa – Policy Statement', 17.05.62

[90] GP, UW, Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 'The Establishment of the Department of Indian Affairs', pp.1-3

[91] Ibid

[92] Ibid

[93] Ibid, p.1

[94] Quoted in Ibid

[95] Ibid, p.16

[96] Ibid, p.18

[97] Ibid

98. A.J. Venter, *Coloured: A Profile of Two Million South Africans*, Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1974, p.487

99. Ibid, p.493 , including enlarging the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court and the Senate, which gave it more support on these bodies, enabling it to win the requisite two-thirds majority to pass the legislation

100. Ibid, pp.491- 492. In 1934 the government appointed a commission to investigate and report on the socio-economic and political conditions of the coloured population. It took three years before the commission completed its work and another six years before the government implemented one of its main recommendations, namely, the establishment of a Coloured Advisory Council CAC

[101] GP, UW, "Report of the Department of Coloured Affairs, for the Period 1st April 1955, to 31st December 1958"

102. GP, UW, *The Coloured Persons Representation Council: The Road To Self-Determination,* undated

103. A.J. Venter, *A Profile of Two Million South Africans*, p.478

104. Ibid

105. Ibid, p.480

106. Group Areas Act, No.77 of 1957, Article 25

107. CAD, GEM 106, 5/1/3/2(2), "Instelling van Departement van Gemeenskapbou", Article submitted by J.H. Niemand to Erika Theron for inclusion in Sabra Publication, 17/09/65

108. Ibid,

109. Ibid

110. Ibid

111. GP, UW, 'Report on the activities of the Department of Community Development for the period 1st August, 1961 to 31st December, 1962', p.10

112. Ibid

CHAPTER SEVEN

Politics and identity on the East Rand in the 1950s

Previous chapters of this thesis have discussed how the government set about formulating and implementing its apartheid policies on the East Rand in the 1950s. The strict enforcement of 'racial' segregation within and control over the black urban population were key objectives of these policies. In this context, the disestablishment of the urban 'black spots' assumed a particular importance, for at least two reasons. First, the residents of these locations were playing a prominent role in the popular struggles against apartheid. Second, residential integration was becoming the norm in the locations because of the lack of accommodation for the rapidly growing population. In both respects, therefore, these 'black spots' were regarded as threats to the viability of apartheid.

This chapter examines the evolution and character of popular politics in the 'black spots' of the East Rand during the 1950s. It focuses in particular on the changing relations – the unfolding complex and varied 'lived experiences' – between Africans, coloureds and Indians of these locations and their effects on local political formations. It is argued that the social and political relations between ordinary people and their organisations (social and political) were profoundly influenced by the co-existence of two opposing trends – of integration and segregation. On the one hand, the government was seeking to impose compulsory segregation. On the other hand, many black political organisations opposed this and campaigned for integration. The chapter analyses the varied responses by residents to these contending policies.

It is within this context that the uneven development of the Congress Movement on the East Rand is considered. The different parties that constituted the

Congress Movement enjoyed varied support in the location of the East Rand. Benoni Old Location was, however, the undisputed stronghold of these parties in the region. Much of the discussion that follows therefore focuses on the politics in that location. It was here that the ANC and TIC forged its strongest bonds from the late 1940s, but the location was also the site of the most demanding test of those bonds, especially in the 1952 riots. In the late 1950s as the struggle against apartheid intensified so the unity within the Congress Movement was consolidated.

The East Rand's 'Black Spots': 'Homes to a strange nation'

The dense concentration of 'black spots' on the East Rand placed the region at the centre of the urban black experience. Until the end of the 1950s these areas were characterised by their demographic variety (by the 1940s almost every 'black spot' in the region had a mixture of African, coloured and Indian people), social and cultural vitality and most notably as arenas of frequent and often intense political struggles. Some of the most important distinctions and variations were between urbanised and semi-urbanised or migrant Africans, urban youth and compound inmates, home-owners and lodgers, those living in houses and squatters, the educated elite and ordinary residents. The 'racial' diversity of these locations was possibly one of their most distinctive features, especially in the context of South Africa's history of strict 'racial' residential segregation. These factors combined to create a rich and in many ways a unique amalgam of urban experiences, which in critical aspects defined the process of proletarianisation of South Africa's black population.

The main purpose for establishing locations in the early part of the 20th century was to impose a basic 'racial' residential segregation in the urban areas. Segregation between white and blacks was largely achieved. However, the authorities had less success in keeping Africans, coloureds and Indians, who often lived in the same location, apart. The East Rand's 'black spots' were overwhelmingly populated by African people, although most of them accommodated some coloureds and Indians. The regional coloured and Indian populations were relatively small and their

numbers in each location varied from less than ten to a few thousand. In 1960 there were 9 349 and 6 544 coloureds and Indians respectively living in the region.[1] The majority was however concentrated in Payneville, Dukathole, Stirtonville and Benoni Bantu Township. Alberton location had a negligible number of coloured and Indian residents, and Brakpan location had only one Indian family (the reason why it became known as the Orange Free State of the East Rand).[2]

Although the government had placed Africans, coloureds and Indians in the same 'black spots', it nevertheless attempted to impose some basic segregation on them. Various laws were promulgated to enforce residential segregation. For example, the 'native location' regulations prohibited other 'races' from entering the 'native location' without a permit. The success of these measures in keeping people apart varied considerably between locations and over time, and depended on the ability of the local authorities to monitor adherence to the laws. But the presence of these different 'racial' groups in one residential area made integration inevitable, although the extent of the process of socio-political melding depended on a variety of factors. Overcrowding, political struggles and the realities of everyday life contributed to undermining segregation.

A distinctive feature of many of the East Rand's locations was the presence of so-called 'Asiatic Bazaars'. Some of these 'Asiatic Bazaars' originated in the previous century under the Boer Republic and they were governed by a different set of regulations than those applying to the 'native' locations. These areas were specifically set aside for Indian and Chinese residents, where they were allowed to trade and live. 'Asiatic Bazaars' were therefore among the first mechanisms to create 'racial' residential segregation. Despite the distinct physical separation between the 'Asiatic Bazaars' and the rest of the location, these measures enjoyed only limited success as a means of segregation. Due to the limitations imposed on African commercial activities in urban areas, the 'Asiatic Bazaars' became the commercial meccas in the locations. Especially over weekends when miners descended on these areas to shop, the 'Asiatic Bazaars' became centres of commercial interaction. In this way segregation was constantly challenged. In Dukathole and Benoni Old Location

the interaction between Indian residents and the inhabitants of 'native section' locations was even more common because only single streets separated the two areas. As a result these streets became zones of interaction, rather than being the 'racial barriers' which the government intended them to be. Similar conditions existed also in Stirtonville. In Payneville, however, the 'native location' was ring-fenced, which virtually restricted contact between Africans and Indians to trade.

In contrast, the physical divisions that the government attempted to impose between Africans and coloureds were invariably less rigid. Coloureds on the East Rand did not live in separate residential areas, but in the 'native locations'. In most cases they resided in specially demarcated areas known as Cape Sections/Stands, but in some locations such separate provision was not made. Unlike the 'Asiatic Bazaars', these coloured sections were not governed by separate laws. Instead, they fell under the same jurisdiction as the rest of the 'native location'. In Payneville the Cape Stands stood right in the middle of the location. In Benoni Old Location the Cape Section was separated by a street from the 'native location', whereas in Dukathole and Stirtonville there was not even that. As a result, the Cape Stands in Dukathole was virtually indistinguishable from the rest of the location.[3]

These arbitrary divisions succeeded in entrenching 'racial' segregation up until the 1940s. But as the pressures of overcrowding mounted from the mid-1940s they became increasingly fudged as residents, especially Africans, who sought accommodation wherever they could find it. By the early fifties African lodgers were found in backyards in all sections of the locations, finally shattering the brittle demarcations between people. The housing shortage also affected coloureds and Indians, and they too became lodgers in areas not legally set aside for them. However, it was extremely rare to find Indians living in the 'native' section, partly because they required a permit to do so (and therefore permission from the authorities) and partly because those sections were usually the most congested, which made it unlikely that they would find accommodation there.[4] Coloureds faced similar legal impediments to living in the 'native' sections, but it was easier for them to do so without detection, especially in Stirtonville and Dukathole. Under the conditions of extreme

overcrowding the authorities also tended to turn a blind eye to the regular flouting of residential segregation. The most common practice seems to have been for Africans and coloureds to acquire rooms or backyard shacks in the 'Asiatic Bazaars', where there was generally more space available than elsewhere in the location. In 1956 the *Benoni City Times* reported that coloureds had 'invaded' the Asiatic Bazaar. Some Indian residents complained that Indian landlords were allowing coloureds to lodge on their properties at the expense of working class Indians, who were also struggling to find accommodation.[5] In Benoni Old Location some Indians also lived in the Cape Section. For example, P.R. Deeva occupied a house in the Cape Section and also owned a tailor's shop there.[6]

As a result, by the 1950s the locations of the East Rand had reached much higher levels of integration than in the previous period. A resident of Dukathole described the location as "mingled mass of humanity of blacks, coloureds, Indians and Chinese."[7] George Du Plessis, a resident of the Cape Section in Benoni, remembers the old location as a place where people "grew up together as one big family". Street divisions existed only as nominal forms of segregation and did not prevent extensive interaction between people. George's family had regular contact with families from the 'native' section, especially the Putini's who were leading ANC figures. As a result, such interaction seemed completely normal to the young George.[8] Kenny Madalane, a resident of Payneville similarly recalls a generally close relationship between coloureds and Africans: "I was right there in Cape Stands where the coloureds were... We had a very good relationship with coloured families. We married one another, it was just mixed marriages."[9] Jimmy Jacobs, a long-standing resident of the Cape Stand in Payneville concurs: "There was no such thing as colour in Payneville... There was no such things as he is coloured or he is a black."[10] Moses Magudulela aptly described Payneville as home to a 'strange nation'.[11]

It is not uncommon for former residents of these multi-racial 'black spots' to refer to the existence of single communities. Informants from Benoni Old Location point to the harmonious relations between residents from seemingly diverse backgrounds. The realities of everyday life tended to blur divisions. There were

myriad points of social connection between people living in the same location. Valerie Klou and her netball teammates regularly walked from the Cape Section through the 'native section' to the Asiatic Bazaar without fear. People from every section knew them and sometimes boys from the 'native section' escorted them to their various destinations.[12] Besides, most of the shops were located in the Asiatic Bazaar and coloureds had to travel through the location to do their shopping. Cinemas were very popular and were frequented by everyone. Africans and coloureds also used the same shebeens, which were primarily found in the 'native section'. The 'native section' was also home to relatively cheap home brewed liquor. George Du Plessis has vivid memories of his daily excursions into the 'native' section to buy liquor for his father:

> I used to come out of school and had to go buy him this beer, 'kaffir' beer in the black township. I had to walk from our house, we were living in 3rd Street to about 9th Street... I used to go with that little paraffin tin and go buy two shilling worth of beer. And then, not long after six o'clock he'll send me again. That woman there, Mrs. Mashaba, was the best beer maker.[13]

Most Africans and coloureds were also Christian and frequently attended the same churches, which further facilitated social interaction between them. However, religion tended to deepen existing divisions between Indians and the rest of the population. Indians were mostly Muslim or Hindu, which kept them apart from the rest of the community. Residents from Payneville recall that there was very little religious interaction between Indians and the residents of the location proper.[14] However, religious differences were for the most part overshadowed by other experiences. One central point of intersection was around trading. For Kenny Madalane the relationship between Africans and Indians of Payneville was primarily commercial:

> When you take it with the Indian community, we used to go and shop there. They used to come and visit, they used to come and sell bananas, samoosas and other things. They went house to house and there was nothing wrong. I don't remember having a problem with the Indians and Chinese, who also came into the township with what we called *Fah Fee*.[15]

The ring-fence around Payneville constrained other forms of interaction between the 'Asiatic Bazaar' and the location. The Indian population was overwhelmingly involved in commercial activities, which dictated to a large extent the nature of their daily interaction with other residents. In locations such as Benoni Old Location and Dukathole, Indian home-owners also became landlords as Africans and coloureds sought accommodation in the 'Asiatic Bazaars'. As a result the perception of them being businessmen was entrenched. As important as these particular relations were, they did not constitute insurmountable obstacles to the forging of social and political relations between Indians and Africans especially. With the exception of Payneville and Brakpan, Indian residents were regarded as integral members of the location community.

Sport was hugely popular in the locations and most people recall a wide range of such activities taking place over weekends. Soccer was especially popular and each location contained a host of teams, which were mostly organised along 'racial' lines. Regional federations were similarly divided. Each location therefore contained teams from the African, coloured and Indian federations, which did not compete against one another but instead travelled to other locations to play teams from the same racial federation. These 'racial' demarcations were underwritten by the authorities who only recognised 'racially' divided teams and provided municipal facilities on this basis. However, in the 1950s these divisions again began to give way under the combined pressure of the changing residential patterns and efforts by leading sports personalities to challenge the racial status quo began to leave their impression. It now became quite common for the 'racially' constituted teams from the same location to

play against one another. More significant was the decision by numerous players to join teams of their choice, against the prescriptions laid down by the authorities.[16]

These changes prompted the formation of the East Rand Inter-Race Soccer Board, which attempted to unite the different federations under a single controlling body and to organise and encourage competition across the traditional divisions. Bob Triegaardt was the president of the Board, which also contained prominent sports personalities from most of the East Rand's locations. According to Triegaardt the new body was more of a 'multi-racial federation':

> There was an East Rand Indian Football Association and a Coloured Association, and African Association. Different but governed by one mother-body. Separate bodies because they lived in separate areas. There were different racial teams from each of the areas. Benoni was the headquarters of the different associations.[17]

Valerie Klou remembers a similar process of integration taking place in netball during the 1950s. The team she played for, Callies, was located in the Benoni's Cape Section and consisted only of coloureds. However, they played all their games in the location against Indian and African competitors.[18] Previously, residential-based teams were 'racially' exclusive, which reflected the 'racial' make-up of those areas. But, as the different sections of the locations became more integrated these residential-based teams began to reflect the new reality.

In some instances young activists openly defied the status quo. TIC members were especially prominent in these efforts. P.R. Deeva, who was known as 'sportsman' throughout Benoni Old Location, "felt [strongly] that all these racial organisations must go." In 1940 Deeva and his cousin joined the Benoni Bantu Boys Club (an exclusive African boxing club). He later became treasurer of the club.[19] They then 'infiltrated' soccer and tennis clubs to pursue similar aims. Along with other TIC activists Deeva formed a mixed tennis team in Benoni Location, although they had difficulties convincing coloureds to join. In the 1950s Deeva, his wife and

the young De Jager brothers joined the Bantu Tennis Club much to the chagrin of the authorities, which immediately attempted to break up the non-racial tennis clubs. On one occasion the new non-racial team won a local competition but the all-coloured team complained about the presence of Indians and coloureds in the 'native' team and called for it to be disqualified. The municipality intervened and insisted they conform to the rules of segregation, which they refused, preferring to forfeit their victory.[20] When the municipality closed the tennis courts because they were being utilised by mixed teams, Deeva, Johnny De Jager and Dennis Brutus organised a campaign to expose the municipality's racism. The authorities however refused to concede and kept the courts locked up. The result was that tennis rapidly declined as a popular sport in the location.[21]

Education was another sphere of both separation and mixing. Most Africans attended schools run by mission churches. These schools often allowed coloured pupils to enrol. In addition there were also separate coloured schools. Indians rarely attended such schools because of their religious differences. In Payneville, where there were no schools for Indians, scholars daily had to travel to Benoni to attend school. In Benoni segregation was not strictly enforced at primary school level. George Du Plessis remembers African students attending the Benoni Coloured and Indian Primary School.[22] However, the authorities seemed to have enforced much stricter segregation at the main high school in the area, William Hills High School, which was reserved exclusively for coloureds and Indians (and, in fact, was staffed primarily by coloured teachers).[23]

The erosion of physical racial barriers and the widespread integration between Africans, coloureds and Indians had a profound effect on the consciousness of the residents of the old locations. For these residents life in the old locations contrasted sharply with the personal and social dislocation caused by forced removals and the segregated lives imposed on black people by the Group Areas Act. These sentiments capture one aspect of the relations between inhabitants of the old locations. As alluded to above there were also various points of tension between them, which

sometimes assumed a 'racial' character. These opposing tendencies were also evident in the politics of the period.

The 'multi-racial' Congress Movement

The 1950s witnessed an intensification of popular struggles against white minority rule. The Congress Movement, led by the ANC, emerged as the pre-eminent liberation movement in the course of these struggles. Black people – Africans, coloureds and Indians – were mobilised in large numbers under this common political banner. The East Rand became a stronghold of the anti-apartheid movement, especially of the ANC. The Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO), which organised Indians and coloureds respectively, were also popular. On the East Rand their support varied considerably between locations. Both were able, however, to build relatively influential organisations in Benoni.

The Congress Movement brought together autonomous and 'racially' exclusive organisations under a single political banner. Throughout the 1950s but especially in the latter half of the decade (after the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955) the different components of the Congress Movement forged a closer unity as the struggle against apartheid intensified. At the same time each of them operated autonomously. Nationally and locally their political agendas and interventions differed, albeit with the same objective of opposing apartheid laws. The varying trajectories followed by these organisations reflected the varying concerns of their constituencies. These differences were especially manifest at a local level. The educated elite from the old locations also dominated the leadership of the Congress organisations. Bonner has argued that the ANC drew its support primarily from the settled urban population, and particularly from the urban elite.[24] The educated elite among Indians and coloureds similarly dominated the TIC and SACPO respectively. It may be argued, therefore, that the alliances formed by these organisations (first between the ANC and TIC, and later under the banner of the Congress Movement

also the SACPO) were principally alliances of the progressive or radical elites from the respective 'racial groups' which these organisations represented.

Co-operation between the ANC and TIC preceded the founding of the Congress Alliance. The Doctors' Pact of 1946 illustrated the co-operation between the leaders of these movements. The relatively close relationship between these organisations was aided by the presence in each of leading Communist Party members. The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was the only political organisation at the time that consciously recruited members from various 'racial' backgrounds and was committed to building a non-racial political movement. The party was especially influential on the East Rand and recruited a number of local African leaders into its ranks. In Benoni young Indian activists participated in the CPSA night schools and subsequently either joined or became sympathisers of the party.[25] After its banning in 1950, the party pursued its political aims within the Congress Movement. The elevation of young radicals to leading positions in the ANC and SAIC from the mid-1940s also contributed to the forging of an alliance between them. From the mid-1940s both organisations adopted a more confrontational stance to the government. The South African Indian Congress embarked on a Gandhi-style passive resistance campaign to mobilise opposition to the Pegging Acts in the mid-1940s. From this time the SAIC played a leading role in the struggles against segregation and the Group Areas Act in particular.

The ANC's radicalisation was led by the Youth Leaguers, among who were Mandela, Sisulu, Tambo and Mbeki. These young radicals transformed the ANC from a moderate elitist organisation to a more radical organisation willing to engage in mass struggles and to confront the government. In the late 1940s they wrested control of the ANC from the moderate leadership. Their ascendancy was marked by the adoption by the ANC of the radical Programme of Action in 1949, which represented an important turning point in the organisation's history. The new leadership signalled its intentions to confront the government by calling stay-aways in 1950 to protest the proscription of the Communist Party and apartheid policies generally.

The East Rand was an important site of combined struggles mounted by these organisations. Activists such as Diza Putini, Edward Cindi, Yusuf Cachalia, the Deeva brothers, David Bopape and Dinah Maile became household names in their locations. Benoni Old Location became the focal point of political struggles in the region and consequently where the alliance between these organisations appeared the strongest. The Indian Congress' successful mobilisation for the defiance campaign against the Pegging Acts was the model on which the Congress Movement's Defiance Campaign of 1952 was based. The jointly organised Defiance Campaign of 1952 was intended to signal the united opposition of black people (at the core of which was the ANC and SAIC) against apartheid. The decision to choose Stirtonville as the place to launch the campaign confirmed the importance of the region to the opposition movement. But before this turning point in the history of black opposition was reached, the relations between the Africans and Indians were sorely tested in the heart of the region's opposition movement, namely, Benoni Old Location.

ANC-TIC unity tested

The alliance between the ANC and TIC appeared strongest in Benoni Old Location. Outside the formal political structures, however, the political alliance between Africans and Indians was less secure. Competition between Indian businessmen and aspirant African entrepreneurs, who resented Indian businessmen's monopoly over commerce in the location, was the most serious bone of contention. The congested state of both areas in the location also contributed to the tension in the area. In particular, unscrupulous Indian landlords who exploited their tenants added to the resentment against Indian businessmen. In 1951 and 1952 the relationship between the ANC and TIC were put to the test as these tensions boiled over into open conflict.

In April 1951, the chairman of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee informed the Town Council that there were two main causes for the enmity between the 'races'. First was the overcrowding in the location and second "the rapid evolution towards

western civilisation of the Native peoples; an evolution which has developed in them a growing sense of their own rights... their rights to trade among themselves." The Council concurred that the main problem was "resentment among natives, already rife, ... against non-native competition."[26]

The stark disparities in commercial activities controlled by Indians and Africans in the location are revealed in the following statistics:

TABLE EIGHT

Businesses owned by Indians and Africans in Benoni Old Location, 1951[27]

	Indians	Africans
Population	1 200	36 000
Number of sites	264	3 100
Number of trading sites	46	42
Number of trading licences	121	87
Number of taxi licences	51	29

In 1951 a dispute erupted over the question of Indian domination of the local taxi industry. The problem was aggravated by the refusal of the Transportation Board to award additional taxi licences to Africans, which created a perception of favouratism towards Indians. African taxi owners initially sought redress by appealing to the Benoni Location Advisory Board, which requested the Council to urge the Transportation Board to issue taxi licences on a 'pro rata basis'. The Transportation Board, however, ignored these half-hearted pleas and continued its practice of issuing the lion's share of licences to Indians. As a result of this rebuff, the aggrieved African taxi owners sought a different solution.

It was at this point that Noni Monare became embroiled in the dispute. It is likely that Monare himself was an aspirant taxi owner as he had previously driven taxis owned by P.R. Deeva.[28] Monare had for some time attempted to establish himself as a businessman in the location but enjoyed only mixed success. Monare may also have harboured political aspirations and may have viewed the taxi dispute as an opportunity to advance on both fronts. On the 16th April 1951, Monare and Head Constable Johnson organised a meeting at Monare's house on 3rd Street between the Indian and African taxi owners, where the latter group "voiced their grievances about the monopoly of the taxi business by the Asiatics". They pointed out that Indians owned as many as five taxis, as well as shops. African entrepreneurs, they argued, had only limited access to business opportunities and depended on the taxi business to gain a foothold in commerce. The African taxi owners reportedly demanded that Indians relinquish their licences to those African taxi owners who were refused licences by the Transportation Board. This the Indian taxi owners refused to concede to and the meeting ended without resolution. The parties did nevertheless agree to convene a further meeting, which took place at the Star Bioscope on the 20th April. At this second gathering, Indian taxi owners objected to the presence of non-taxi owners in the delegation of the African taxi owners. After failing to reach an agreement on this matter, the African delegation walked out of the meeting. They immediately reconvened at another venue, where it was decided to call a boycott of Indian-owned taxis. The already tense situation was further inflamed when Monare was shot in the leg by an unknown assailant.[29]

In a shrewd political manoeuvre, the taxi boycott was immediately politicised by the decision to drape African-owned taxis with yellow, green and black flags – the colours of the ANC. It is unlikely the local ANC leaders officially endorsed this measure as they seem to have had no involvement in this dispute. The Advisory Board attempted to intervene and reconcile the opposing parties, but with little effect. It also tried to get the boycott called off, but without success. Monare and the African taxi owners seemed determined to press ahead with their action. It is unclear how

long the boycott lasted or whether it managed to mobilise support among location residents.

Monare apparently believed the taxi boycott was a failure because "the Indians changed their taxis and called them by their boys' surnames. They fetched money in the night, they cancelled the certificates with lawyers and made agreements."[30] The authorities nevertheless seem to have taken some notice of the boycott because the following year it awarded more licences to African taxi owners. In 1951, 29, 15 and 41 licences were issued to Africans, coloureds and Indians respectively. But in 1952, 34 licences were issued to Africans compared to only 25 to Indians, which represented an increase of nearly 150% in the number of taxi licences issues to Africans.[31]

The following year the same issues again burst to the open, this time with such ferocity that they threatened to cause irreparable damage to relations between Africans and Indians. In July 1952 Benoni Old Location was suddenly engulfed by what became known locally as the 'Korean War'.[32] On 4 July 1952 an Indian shop-owner, Faizel, beat to death a young African boy who he accused of stealing from his shop.[33] Residents from both areas of the location were outraged. Faizel was a notorious conservative and was on bad terms with TIC activists, who immediately denounced Faizel for his actions. Initially, it appeared this assuaged the feelings among many adult African residents who considered Faizel should be punished but accepted that he was not representative of the attitude of Indians to Africans.[34]

However, for Noni Monare the situation presented an opportunity not only to avenge the callous death of the young boy but also to teach Indian traders a lesson. Monare held very strong anti-Indian views. He even supported the creation of group areas where Indians and Africans could engage in businesses separately. Notwithstanding or perhaps consonant with his radical populism, Monare wrote a letter to a leading government official, T.E. Dönges, to express his antipathy towards Indian businessmen:

> I would like to let you know that I am supporting the Group Areas Act. It seems to me that Benoni Municipality is against the Group Areas Act because through my knowledge I know that Act is existing. To my surprise I still see Indians building very expensive houses and Bioscopes in Benoni Location, the very centre where riots occurred recently between the Africans and Indians... The Indians are very 'immoral', they are the cause of strained feelings between the Africans and the whites in this country. The exploitation of Africans by Indians is very high especially here in Benoni.[35]

In the days before the boy's funeral Monare mobilised youth (including *tsotsis* and ANC Youth League members) in the location, as well as those from as far as Alexandra and Sophiatown.[36] At the end of the funeral service Monare delivered a fiery speech in which he appealed to the mourners "to stand bold as a black nation".[37] After the funeral he led his band of youthful supporters on a march to the Indian section where they proceeded to attack businesses. As shop after shop was gutted to the ground Monare's supporters chanted "Korea, Korea". Over the next fortnight the situation in the location remained poised on knife's edge as more attacks were launched against Indian shops. Some feared Benoni might witness a repeat of the devastating so-called 'race riots' in Durban in 1949.

The length of time it took to restore calm in the location as well as Monare's close relationship with Constable Johnston (who was also involved in the taxi dispute) raised the question of police complicity. P.R. Deeva argues that when the police arrived in the location they did little to stop the violence.[38] The Benoni Town council, while almost probably non-complicit, was certainly keen to capitalise on the dispute. According to the chairman of the Native Affairs Committee,

> There can be little doubt that the conditions and ugly inter-racial atmosphere, gradually but continually gaining in intensity as among the Asiatic, Coloured and Native populations in the Non-European areas to-day, cannot be overlooked, and under the present day

> conditions all the elements are present that will without undue exitement (sic) or agitation lead to disorders which may result in bloodshed.[39]

The authorities had their own reasons for highlighting 'racial' tensions, or misconstruing any conflict in the location as illustrations of 'racial' animosity. Their solution was to endorse the politically contentious issue of Group Areas:

> Whilst there may be provisions in the [Group Areas] Act with which we do not all agree and whilst, also its application in certain areas of the Union will undoubtedly create hardship, it is felt that in the case of Benoni its application will eventually prove to be in the best interest of all section of the population.[40]

Monare's Korean movement threw the opposition alliance into much greater disarray. From the moment of the first attacks on the Indians shops, local Congress leaders frantically tried to assert their authority over the location's population in an effort to stop the violence. Deeva organised his own youth defence group, called the 'wrench', which was composed of African youth loyal to the Congress leaders. However, Congress support rested mainly on the older and more established residents who were not involved in the violence. Monare drew his following from the ranks of the unemployed, the youth or those struggling to establish themselves in the urban locations – precisely those constituencies the Congress Movement failed to attract into its ranks. The national leaders of the Congress Movement were equally perturbed by the turn of events in one their political strongholds. Mandela, Sisulu, Tambo and Dadoo approached the local Congress leaders to find out how they could have allowed such a crisis to develop. Tambo, who lived in Wattville, became directly involved in efforts to bring about peace.[41] They engaged in a series of public displays of unity between Africans and Indians to show African residents that not all Indians were anti-African and that many of them were part of the liberation struggle. ANC

and TIC leaders called meetings, visited residents and marched through the street to appeal to residents to stop the violence.[42]

The turning point in the crisis occurred when local TIC leader, P.R. Deeva, convinced the leader of the Basotho gang (the Russians or *maRashea*) to protect the Indian section from attacks by Monare's group. Many of them lived as lodgers in the Indian section and were not prepared to sit back and allow their dwellings to be destroyed by location youth. Monare who was a Basotho also attempted to solicit the support of the Russians but was outmanoeuvred by the equally astute Deeva.[43] Monare probably failed because his main support base, the location youth, were the traditional foes of the more rustic Russians. Monare and his supporters baulked at the prospect of a confrontation with the Russians, who had a reputation of unmatched ruthlessness. The intervention of the Russians thus put an end to the attacks on the Indians Section. The Congress leaders also managed to isolate Monare from the older and more settled residents. As the tide began to turn against Monare, the police began to act more decisively against rioters. For example, Monare and other leaders were arrested. Within a few weeks peace was restored and the 'Korean' movement was at an end.

The Congress leadership was however clearly stunned by these events, which had exposed serious flaws in the Congress Movement. The outbreak of the 'Korean War' coincided with preparations for the vital Defiance Campaign, which in many senses represented the strongest show of unity between these two organisations. It responded by making Monare the leader of the regional Youth League, a position which he utilised later to lead the struggle against Bantu Education in Benoni. In so doing, the Congress Movement took an important step to bringing Monare's supporters into their sphere of influence. Monare's political career in Benoni was abruptly ended in 1955 when he was deported to Lesotho because of his prominent role in the education boycott.[44]

Residents of the old location remember normal relations being restored surprisingly quickly after the conflict ended. Indian businesses were immediately re-opened and the Indian section regained its status as the commercial centre of the

location. The imbalances in trading relations were also restored but there was no recurrence of the events of the early 1950s. Indeed residents of the old location remember relations between Africans and Indians being especially harmonious after the 'Korean War'. The launch of the Defiance Campaign so soon after the violence in Benoni was also fortuitous because it demonstrated the unity of African and Indian leaders against the apartheid government. Mandela and Dadoo together were among the first to defy apartheid laws and court imprisonment. These symbolic gestures of unity contributed hugely to healing the wounds of the conflicts in Benoni.

The Defiance Campaign also marked the turning point in the transformation of the ANC into a popular mass organisation. Nationally and in almost every location on the East Rand the support for the ANC swelled over the next few years. Its reputation as the main liberation movement was augmented by important campaigns such as the potato boycott, the anti-Bantu Education struggles, the launch of the Freedom Charter and the anti-pass campaigns. East Rand locations were in the forefront of many of these campaigns. Benoni and Germiston locations, for example, witnessed among the best-organised struggles against the introduction of Bantu Education. Congress activists, parents and teachers set up alternative schools (the cultural clubs) and even though these eventually floundered, they nonetheless demonstrated the strong support the ANC had been able to build in these locations.

In all of these struggles the ANC and SAIC appeared as inseparable alliance partners. Indian Congress leaders were prominent at the launch of the Freedom Charter, many of them were part of the Treason Trial of 1956 and they joined the thousands of women who marched to Pretoria to oppose pass laws. Besides these national campaigns the struggle against group areas, for more housing and better living conditions helped forge closer links between the impoverished residents of the locations. Here Benoni again assumed its place as a leading Congress stronghold. By contrast, the politics in the coloured communities on the East Rand proceeded along a rather different trajectory.

East Rand coloured politics emerges from its slumber

When P.R. Deeva moved to the Coloured Section of Benoni Location he received a mixed reception. Many coloured residents welcomed him to the area because he was well-known. But there were some who objected to the presence of an Indian person in the Coloured Section. At the height of the 'Korean War' his neighbours complained that his presence in the Coloured Section threatened to bring the conflict to the area, which was untouched by the violence.[45] George du Plessis, who was active in Congress politics from 1950, hardly remembers the 'Korean War', an indication of how little impact this crucial episode in the location's history had on the lives of coloured residents.[46] This point also illustrates the extent to which many coloureds remained distant from the main political movements, at least until the mid-1950s. Despite the prominent role played by political activists such as Mary Moodley in the struggles led by the Congress Movement throughout the 1950s, the relationship between coloured political movements and the Congress Movement remained ambivalent. It was only in the latter part of the decade under the impetus of radicalised political struggles that a closer relationship was forged between the Coloured People's Congress (later SACPO) and the rest of the Congress Movement on the East Rand.

This ambiguity between coloured political movements and the Congress Movement was an expression of the complex nature of coloured identity. This question has been among the most vexed in South African politics and has stubbornly defied simplistic characterisation. Among the defining features of coloured identity have been its contradictoriness, political malleability (that have made it prone to perennial manipulation), regional variations and constant redefinition since the turn of the 20th century by both the ruling class and the people defined as coloured. Various factors have influenced the evolving character of coloured identity: the ebbs and flows of the national liberation struggle, the economic fortunes of the country and, of course, the government's policies. In the latter case the passage of the Group Areas

and Population Registration Acts in 1950 served to enforce a stricter division between coloureds, Africans and whites.

The construction of a discreet coloured identity proved far from easy, especially in the urban locations of the Witwatersrand where the lines of 'racial' demarcation were often blurred. Compared to the urban centres of the Western Cape there was a greater familial and social overlapping between Africans and coloureds in the 'black spots' of the East Rand. Not all coloureds accepted the association made between them and Africans. For sections of the coloured population this association implied being subjected to the same oppressive and impoverished conditions as experienced by Africans. They preferred to stress their apparent social and cultural proximity to the white population in the hope that it would spare them from social deprivation. They were prepared to accept the relative privileges accruing from their secondary status in apartheid's racial hierarchy. As Dugmore has argued 'being coloured' meant exemption "from lower wages, pass laws, certain taxes, residential restrictions and, at some levels, particular types of social and police abuse and harassment."[47] Other coloureds, however, viewed apartheid as the problem and aligned themselves to a united struggle by black people to overthrow the system. More than any 'racial' group, coloureds were constantly pulled in opposite political directions. This produced a very different kind of politics than was the case among Africans and Indians. The very pronounced divergent tendencies among coloureds were also reflected in the varying attitudes over their association with Africans and whites.

Danny Cassel, now a well-known businessman in Reiger Park, was born into a relatively non-political family[48] that straddled the racially defined barriers in ways that were quite common on the Witwatersrand. His father came from the Transkei and his mother's family lived in Payneville, from where they were evicted because of his grandfather's regular confrontations with the authorities over his illegal beer brewing activities. Danny's parents first lived in Alexandra township and in 1960 moved to Stirtonville where his father engaged in a number of small businesses. For example, Cassel senior kept five cows in his yard and sold milk to his neighbours.

According to Danny his family was indistinguishable from their African neighbours. Two of his aunts married African men and, at the time, "no-one cared who you married".[49] The question of a separate coloured identity was not a primary issue in the daily lives of the Cassel family.

Cravin Collis[50] was born in Benoni's Cape Section and was classified as coloured. However, his formal racial classification has always been an enigma to him because

> I grew up in a family with black extraction... My second name is Mxolisi... I could not be a racist, it would be contradictory.[51]

Jimmy Jacobs of Payneville has a similar genealogy: his mother was coloured and father Zulu. He speaks Afrikaans and Zulu fluently and was raised in a mixed environment in the Cape Stands. Like Collis he was classified coloured, but was often mistaken by the police as African. As a result he was frequently harassed by the police and asked to produce a pass. Only his ability to speak Afrikaans fluently convinced the police that he was coloured. His fluency in Zulu, on the other hand, made him more acceptable among the Africans of the location.[52] There was therefore a significant section of coloureds in the locations of the Witwatersrand who shared numerous bonds with their African counterparts, to the extent that their supposed coloured identity was not an issue.

Co-existing with this trend was the opposite tendency that emphasised coloured separateness (from Africans) and wanted to promote closer bonds with whites. Jimmy Jacobs recalls that not everyone in the Cape Stands shared his colour-blindness. There were more than a few coloureds "who wanted to be whiter than white" and insisted they were different from the Africans in the location.[53] A section of the coloured population in Benoni shared the same attitude. Cravin Collis recalls that they tried to show their affinity to whites by emphasising their fluency in Afrikaans.[54] During the period under discussion a number of organisations emerged which promoted the idea of the 'natural affinity' between coloureds and whites. One

such organisation was the Transvaal Coloured People's Association (TCPA). This never achieved any sustained mass support but was courted by the authorities because of its conservative politics. In the early 1950s, the TCPA enthusiastically endorsed the Group Areas Act and called for its speedy implementation so that coloured people could be removed from the locations where they were living together with Africans. In 1950, for example, the Springs branch of the TCPA submitted a memorandum to the local authority, in which it appealed for the immediate establishment of a separate coloured township:

> For all the years we have lived among natives in circumstances which are foreign to our customs and habits. Under these circumstances the younger generation degenerates very quickly.
> When we arrived here we were promised that our residence here was temporary, but in spite of repeated applications for the removal of the coloureds, nothing positive has been done for us in this direction; on the contrary all privileges have been denied us.
> We are concerned to learn that the Asiatic, a foreigner, has been exempted from all these circumstances wherein we, the coloured population, suffer. We are very much concerned to learn that after all these years of living with and faithfulness to the European authority we are compared with the native.[55]

This memorandum was a crude attempt to distinguish coloureds from other blacks by pleading affinity to whites and loyalty to the government. The obsequiousness evident in the memorandum reflected a growing desperation among coloureds to improve their living conditions. In this vein the TCPA appealed to the Council to provide "Facilities for the coloured on economic and industrial grounds". Such economic advancement it believed should be designed to ensure the "furtherance of coloured interests in general as a separate race with its own tradition and national pride."[56] The memorandum was signed by 105 coloured residents from Payneville, indicating relatively solid support for the policies of organisations such as the TCPA. The Group Areas Act seemed to provide an opportunity to escape the overcrowded and

indigent conditions of the Cape Stands. Coloureds from Stirtonville made similar demands and called for land to be set aside for them outside the 'native location'.[57]

The coloured elite, particularly businessmen, also especially experienced frustration in the 'native location'. They were not permitted to engage in any business activities because Payneville was a 'native location', which meant only African businesses could operate there. The thriving trade of the Asiatic Section compounded their sense of injustice. To them the creation of a group area promised the prospect of their own businesses free from competition from other 'racial' groups. For these people the pro-apartheid policies of the TCPA appeared attractive. Although the TCPA appeared unable to build a loyal following, its ideas nevertheless resonated among sections of the region's coloured population. The TCPA's failure to translate the support for its policies into a viable organisation, was also experienced by other political organisations. Previous attempts by political movements to mobilise the coloured population of the Transvaal found them to be disinterested in formal politics.

Generally coloured people of the East Rand remained aloof from politics. In Dukathole, Payneville and Stirtonville coloureds rarely made an impression in the local political arena. Even the main national campaigns led by coloured organisations, such as the struggle against the removal of coloureds from the common voters' roll, failed to attract much support on the Witwatersrand, probably because Transvaal coloureds did not have the right to vote. Occasionally political organisations attempted to mobilise coloureds around specific issues, but these efforts rarely succeeded. The pre-eminent coloured political organisation during the first half of the twentieth century, the African People's Organisation (APO), failed to establish any substantial support in the Transvaal. The APO briefly appeared on the political scene in Benoni in 1945 when it organised a public meeting (which was attended by about 100 people) to demand that more houses be built for coloureds.[58] The Communist Party was similarly unable to recruit even young coloured intellectuals into its ranks in the way it succeeded in doing among Indians. Coloureds thus remained on the periphery of organised politics.

Here again Benoni proved to be an exception. Until the mid-1950s most coloureds in the location were also generally averse to becoming involved in politics. In

the early 1950s a handful of coloured activists became involved in Congress politics, Mary Moodley being by far the most prominent. But it would take some time before she and others of her ilk would be able to assert any political significant influence in the area. Before that politics in the Cape Section undertook a detour via the Coloured Advisory Committee.

In August 1951 the Benoni Council decided to establish liaison committees for coloureds and Indians that would function in a similar fashion to the Advisory Boards.[59] On 26 September the same year the first Coloured Advisory Committee (CAC) was elected consisting of G. Carr, W. Pietersen, P. De Jager, Bob Triegaardt, A. Jansen and P. York.[60] Two months later the Benoni Asiatic Standowners and Tenants Liaison Committee was established comprising C.S. Moodley, Faizel Ellahi, P. Singh, S.M. Ally, Wing Son and T.J. Poonsamy.[61] The differences between the politics in the Indian and coloured populations at the time were reflected in the divergent histories of their respective committees that were created by the Council. The Asiatic Liaison Committee was virtually stillborn despite the presence on it of one the Indian Section's political luminaries, C.S. Moodley, who had previously been a leading figure in the TIC. But the dominant position of the TIC and its implacable opposition to the Asiatic Liaison Committee left the Council's initiative without any popular support or legitimacy.

The CAC enjoyed more legitimacy despite criticisms from the more radical activists aligned to the Congress movement, who asserted that these bodies had no powers to effect material improvements in people's lives and reinforced racial divisions. This was because in the early 1950s the radicals were weak and their criticisms did not find an echo among ordinary coloured people. In addition, the presence of G. Carr,[62] an outspoken critic of the government and an ANC supporter, enhanced the reputation of the CAC. So too did the membership of Bob Triegaardt, who was a respected senior teacher at William Hills High School and who had been involved in various welfare projects in the coloured section. Most members of the committee were moderate and did not perceive their functions as political.[63] But

whatever their political stand, committee members were in there to demand improvements in the lives of coloured residents from the Council.

Within months of its establishment the CAC embarked on a campaign to acquire more houses and land for coloured residents. It also sought to secure the creation of a new coloured township by invoking the Group Areas Act. However, the Land Tenure Advisory Board rejected the request on the grounds that such an area could not be established prior to the production of a detailed plan for group areas for the town.[64] The CAC also insisted that coloured businessmen be given preferential treatment in coloured areas, reflecting the same concern that African entrepreneurs had about Indian businessmen's monopoly of commerce in the location. Bob Triegaardt was especially an avid proponent of this view.[65]

The CAC's primary concern was housing. The Cape Section, like the rest of the Benoni Old Location, had become seriously overcrowded. Slum conditions were rapidly developing in the coloured section, where at least 2662 people were crammed into only 370 houses.[66] The council acknowledged that "Gross overcrowding is rampant" in the coloured section where more than half of the existing houses were declared unsuitable for habitation and privately acknowledged that at least 219 new houses were required to meet the existing needs.[67]

The CAC repeatedly warned the Council of the deteriorating conditions in the Cape Sections and reacted with incredulity when the Council claimed to be unaware of the situation. At a meeting with the Council, Mr. G. Carr estimated that about 100 coloured families were in desperate need of houses. In a veiled threat he warned the Council that unless it addressed the housing crisis the people would find 'other means of dealing with the situation'. But the CAC also promised to co-operate with the Council if it was consulted before decisions were taken on housing matters.[68]

In January 1953 the Benoni branch of the TCPA despatched a memorandum to the council to add its voice to the growing chorus of complaints about the situation in the Cape Section. It characterised the recent rent increases as unfair because services remained decrepit. And, in similar vein to its intervention in Payneville, the TCPA accused the Council of discriminating against coloured businessmen because

the authorities constantly turned down applications for business licences from them. Its memorandum to the Council averred that,

> As the council grants licences to Indians and Natives liberally, the Association is of the opinion that Coloured applications should be viewed in the same light. This differentiation on the part of the Council toward our people has in the past had a detrimental effect on the Coloureds, and it has of necessity resulted in Coloureds being unscrupulously exploited by shopkeepers of other races.[69]

Notwithstanding its strong views on this matter, the TCPA seemed to have disappeared from Benoni's political landscape almost as quickly as it had appeared. This left the CAC as the principal voice representing the interests of the people of the Cape Section. The CAC continued to press the Council to build more houses and mobilised support in the community to back its demands. By the end of 1953 the Council itself expressed the fear that the situation was in danger of spiralling out of control and that there might be a repetition of the squatter problem in the coloured section. It also conceded to the demand of CAC not to implement the proposed rent increases.[70]

In March 1954 the CAC also accused the Council of discriminating against coloureds and of favouring other races. It protested that,

> Benoni has achieved outstanding success in solving the housing crisis for Europeans and Africans. This however cannot be said for its housing to the local Coloured population. The Sub-Economic and Economic houses built by the Benoni Council are insufficient to meet the needs of the Coloured population with the result that the majority of our people are forced to live under appalling conditions in the so called 'Cape Section'.[71]

The CAC appealed to the authorities to make more land available and to permit coloureds to build their own houses. In what had by this time become a common political tactic employed by coloured politicians to win concession from the authorities, the CAC also invoked the purported close bonds between coloured and whites. In the memorandum submitted to the Council, the CAC argued that it was an

> unpleasant paradox that a community which it generally admitted closely approximates European standards of culture, attainment and living should exist in filth and squalor in a town where the housing conditions of all other groups are being improved with such marked success... The Benoni Council have given the country a lead in many important aspects of Non-European Administration ... All this has resulted in a more contented, progressive native population. We feel that assistance on the lines proposed above, would produce the same results in the Coloured Community, and remove the feeling of frustration and suspicion that exists in our ranks.[72]

But the Council remained unmoved by the CAC's appeals and made only half-hearted attempts to address coloured people's concerns. In mid-1954 the Council decided to convert houses in the Cape Section from sub-economic to economic units as well as giving residents the option to purchase these houses. This decision was accompanied by a huge increase in rentals (or the repayment amount) from the £1.17.6 to £4.6.1.[73] The increases affected only 35 sub-economic houses but nevertheless incensed residents, not only because of the leap in rents but also because the Council still appeared to avoid the central issue of the lack of houses. By 1955 impatience over the Council's failure to provide houses mounted and was reflected in the adoption of a more radical stance by some of CAC's members. The Council's decision in 1955 to conduct a social survey in the Cape Section to ascertain which residents were employed in Benoni caused a further outcry in the community. It was obvious that Council wanted to disqualify those residents who were not employed in Benoni from housing provision. In November 1955 CAC called a public meeting to

oppose the council's proposed socio-economic survey, which it labelled as "the greatest threat to our personal freedom". It also stridently objected to the council's threat to evict coloured lodgers from the Asiatic section.[74] Over 200 residents attended the meeting, which itself suggested a shift in the political mood among coloureds. The political temperature of the meeting was also raised by the Council's proposal to suspend its recognition of CAC. Clearly, the authorities had become concerned about the radicalisation of a committee it had hoped would be a platform for moderate politicians. Even now the CAC was divided on the approach it should adopt to the Council. The moderates, led by Bob Triegaardt, favoured a conciliatory tack. The radicals, led by George Carr, were more confrontational. The November meeting generally supported the oppositional stance adopted by Mr. Carr and his supporters. When he called on the committee to defy the council and refuse to resign he was 'unanimously applauded'. He also used the opportunity publicly to accuse the township manager, J.E. Mathewson, of working hand in hand with Verwoerd and asserted that the CAC would stand together with the Kleurling Volskbond in opposing the ejectment of coloureds from the Asiatic Section.[75]

The public association with the Kleurling Volksbond was curious, to say the least. The Transvaalse Kleurling Volksbond was notoriously conservative. It supported separate representation for coloureds and was especially vocal about developing a coloured nationhood.[76] Carr's threat may have been designed to show the Council that the CAC was willing to mobilise broader support for its campaign. In the event the alliance did not materialise. By this time the Congress-aligned South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO) was emerging as a key player in the politics of the coloured sections. In 1956 SACPO added its voice to the growing chorus of opposition to the Council's plan to evict coloureds from the Indian section.[77]

SACPO was formed in 1953 as the successor to the Franchise Action Council (FRAC)[78]. FRAC's campaign against the implementation of the separate voters' roll brought it closer to the Congress movement, a trend that was accelerated with the formation of SACPO.[79] SACPO soon became integral to the Congress Movement and

in the late 1950s changed its name to the Coloured People's Congress (to bring it in line with the nomenclature of the Congress Alliance). Van Der Ross claims that at the launch of SACPO there was considerable debate over the inclusion of the word 'Coloured' in the name of the new organisation. The decision to retain it was based on the belief that it was necessary "to achieve a situation where an acknowledged Coloured political organisation could liaise at top-level with Black, Indian and White organisations of similar views."[80] In this sense SACPO typified the multi-racial political approach current at the time. It proclaimed allegiance to the Freedom Charter (with its explicitly non-racial principles) and supported the struggle against oppression. However, the organisation saw its primary task to mobilise "Coloured people against any attacks upon their political and economic and social rights."[81]

A small group of radicals had been active for some time in Benoni. At the centre stood Mary Moodley, a Congress stalwart, and the De Jager brothers, who began their political careers in the Non-European Unity Movement. George Du Plessis, another young Congress activist, remembers a defining moment in his life being the May 1950 strike:

> my political consciousness arose on the 1 May 1950 when Aunt Mary Moodley led a march and requested that students be part of May Day protest. What happened there is that on the 1 May 1950 I was already in Std.6 and we were sitting there at the William Hills High School and we saw all this. I looked at the window and saw this fat woman. I did not know her. She was walking in front with a lot of Africans and coloureds following her. And she came to the school, first the primary school on the right hand side and the principal and rang the bell and told the children that was about 10 o'clock to go home. Then she came to the high school and the same thing happened. Mr. Jansen, the principal, also rang the bell and said OK children you are dismissed, go home. And to me it was something that really arose me. I actually took my books and followed them.[82]

Aunt Mary Moodley inspired a whole generation of coloured activists from Benoni. P.R. Deeva remembers her as a woman of outstanding principle and commitment.[83] Her own children, particularly Joyce, became staunch anti-apartheid campaigners. In the early sixties the two of them served jail sentences and were placed under house arrest for long periods. Joyce eventually left the country to join the ANC in exile.[84] Aunt Mary introduced youth like George to politics. "I was fifteen years old", remembers George of his political initiation, "and Aunt Mary took hold of me and I started selling these newspapers, like the *New Age*, the *Spark* and quite a lot of political newspapers. Most of the time I used to keep half of the money. She never used to count them and never used to worry, as long as we go out door to door and sell these papers or even give it out free of charge."[85] She regularly arranged for these young recruits to meet key ANC figures like Tambo and Sisulu for political discussions. By the mid-1950s SACPO had developed a strong presence in the Cape Section and was led by a group of well-trained young activists.

In the late 1950s these young militants successfully challenged the moderates for the leadership of CAC. The main protagonist in this move was Derek De Jager, a young lawyer who as a student established links with the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). His brother, John De Jager, had also been a member of the Society of Young Africans (SOYA) while a student at the University of the Witwatersrand. From the mid-1950s they had become increasingly disillusioned with the sectarian politics of the NEUM and decided to place their energies in the Congress Movement.[86] Under their leadership the Cape Section's young radicals[87] took over CAC and renamed it the Benoni Coloured People's Vigilance Association.

De Jager and his supporters were astute enough not to ditch all the moderate leaders. Bob Triegaardt, who was respected in the community, was kept on the committee. George Carr was retained because of his radicalism. In additiion they decided not to bring Aunt Mary onto the executive because she was too closely associated with the Congress Movement. The Vigilance Association was very popular but the young radicals were uncertain whether coloureds in general were

ready to endorse the Congress Movement. They felt that coloureds were relatively conservative. According to John de Jager many coloureds were "happy to sit on the fence because they felt they were not as bad off as Africans."[88] In a further gesture towards pragmatism the Vigilance Association retained the formal relationship its predecessor had with the Council. It wanted to use this to extract concessions from the Council, such as the right to distribute houses to coloureds. The Vigilance Association was especially successful in providing accommodation to those people who lived in a notoriously insalubrious section of the Indian Section, called Rooiyard. In this way the Vigilance Association established itself as the leading voice of coloured people in the old location in the late 1950s. Congress supporters dominated the leadership of the Vigilance Association, which thus acted as an intermediate structure between ordinary coloureds and the Congress Movement. Coloureds could therefore be associated with the Congress Movement without formally joining it.

By the end of the 1950s, therefore, a significant layer of coloured activists had joined their counterparts in the ANC and TIC in an unprecedented show of unity against the government. The constituent parts of the multi-racial Congress Movement had varying support on the East Rand and Benoni probably represented its strongest base in the region. For example, in 1956 hundreds of Africans, coloureds and Indians marched to the Benoni Town Hall to submit a petition opposing the demolition of shacks and houses in the 'Asiatic Bazaar'.[89] Demonstration of this sort transcended the narrow 'racial' interests that were evident in the previous period. It also suggested that a new non-racial class unity was starting to emerge in some 'black spots'. Events such as the Amato Textile strike of 1958, in which shopstewards Don Mateman and Ed Cindi (local leaders of SACPO and the ANC respectively) played leading roles[90], also cemented the incipient working class unity taking shape among Benoni's black population. However, the 1958 General Strike received mixed support from coloured workers, primarily because of the political nature of that action.[91] Moreover, just as this political unity reached new heights, it was torn asunder by the state's twin onslaught of repression and forced removals.

The 'black spots' of the East Rand represented a challenge to the Nationalist government on various fronts. Their 'multi-racial' character defied the rigid segregationist view of the government, which made them prime targets for 'disestablishment'. Although relations between the 'races' were often ambiguous, in the 1950s a greater *class* unity was being forged in the face of a series of attacks by the government on various aspects of the lives of the residents of these 'black spots'. Despite the serious tensions between Indian landlords or traders and aspirant African entrepreneurs, a new and common political front was being created under the banner of the Congress movement. However, this was a fragile unity that did not always transcend the apparently narrow interests of the various 'races'. Thus coloured militants were often simultaneously involved in the broader struggles being waged by the 'multi-racial' Congress movement, while also campaigning on behalf of their 'own' (coloured) constituency. These dynamic and contradictory processes were most vividly illustrated in the Benoni old location during the 1950s. It was here that the ANC-TIC unity was most severely tested and where the Congress movement developed its strongest support from all sectors of the location. The final chapter considers how forced removals, repression and the introduction of racialised political structures affected this community in the 1960s.

ENDNOTES

[1] Government Publications, University of the Witwatersrand, Population Census1960

[2] Interview, S. Abram-Mayet, Benoni, 28.10.2000

[3] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus – A History*, Maskew-Miller Longman, Johannesburg, 2001, p.6

[4] There is virtually no official or anecdotal evidence to suggest that Indians lived in the 'native sections'

[5] *Benoni City Times*, 20.01.56

[6] Interview, P.R. Deeva, Benoni, 17.11.2000

[7] P. Bonner and N. Nieftagodien, *Kathorus*, p.6

[8] Interview, George Du Plessis, Reiger Park, 27.10.2000

[9] Interview, Kenny Madalane, Springs, 12.06.95

[10] Interview, Jimmy '5000' Jacobs, Springs, 12.06.95

[11] Interview, Moses Magudulela, Springs, 09.06.95

[12] Interview, Valerie Klou, Reiger Park, 10.11.2000

[13] Interview, George Du Plessis

[14] Interview, Abou Khan, Springs, 29.06.95

[15] Interview, Kenny Madalane, Springs, 12.06.95

[16] Interviews, P.R. Deeva, and Bob Triegaardt, Reiger Park, 10.11.2000

[17] Interview, Bob Triegaardt

[18] Interview, Valerie Klou

[19] Interview, P.R. Deeva

[20] Interviews, P.R. Deeva and John De Jager, Midrand, 11.11.2000

[21] Interview, P.R. Deeva

[22] Interview, George Du Plessis

[23] Interview, Bob Triegaardt

[24] P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 1988

[25] Interview, P.R. Deeva.

[26] Central Archives Depot (CAD), Municipality of Benoni records (MB) 1/4/16, Minutes of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee, 13.04.51, 'Report of the chairman'

[27] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee , 13.04.51, 'Report of the chairman'

[28] Interview, P.R. Deeva

[29] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of Benoni Native Affairs Committee, 14.05.51, 'Dispute: Native and Indian Taxi Owners'

[30] P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', p.412

[31] CAD, MB 1/4/18, Benoni Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 11.08.52, Minutes of the Joint Advisory Board, 22.07.52 The number of licences issued to coloureds remained constant.

[32] Interviews with P.R. Deeva, Joyce Moodley, Brakpan, 20.12.1999
and Harriet and Abel Cindi, Daveyton, 13.11.00 Monare was also given the nickname 'Korea'. The reference here was of course to the war raging on the Korean Peninsula, a critical and strategic arena of the conflict during the Cold War.

[33] There are minor differences in the accounts of informants over what the boy was accused of doing but these do not in any way affect the general argument on the key events that followed.

[34] Interviews, Harriet and Abel Cindi and Alekiah Nyamane, Daveyton, 08.11.2000

[35] CAD, NTS 6641, 125/313 (v), Elias Monare to T.E. Donges, 14.10.53

[36] P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', p.413 and Interview with P.R. Deeva

[37] P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness', p.413

[38] Interview, P.R.Deeva

[39] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee (NAC), 13.04.51, 'Report of the chairman'

[40] Ibid

[41] Ibid

[42] Ibid

[43] Ibid, Deeva remembers that he and Monare visited the Russian leader on the same day, but he managed to arrive there first. Deeva and Monare were in fact close associates and remained in contact throughout these events.

[44] *Benoni City Times*, 01.07.55

[45] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee (NAC), 13.04.51, 'Report of the chairman'

[46] Interview, George du Plessis

[47] H. Dugmore, 'Becoming Coloured: Class, Culture and Segregation in Johannesburg's Malay Location, 1918-1939', Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1993, p.94

[48] Danny Cassel's mother worked as a nurse at the Benoni-Boksburg Hospital where, for a time, she shared a room with Nelson Mandela's sister. The latter organised a strike against the poor quality of food given to nurses. Other than this brief episode of involvement in a struggle, the Cassels were rarely directly involved in oppositional activities as they were pre-occupied with their various business enterprises.

[49] Interview, Danny Cassel

[50] In the 1980s he became a leading figure in the Tricameral Parliament where he represented the coloured Labour Party

[51] Interview, Cravin Mxolisi Collis, Reiger Park, 26.10.2000

[52] Interview, Jimmy '5000' Jacobs

[53] Ibid

[54] Interview, Cravin Collis

55. CAD, MSP 1/3/5/1/25, *Minutes of the Public Health and Non-European Committee*, Translated memorandum received from the Springs branch of the Transvaal Coloured People's Association, October, 1950

56. Ibid

[57] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 26.05.50

[58] CAD, MB 1/4/9, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 09.03.45

[59] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 14.08.51

[60] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Native Affairs Committee Minutes, 09.10.51. It is unclear to me how these elections were held or indeed whether elections actually took place. Mr. Triegaardt recalls being appointed by the Council because he was a prominent teacher. Other interviewees recall a combination of selections and elections in the constitution of the Committee.

[61] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee, 06.12.51

[62] Carr was a senior teacher and later acting-principal of William Hills High School. Earlier in his career he was denied promotion because of his opposition to the government. His promotion to acting-principal in the 1950s was due to his participation on the CAC, although the authorities still would not confirm him as the principal. In the 1960s he again suffered the wrath of the authorities when he was hounded from William Hills and failed to secure alternative employment due to pressure placed on employers by the security police. He eventually died as a pauper in Newclare. See interviews with John De Jager and George du Plessis

[63] Interview, Bob Triegaardt

[64] CAD, MB 1/4/17, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 07.03.52

[65] CAD, MB 1/4/18, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 11.09.52, Extracts from CAC meeting held on 24.07.52

[66] CAD, MB 1/4/16, Minutes of the Benoni Native Affairs Committee, 13.04.51, 'Report of the chairman'

[67] CAD, MB 1/4/21, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 17.06.54

[68] CAD, MB 1/4/19, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 17.04.53

[69] CAD, MB 1/4/19, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 13.02.53, 'Memorandum from the Transvaal Coloured People's Association', 20.01.53

[70] CAD, MB 1/4/20, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 14.08.53

[71] CAD, MB 1/4/21, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 15.04.54, Memorandum from the Coloured Advisory Committee

[72] CAD, MB 1/4/21, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 15.04.54, Memorandum from the Coloured Advisory Committee

[73] CAD, MB 1/4/21, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 20.05.54

[74] CAD, MB 1/4/24, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 05.12.55, 'Notice for public meeting'

[75] Ibid

[76] R. Van Der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid: A Study of Political Movements among the Coloured People of South Africa, 1880-1985*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1986, p.278

[77] CAD, MB 1/4/25, Minutes of Native Affairs Committee, 19.03.56, 'Memorandum from the South African Coloured People's Organisation' (SACPO). In its memorandum SACPO declared. "This organisation has pledged itself to fight for the rights of Coloured People in every sphere, to strive unceasingly for better living conditions and to protect the Coloured people."

[78] FRAC was formed in 1951 to lobby against the National Party's plans to place coloureds on a separate voters' role. It consisted of a wide range of organisations from the CPSA to the conservative Coloured People's National Union of George Golding. The leadership of FRAC was mostly drawn from the CPSA.

[79] G. Lewis, *Between The Wire And The Wall: A History of South African 'Coloured' Politics*, David Philip, Cape Town, 1987, pp.267-269

[80] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*

[81] Ibid

[82] Interview, George Du Plessis

[83] Interview, P.R. Deeva

[84] Interview, Joyce Mohamed

[85] Interview, George Du Plessis

[86] Interview, John De Jager

[87] Other members of this young group included Don Mateman, Baby Singh and Valerie Klou

[88] Interview, John De Jager

[89] *Benoni City Times*, 04.05.56

[90] P. Bonner and R. Lambert, 'Batons and bare heads: the strike at Amato Textiles, February 1958' in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, Longman, London, 1987

[91] Interview, John De Jager

CHAPTER EIGHT

Forced Removals and 'Racial' Politics in the 1960s

From the late 1950s the government's grand scheme of enforcing compulsory 'racial' residential segregation rapidly gained momentum. By this time it had overcome many of the legal and bureaucratic obstacles which had hitherto delayed the implementation of its plans. The most serious problem the authorities continued to face, however, was the mounting black opposition movement, whose increasingly radical mobilisation threatened key aspects of apartheid policies. However the Sharpeville shooting in 1960 and the repression that followed it, decisively swung the balance of forces in favour of the state. In 1960 the ANC and PAC were banned and the first national state of emergency was declared. Thousands of their members were detained under the emergency regulations and hundreds were tried for sabotage.[1] The promulgation of special pieces of legislation[2] to augment the repressive machinery of the state allowed it to detain, torture and on occasion even kill political opponents with impunity. These measures crippled the liberation organisations. The life sentences imposed on prominent figures, such as the Rivonia trialists stripped the movement of some of its most capable leaders. Hundreds also went into exile to escape the state's repression and to attempt to rebuild the movement. This was further to denude the internal movement of many of its leading figures. The South African Congress of Trade Unions, which was not banned, suffered especially heavily as a result of the loss of its top officials.

The first part of this chapter discusses how this repression affected the struggle against forced removals on the East Rand, and particularly in Benoni. It shows how the silencing of local militants undermined the struggle against forced removals. All the main radical organisations on the East Rand were either banned or splintered under the pressure of repression. In some instances new

organisations emerged to wage the campaigns against removals, but ultimately these efforts also foundered.

The 1960s are traditionally characterised as a period of political quiescence. When compared to the politically volatile decades that preceded and succeeded it, this description seems indisputable. But this is also an over-simplistic characterisation, which tends to overlook the opposition that did occur. Admittedly these struggles occurred only episodically and were primarily localised. Nevertheless, as this chapter shows there were oppositional 'sounds in the silence',[3] albeit constrained by repression and confined to a 'racially' divided political framework.

The second part of the chapter looks at the development of new forms of 'racial' politics in the group areas on the East Rand. It shows that the government deliberately created a space in which conservative politicians could operate. Under the circumstances a new breed of politician emerged. These people initially enjoyed little public support, relied on the authorities to maintain their political status and were prone to corruption. From the late 1960s these politicians began to gain some support because of the social development that occurred in the group areas, for which the government allowed them to take the credit. These political figures were, however, challenged in their residential areas. The government's racialised political structures also created the space for new forms of opposition to emerge. Various opposition organisations sprang up in the coloured and Indian group areas, although they only made a limited impression. The coloured Labour Party was one organisation which was prepared to operate within the 'racially' exclusive parameters enforced by the government, while simultaneously articulating strong criticisms of apartheid. At least in the first few years of its existence the Labour Party was perceived as being genuinely against 'separate development' and as a supporter of non-racialism. Young and old militants in the East Rand's coloured group areas joined the party despite the contradictions inherent in its policies. The opposition movements that emerged in the 1960s differed considerably from the liberation organisations of the 1950s and 1970/80s. They were less radical, generally did not possess mass support and rarely

organised militant action. However muted though they were the voices of opposition were not absent.

Forced removals implemented

The government's programme of forced removals gained momentum in the late 1950s. In 1958 Alberton old location was disestablished and its entire African population forcibly relocated to Thokoza. This signalled the start of an intense effort by the government to remove all 'black spots' in the region. As the government's regional restructuring plan became finalised it also became evident that despite protests from the local authority, Benoni Old Location would become the regional Indian group area.

The people of Benoni Old Location responded by uniting in a common campaign to stop the dismantling of their community. The ANC, TIC and SACPO were all involved but the struggle was effectively spearheaded by local organisations (which were generally led by local Congress Movement members). At the time the Congress Movement was pre-occupied by national political campaigns such as the 1958 General Strike, opposition to the National Party in the 1958 election and the anti-pass campaign. Consequently little attention was given to local issues. In Benoni a plethora of local bodies sprang up to lead the fight against forced removals, the most important being the Vigilance Association, the Benoni District Indian Commercial Association, the African Vigilance Committee, the African Traders and Workers and the Transvaal Chinese Association. Even the Advisory Board supported the campaign. Sections of the local white community also opposed certain aspects of the government's group areas plan, particularly the removal of coloureds to Boksburg. This striking show of unity to save the old location was unique on the East Rand.

The anti-removals campaign took the form of marches, petitions and public meetings, all of which were well supported by the residents of the old location. At one such public meeting, which was jointly organised by the Vigilance Association and the Indian Association, more than three hundred people packed the venue. The address by the representative of the Transvaal Chinese

Association captured the prevailing mood in the location. Mr. A. Oshry explained that the Chinese people living in Benoni "do not ask for a special area to be set aside for them... they do not want to move from where they are."[4] Leo Lovell, Benoni's Member of Parliament and an ardent critic of apartheid also addressed the meeting. He became a central figure in the campaign both as an opposition politician and the as the legal representative of some of the abovementioned organisations.

This gathering campaign against removals was stopped in its tracks by the repression that followed the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. Prominent local figures such as Mary Moodley, Joyce Moodley, Baby Singh, Diza Putini, Ed Cindi and Don Mateman were arrested. Some were detained for extended periods and others were placed under house arrest. Still others went into hiding or withdrew from public political activities.[5] Thus bereft of some its most capable political leaders and denied the possibility of mass mobilisation, the campaign against the disestablishment of Benoni Old Location was checked.

Leo Lovell now became even more prominent in the campaign as the Vigilance Association came to rely on him to convince the local authority not to proceed with the removals. He had previously succeeded in getting four hundred white residents of Benoni to sign a petition in opposition to the removals.[6] John De Jager remembers him making a string of stirring speeches against the removals, which endeared him to the black community but also earned him the wrath of the white establishment.[7] Notwithstanding Lovell's passionate commitment to the cause, this increasing dependence on his support reflected the weakness of the previously united campaigns of local black organisations. A number of other factors also contributed to the fracturing and collapse of the anti-removals struggle in Benoni.

The state's plan to convert Benoni Old Location into the regional group area for Indians produced a divided response from local Indian residents. On the one hand, many traders decried the expected loss of clientele that would result from the removal of coloureds and Africans. On the other hand, they realised that the removals would also ease the extreme congestion and make available more houses to Indian residents. For the numerous families crammed into single rooms

or into backyard shacks the prospect of acquiring house held the same appeal as it did for Africans who had earlier had been moved to Daveyton and KwaThema. Most of these residents did not necessarily support group areas but neither did they actively oppose them. Under these circumstances, TIC activists found it especially difficult to mobilise any significant support among ordinary Indians against the removals.

The TIC had much less success in mobilising support among Boksburg's Indian residents, who were known throughout the region as being politically conservative. When Indians first settled in Boksburg in 1885 many of them began working as labourers in the coal mines, which they continued to do into the 1960s. Others worked in the service industry. The Indian community of Boksburg therefore had a much bigger proportion of workers in their ranks compared to their counterparts in Benoni and Springs. Although a trading class did emerge, it remained relatively small and lacked the influence enjoyed by traders in other 'Asiatic Bazaars'. Local Indian leaders tried to use the role of Indians in the town's economy as a reason why they should not be relocated:

> On the whole we feel that we are a hard working community, not afraid of work. Our people do manual work on the mines. Our honesty and reliability are never in doubt on the mines, for not only, do our people tend to all the Pump Stations on the ERPM but so reliable are our workers that, never has an Indian ever been found drunk, late or asleep on duty. Indians do sanitation work on the mines, and who can say it is not an honest living. Our waiters we say without fear of contradiction are among the best if not the best.[8]

But the Boksburg TIC seemed to have failed to build support among this working class constituency. As a result, Indians of this area were never drawn into the anti-apartheid campaigns of the Congress Movement on the same scale as in Benoni. The conservative leaders of the community boasted that they had rejected attempts by the TIC to enlist their support:

> The Congresses came from other towns, to appeal to us, to stop this co-operation with the authorities, we were branded sell-outs. But it is History now that we drove them away for good from Boksburg. We accepted the act as the Law of a fair and just land.[9]

The authorities acknowledged Indians from Boksburg were very unpopular on the East Rand because they supported the Group Areas Act.[10] Indian workers tended to support the creation of a group area in Boksburg because they hoped it would result in them acquiring more houses. Traders in Boksburg endorsed the call for the creation of a group area because they hoped in this way to avoid being removed to Benoni and in the process lose their clientele in Boksburg. The TIC's principled opposition to group areas therefore engendered little enthusiasm in the local community.

Beyond that, the TIC was perceived to have focused its campaign on defending the rights of traders. Its intervention at the local Group Areas Board hearings consisted almost exclusively of objecting to the deleterious effects the removals would have on prominent Indian shop owners plying their trade in the centre of Boksburg.[11] In particular, the TIC's legal representative, George Bizos, attempted to prevent the removal from the centre of town of the Bhyat family business. Bizos accused the authorities of reneging on an agreement between Mahatma Ghandi and Jan Smuts, which gave the Bhyats trading and residential rights in the centre of Boksburg.[12] Since the turn of the century, the Bhyat family had built a flourishing business, which had become among the most profitable stores in the town with a monthly turnover of between £4500 and £5000.[13] The TIC was thus pre-occupied by the injustice perpetrated against the Bhyats at the expense of the concerns of the poorer sections of the community.

Once the GAB hearings had been completed, there was little evidence of the TIC campaigning against the group areas in Boksburg. As a result, the conservative leaders were able to play the dominant role in Boksburg. These leaders had been campaigning for a group area in Boksburg from 1950 and, at least until the late 1950s, they enjoyed the support of the Council in this endeavour.

The TIC's influence over the Indian population in Benoni disintegrated as a result of the repression it suffered. Without its political authority the divergent interests of various groups quickly splintered. In the early sixties Benoni's Indian community became less involved in the anti-removals struggle because they were no longer directly threatened by the removals. TIC campaigners thus found it difficult to convince Indian residents to support the campaign. Even traders resigned themselves and began to place their hopes in the influx of an Indian clientele from other parts of the region. The TIC in places such as Pretoria and Pageview successfully sustained itself by focusing almost exclusively on the struggle against forced removals, which directly threatened to destroy Indian businesses. The same situation did not apply to Benoni and as a result the local TIC's influence in the community quickly dwindled.

In the post Sharpeville situation the unity that had been built between the different factions on the Benoni Coloured Vigilance Association likewise came unstuck. The Association's public position was that no-one should move to the new regional group area for coloureds, Reiger Park. However, from the early 1960s, the moderates on the committee began to change their views, arguing that the removal was inevitable and that coloureds should seek the best possible deal for themselves. The declaration of group areas for Benoni in November 1962 seemed to confirm this view. Meanwhile municipal houses had become available for coloureds in Stirtonville and the authorities also began to sell private properties in Reiger Park.[14] One of the debates that pre-occupied the Vigilance Association at this point was whether home-owners in Benoni's coloured section should sell their properties to the municipality or to private buyers.[15] This debate, which took place mainly among the moderates on the Association, showed that an important shift had occurred from opposing the removals to considering what would be the best deal for home-owners who were preparing to move to Reiger Park.

One of the first people to break ranks was long-standing Vigilance Association member, Bob Triegaardt. He acknowledged that people "were reluctant to come to Reiger Park because we were fairly well established" but felt at the time "there was nothing much we could do, definitely nothing we could

do". As a result he decided to sell his house in the old location "So that I could invest on this side [Reiger Park]. I had something I could put in so I could build on a more elaborate scale. For instance I bought three sites, and I built across two... I thought of my children. That's why I took more sites. At the time I could afford it." His decision caused deep resentment in the community who felt betrayed. Triegaardt admits that, "There was not a good feeling at first. People were not happy about it."[16] Soon businessmen followed his example and sought out the best sites in Reiger Park. The floodgates had now been opened and according to Cravin Collis,

> There was a mad rush for that kind of property. Initially people in Benoni were hesitant, others saw it as an opportunity. Some key stands were bought by key people. There was an element of opportunism. People who said we should not move, they in the meantime acquired property. They came first into this so-called coloured area.[17]

The Vigilance Association also found it difficult to convince lodgers to heed its call not to move. George Du Plessis remembers that,

> the people that actually ran for these houses were the people who were living in the backyards, people who were living in the Indian Section... So when most of the blacks from Stirtonville were removed, those people, although we told them not to move, they did. Some of them came here [to Reiger Park] and they looked at Galeview and said, God why. Also when they moved there the Council told them all we are going to charge you is £2 a month. So you will get your free water and all that for £2 a month. Here you are paying £3 or £4 a month for a little shack in the yard. So those were the people we could not stop. So they came and filled up these houses from all over.[18]

For a while the radical faction of the Vigilance Association remained resolute. De Jager and his comrades believed it would be incorrect for them to

submit after having struggled so hard to oppose the removals and having appealed to residents not to move.[19] But the resistance had been broken and their refusal to move became merely symbolic. By 1963 George Du Plessis and a host of other former local Congress figures had moved to Reiger Park. George first lived in a two-roomed house in Stirtonville and then bought a property in the new extension. John de Jager preferred to move out of Benoni and Mary Moodley rented a house in Actonville.[20]

Once the coloured people's resistance to the removals was broken, the African home-owners of the old location were virtually left on their own to fight the government's plans. It was a fight they were unlikely to win. Pressure was mounting to effect the completion of the racial restructuring of the East Rand, and the continued presence of Africans in Benoni Old Location (the designated Indian group area) was viewed as a main obstacle to the realisation of this plan. In 1963 the central government expressed its impatience at the slow pace of the removals from the old location and called for the urgent acceleration of the process so that the region's Indian population could be settled there.[21] Indeed, almost as soon as coloureds vacated their houses, Indian people from the Indian Section and other parts of the East Region began replacing them.

Whereas the opposition to the removal of coloureds received widespread support from Benoni's white community, including from the Town Council, negligible support for the plight of African residents was forthcoming. Leo Lovell remained the lone voice from that community who continued to oppose the removals. The Council was for its part committed to its own plans of moving all African people of Benoni, except those residing in Wattville, to Daveyton. In the early sixties plans for the establishment of Daveyton Extension were already well-advanced, a clear sign of the local authority's intentions to proceed with the removals. Support for African residents was therefore to a large extent confined to the location.

Despite the odds being stacked against them, African residents, many of whom were long-standing urbanites and also home-owners, were not prepared to submit to the dictates of the government without a fight. In the absence of the Congress Movement, residents formed the Benoni and Wattville Residents'

Association to lead the struggle against the removals. The local Advisory Board was generally perceived as too compliant and ineffective to lead the struggle in the absence of the ANC. Since the mid-1950s the Advisory Board had retreated into almost complete obscurity. And even when the liberation organisations were smashed by the state, it failed to restore any meaningful political role to itself.

In contrast, the Payneville Advisory Board was in the forefront of the struggle against forced removals from the late 1950s. This was due to the continued membership on that Board of radicals such as P.P. Legodi.[22] In the late 1950s and early 1960s the Payneville Advisory Board became the main representative of home-owners in the location and especially after 1960 it vociferously campaigned for the interest of its constituency.[23] Between 1958 and 1964 the Payneville Advisory Board was continuously at loggerheads with the local authority, fighting against the removals and when that did not succeed, it used various measures to stall the process before finally campaigning to win the best compensation for home-owners.

The moribund state of the Benoni Advisory Board elicited regular calls for it to disband. For example, in 1963 the Residents' Association accused the Advisory Board of being ineffective and of failing to keep the community informed about the Council's plans especially in relation to property valuations for the purpose of compensation payments. As far as Simon Ntuli, the General Secretary of the Association, was concerned,

> the Advisory Board does not exist. We wrote them a letter after a meeting of 1000 residents passed a resolution demanding their resignation. That was four months ago. They have not responded as yet.[24]

Whether Ntuli's claim of 1000 residents at a meeting is true or not, residents remember this time in the old location as one of heightened political activity. Regular public meetings were held at the Davey Social Centre and at cinemas in the Indian Section. Marches and demonstrations were also organised. Simon Ntuli and a Mr. Gumede were among the prominent figures in the opposition movement.[25] One measure of success was that the Association was

prohibited from holding meetings in the location.[26] The Association's campaign also forced the Advisory Board into action. A reportedly 'stormy session' with the Management Committee, saw the Advisory Board request the Council to explain "everything about the removal, including, which body was responsible for the removals, who was going to pay for it". The Board even informed the Council that the removals were undemocratic.[27] After this episode, however, the Advisory Board once again disappeared from the scene.

As the pressure in the location mounted against the removal, the Council stepped its campaign up a gear. In mid-1963 the Council's Welfare Committee conducted a socio-economic survey under the pretext of gathering information. Residents were angered by what they saw as underhand methods employed by the Council to get them to agree to move. Their fears seemed confirmed when 'blackjacks' forced some residents to complete and sign the forms.[28] The clearest indication that the removal of Africans would proceed was the formulation and endorsement of detailed plans for the payment of compensation. In this regard the authorities were a few steps ahead of the residents. By the time group areas were formally declared in Benoni a detailed plan existed not only about how compensation would be determined but what amounts would be paid for each property in the old location. The Minister appointed a valuator to determine the basic value of properties. Although property owners formally had the right to object to the valuator's determination the procedure to alter the amount was cumbersome[29] and was generally viewed by residents as futile. More than two thirds of African families received less than R500 compensation (more than 50% actually received less than R300 and less than 20% received more than R1000) for properties many had spent years and considerable sum of money upgrading.[30] The already paltry amounts were further reduced by the deduction of the cost of houses constructed in Daveyton. The cost of the standard 51/9 type houses was estimated at R642, considerably more than the compensation received by most.[31] Of the 2100 families who were to be relocated, only 300 families could afford the cost of municipal housing on the basis of compensation received.[32]

Over the next few years some attempts were made to continue the anti-removal campaign, but the mass support that it previously enjoyed gradually

dissipated. In late 1966 some homeowners were still attempting to use legal means to prevent the disestablishment of BBT. Assisted by Leo Lovell, these residents made an ultimately vain attempt to question the Council's legal authority to proceed with the disestablishment of the BBT and to stop it from advertising affected properties for sale to prospective Indian residents.[33] At that stage the Benoni and Wattville Action Committee was leading the campaign. Its public statements were strident and particularly critical of Indian residents who had occupied houses vacated by residents who had moved to Daveyton. In a pamphlet distributed in the location in 1966 the Action Committee announced, 'Benoni Old Location is not moving to Daveyton and is not given to Indians'. The pamphlet claimed it would take another decade before the removals were effected and appealed to residents to take on more lodgers, presumably to complicate the task of the authorities. The Action Committee implored the remaining residents to stand firm and not submit as other had done before them:

> We are very sorry for the Indians. They must find their own Location. We are sorry for the cowards who ran away to Daveyton. Their cheap compensation money will get finished and they will know this: East, West, North, South, Daveyton, Holfontein, Home is Best.[34]

Their impassioned appeal may have resonated with the mood of many residents, but could not at this stage generate mass support. Most tellingly more than 1 600 families had already been removed to Daveyton, which undermined any possible effective mass mobilization. In early 1967 the last residents of Benoni Old Location were removed to Daveyton Extension or Skotiphola, as it was colloquially known. Thus by the mid 1960s the integrated community of Benoni Old Location and the other 'black spots' of the East Rand had been forcibly separated and consigned to 'racially exclusive' residential areas, where the government hoped to inculcate new ethnic and racial identities in residents. The disestablishment of Benoni Old Location and other 'black spots' ended an era during which the development of a relatively united black urban working class

seemed a real possibility. Now, instead, the implementation of group areas ushered in a period of 'racially' divided politics.

Actonville in the 1960s - Politics of Patronage and Corruption

The demise of the TIC as the main political organisation of Indian people on the East Rand was one of the distinctive features of the post-Sharpeville period. Although the organisation was not banned, many of its leaders felt the brunt of the government's repression. A large number were detained, placed under house arrest, tried under security legislation and a few prominent members were among the first to die in detention. As a consequence a number of TIC activists chose to go into exile, while many slumped into political inactivity. Others, like P.R. Deeva, chose to become involved in social welfare activities in their communities. For them this was one way of contributing to the advancement of poor people, under conditions when 'it was not possible to wage a successful mass struggle against the government'.[35] The political vacuum left by the TIC was not easily filled. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the TIC stood virtually unchallenged as the main political voice of Indians on the East Rand. Pretenders to its hegemonic position found little support, even among conservative elements. Abram-Mayet, a long-time political opponent of the TIC, acknowledges its predominant role in the 1950s.[36]

In the first half of the 1960s some TIC activists were involved in the anti-removals campaigns but in the main formal (especially oppositional) politics had been badgered into quiescence. It would take until the early 1970s for party politics to re-emerge in Actonville and then on an entirely different basis than in the 1950s. In the intervening period the political life of the East Rand's main Indian group area was dominated by the newly formed Indian Consultative Committee (ICC) and centred on the question of housing.

The establishment of the ICC in 1965 was the government's attempt to fill the political vacuum left by the demise of TIC with conservative and compliant politicians. The government's intentions were revealed by the manner it went about seeking members to serve on the ICC. In 1964 the government approached

leading personalities in the community to accept nomination onto the ICC. Among the people to whom overtures were made were Abram-Mayet, G.R. Moodley and P.R. Deeva. After a meeting in Pretoria with government officials they all agreed not to accept the government's invitation because the ICC was nothing more than an advisory committee, designed to promote the interest of the government. However, soon after this meeting G.R. Moodley and Abram-Mayet broke ranks and accepted the government's offer.[37] Actonville became one of only a few Indian group areas where the government could find enough conservative politicians willing to serve on an ICC.

The ICC was launched the following year amidst considerable fanfare. The public launch was attended by members of the government, the Provincial Administration and local authorities from across the East Rand. The authorities claimed that more than a thousand residents attended the launch.[38] Special entertainment was laid on to attract the interest of the public. The *Benoni City Times* hailed the establishment of the committee as the dawn of "a new era in the history of local government and ... as a forward step to bestowing on the Indian community a greater say in the management of its own civic affairs." The first five members of the committee were praised as being among Actonville's 'foremost citizens'.[39] Mayet, who became the first chairman of the ICC was hailed as the "father of the people".[40]

The authorities heaped lavish praises on these moderate politicians in an attempt to elevate their standing in the community. This was understandable, as all of them, except G.R. Moodley, had played only peripheral roles in the politics of Actonville until their appointment to the ICC.[41] The authorities attempted to paint a positive picture of the ICC and of Mayet in particular. In 1967 the Department of Indian Affairs promised to establish the Transvaal Indian College in Actonville as part of a broader plan to diversify the employment opportunities open to Indians.[42] Actonville was chosen above places such as Pretoria and Lenasia because of the loyalty displayed by the ICC. The ICC applauded the decision and also called for the establishment of an industrial township in Actonville "for Indian entrepreneurs to invest their capital", which would "ensure [the development in] Actonville [of] a sound and stable middle class

community."[43] Mayet described himself and his committee as "men who are courageous and can stand by their convictions, who are realistic and imaginative and not emotional."[44]

It was nevertheless difficult for these politicians to counter the perception that they were mere 'stooges' of the government. Before candidates were even considered for appointment to the ICC their political history was checked. They also had to receive clearance from the security police,[45] which reflected the government's apprehension about filling the positions on the ICC with reliable people. The local authority also warned the ICC not to become oppositional. At the launch of the ICC, Councillor Smith advised Mayet and his cohorts to exercise patience and not to expect results too quickly. In a thinly disguised threat he warned them not to "cross swords with the Council and don't try to shock them."[46]

The ICC's conservatism was illustrated by Mayet's attempts to confine the membership of the ICC to staunch supporters of the government. Mayet also seemed to have viewed the ICC as his personal political fiefdom. A case in point was his intervention to block the appointment of Mr. C. Daya to the ICC in 1966. In a confidential letter to the authorities, Mayet accused C. Daya of being disloyal to South Africa and claimed he could not be trusted as he was a follower of Mahatma Gandi and Pandit Nehru. Mayet was especially offended by Daya's criticism of his public honouring of H.F. Verwoerd after the latter's assassination. Most revealingly, Mayet would only support Daya's nomination on condition that he publicly declared his support for separate development and the removal of African people from the old location to make way for Indians.[47] At the same time Mayet endorsed the nomination of another candidate, Mr. Singh, because of his support for government policy. Mayet was rewarded for his support by his appointment as chairman of the ICC until 1969. Buoyed by this success, Mayet attempted the following year to block the re-appointment of G.R. Moodley on similar grounds to those which he applied to Daya. Ironically, the Provincial Administration, which had appointed Moodley, acknowledged Mayet's propensity to label his detractors as 'left wing'.[48] As a result Mayet's objections were

dismissed and Moodley re-appointed. Such episodes further undermined the ICC's credibility in the community.

The ICC was an unelected body and therefore the extent of its popular support was never tested. The authorities appointed all members of the ICC and it enjoyed only advisory powers. The lack of popular accountability plus the government's desperation to maintain the support of its hand-picked representatives created ideal ground for breeding corruption and self-enrichment. Patronage quickly became the distinctive feature of the ICC. At the centre of this network was ICC chairman, Abram-Mayet, who the authorities admitted was embroiled in controversy from the time he was appointed to the ICC.[49]

The inter-related problems of corruption and patronage were most vividly illustrated in the process of allocating houses and businesses. Although the final decision over housing allocation rested with the Town Council, the ICC exercised considerable influence in so far as it made recommendations to the Council on the matter. It was perceived as the 'eyes and ears' of the authorities in the area and was therefore meant to be in touch with the needs of the community. The acute shortage of houses in Actonville made access to accommodation the priority concern for residents, especially for those who were moved from other parts of the East Rand and for lodgers from the old location.

In August 1966 the Benoni Town Council announced plans to sell 108 houses previously owned by African residents to Indians.[50] Scores of people applied for these houses but found the process of allocating houses seriously flawed and riven by corruption. A petition signed by 172 residents and numerous affidavits submitted to the Council accused the ICC of impropriety and listed examples of corruption perpetrated by Mayet.[51] The most common allegation made against the ICC was that of bribery. ICC members were blatant in expecting some reward from residents who were allocated houses. Mayet in particular was accused of abusing his position for self-enrichment. When houses became available he awarded two of the better houses to himself and his wife. At the time he did not even reside in the area and therefore leased these houses as a source of income. It was common for better-off residents to purchase multiple properties, which were then leased to tenants. Rich residents, like Mayet, therefore precluded

these people from purchasing houses. In a particularly outrageous instance of abuse of power, Mayet allegedly asked Cynthia Moodley to become a concubine for his friend (Ramie) in return for ensuring the success of her father's application for a house. Her refusal was met with a notice to vacate the house.[52]

Within the first couple of years of the existence of the ICC numerous complaints and formal charges were brought against Mayet. However, the authorities (especially the Benoni Town Council) refused to take act against the man they regarded as their main supporter in the township. The Transvaal Provincial Administration was concerned that the community was divided but claimed not to have any incriminating evidence against Mayet, and left the matter in the hands of the municipality. The Director of Non-European Affairs for his part did not believe "the position call[ed] for any undue concern."[53] Official tolerance and, in reality, reward for such blatant abuse of power by the supporters of the government further alienated the ICC from the community. Despite a generalised dissatisfaction with Mayet and the ICC, most people initially believed it would be futile to attempt to do anything about it because the government supported him.[54]

Mayet was unrepentant and lashed out at his critics. He claimed the campaign was organised by "dissidents who have failed in the past to secure nomination to the Indian Consultative Committee" and that a personal feud existed between him and Mr. Naicker, one of the main organisers of the petition. He accused Mr. Naicker of being anti-Christian, which seemed to be nothing more than a blatant attempt to discredit his opponents before the 'Christian' authorities. Most seriously Mayet claimed his opponents "were backed by men who were active in the hey-days of the left-wing organisations whose objects were to fight authority, good government and order wherever possible... the recent acts of the group concerned... is this time making a comeback bid, under the cloak of pro-governtism (sic)."[55]

Mayet's concern that former TIC members were behind the campaign to expose his corruption was not unfounded. One of the first signs of the growing dissatisfaction centred on the renaming of streets in Actonville. More than 250

residents signed a petition to this effect in one of the first post-Sharpeville demonstrations of discontent in Actonville. The petitioners argued that it was

> not becoming to have streets and avenues named such as Mayet Drive, Moodley Street, Karolia Street (presumably names of the Indian Consultative Committee members) and other handpicked names since this an apparent form of despotism as far as the great majority of the Indian people in this area are concerned.[56]

It is unclear exactly who organised the petition but it seems to have been part of the growing opposition that emerged from previous TIC activists. In September 1966 a group of prominent local leaders formed the Benoni Indian Ratepayers Association "to make representation to the relevant Authorities with regard to the Social and Civic needs of the Indian People, and to be vigilant over future developments in the area."[57] The new Association was led by C.S. Moodley (nephew of the G.R. Moodley, a leading member of the ICC) and B.R. Dewa, a well-known TIC activist.[58]. Although the aims of the Ratepayers Association could hardly be described as radical, it deliberately set out to expose the incompetence and malpractices of the ICC.

The emergence of the Ratepayers Association also signalled a split in the already depleted ranks of the local TIC. Until then the organisation had maintained its principled opposition to any involvement in government created bodies. However, a number of prominent TIC members, led by B.R. Dewa and Dr. Mia, believed that the position was outdated. They agreed the ICC was essentially a tool of the government, but were concerned that the allocation of houses was being left in the hands of corrupt politicians.[59] The central aim of the Association was therefore to remove Mayet and his supporters from the ICC and replace them with reputable leaders who would allocate houses on an equitable basis. B.R. Dewa in fact sought nomination onto the ICC but was probably excluded on the basis of his previous appearance on the blacklist of the police.[60] Other TIC members, such as P.R. Deeva, disagreed with the new tactic pursued by their comrades and continued to dissociate themselves from the ICC. Thus the more radical wing of the already weak TIC was further marginalised. The TIC as

a whole was further weakened and, as a result, the Ratepayers Association became the main opposition to Mayet and his supporters.

Initially the Ratepayers Association failed to make a serious impression. Its first two attempts at a mass launch in 1966 attracted only about one hundred people. These initial setbacks did not deter the Association and in January 1967 a new and more vigorous campaign was launched against the ICC. A series of public meeting were convened and a door-to-door campaign was embarked upon to mobilise support for the Association's demands. Such was the effect of their campaign that Mr. G.R. Moodley publicly associated himself with it, causing a rift in the ICC. Mayet's reaction reflected his concern about the support garnered by the Association. He urged the authorities to act against the Association's leaders because, according to him, they endangered the future of the town and the development of Indian local administration.[61]

The Association's attempt to unseat Mayet did not immediately succeed primarily because the authorities were not prepared to see their key supporter removed by more radical elements. The allegations made against Mayet were not considered serious enough by the Benoni Council for it to discontinue supporting him. Because members of the ICC were appointed it was necessary for the Association to convince the authorities to appoint new members in place of the ones they had previously supported. The Association's attempts to mobilise public support had little effect on the opinion of the authorities. Moreover, its campaign focused on discrediting individuals, rather than the institution, so the campaign could not be too critical in case public opinion was transformed into active opposition, which would in itself not have been permitted by the authorities. So the Association was hamstrung by its own limited aims, namely, to replace the existing members of the ICC with its own leaders, as well as by the threat of further repression by the state.

The Association persisted over subsequent years to expose the corruption of the ICC. By the end of the decade Mayet's improprieties had discredited him throughout the community. He was even removed from all leading positions in local Muslim organisations. In 1971 the authorities could no longer ignore the situation and he was replaced as chairman of the ICC. The Ratepayers and

Tenants Association this time produced concrete evidence of corruption by Mayet,[62] but the authorities refused to remove him from membership of the ICC despite the overwhelming evidence against him. Their argument was that they could only act decisively if he was found guilty in a court of law.[63] As this did not happen Mayet was able to retain his position and continue his practices.

An even more important development was also taking place in the group areas. From the late 1960s the government began to provide new houses (and flats) to alleviate overcrowding. The government created bodies such as the ICC now began to be viewed in a more positive light. They were portrayed as being partly responsible for the building of these houses for which the government allowed them to take the credit. Few people were persuaded by the government's racist policies of segregation and separate development. Group areas received only minimal support on the East Rand and was mostly rejected. But once the removals had been effected and group areas became an unavoidable reality, residents in these areas turned their attention to making the best of the given situation. The desire for housing became the overriding priority. P.R. Deeva acknowledges that the state's ability to provide housing to many of the Indian people was a trump card, not only for the government but also their allies in the community. Despite the ICC's association with corruption, it was widely believed to have played a positive role in providing houses. Mayet especially was a key beneficiary of this attitude. From being overwhelmingly sceptical and even negative about group areas and the ICC in particular, many Actonville residents began to believe that the system would provide them with some material benefits. Mayet's victory in the first elections held in Actonville in 1973 confirmed this shift.

Coloured politics and identity in Reiger Park

The repression of the early 1960s also adversely affected progressive organisations among coloureds. SACPO, which had been weaker than either the ANC or TIC, disappeared almost immediately from the political scene on the East Rand. In Benoni, the Vigilance Association disintegrated under the impact of

forced removals. As in other black areas in the early 1960s Reiger Park experienced a precipitous decline in organised political activity. But in contrast to these areas where virtual political quiescence continued until the early 1970s, Reiger Park's political re-awakening occurred in the mid-1960s. The earlier revival of organised politics in the coloured group area was due in part to the establishment of the Coloured Representative Council (CRC) in 1969 (for which elections were held) in anticipation of which a number of political parties were launched. Coloured group areas thus witnessed the inauguration of a novel form of party politics from the mid 1960s, namely, politics that were allowed to function only within the narrow, racially determined parameters set out by the government.

Various parties were launched to contest the CRC elections, ranging in their political approach from conservative coloured nationalists to critics of the government. Inextricably intertwined in this political process was the central question of coloured identity. The nurturing of a coloured political identity was an important objective of the government from the early part of the twentieth century. After 1948 the National Party especially pursued this objective with vigour and single-minded determination. Group areas and separate development were regarded as pivotal planks in its strategy to inculcate a distinct coloured identity and 'coloured politics', which would form part of the overall racial political system.

Achieving the ideological objective of fostering a distinct coloured political identity proved a far more difficult and complex process than the government might have anticipated. The experiences in Reiger Park in the 1960s showed that even when the state appeared omnipotent it could not automatically impose its ideological imperatives on the subjugated population. Reiger Park's diverse population was initially not amenable to embracing the uniform racial political identity prescribed for them from above.

The complexities of coloured identity have already been alluded to. The inherent contradictoriness of 'being coloured' was particularly evident in the integrated 'black spots' on the Witwatersrand. In these areas the diverse 'lived experiences' of coloureds produced simultaneously overlapping and divergent

views about 'colouredness'. These central features of 'colouredness' were transferred to Reiger Park despite the fundamentally different 'lived experiences' – of 'racial' exclusivity – prevailing in the group area. In addition, the diverse origins of the people moved to Reiger Park proved to be a major cause of division and antagonism. Class divisions also began to be expressed more explicitly even though the coloured middle class remained relatively small and economically weak. Hence in the early years of Reiger Park's history the government and its local adherents found it extremely difficult to inculcate a sense of a common and exclusive racial identity in the residents of this group area.

The government's pursuit of its racial objectives was further complicated by a pervasive antipathy among coloureds towards its policies of group areas and separate development. At this stage the community's resentment of the group areas was especially intense. Few people supported the concept of racial segregation, but hoped their removal to group areas would result in significant improvements in their lives. Until the early 1970s, however, the government delivered on very few of its promises. As a result the whole process of forced removals left a very bitter taste in the mouths of the majority of coloureds. In the mid-1970s the Theron Commission reported that the application of the Group Areas Act had caused considerable bitterness among coloureds. It identified at least ten points of 'major friction' arising from this central piece of government policy. Among the most important were the lack of proper housing and facilities, financial loss and removal of people from the places of residence of their choice.[64] The people from Benoni felt especially disrupted by the removals because they had developed a relatively strong sense of community in the old location. In Reiger Park old social networks were destroyed, resulting in a deep sense of alienation being experienced by new residents. Valerie Klou's bitterness about the removal must have been shared by many:

> We did not like living in Reiger Park at all. We felt we belong to Benoni. Everybody knew each other, everybody was friendly with each other. There was no ill-feeling. For two or three years, everybody's nerves were on edge because when weekend came

people did not know what would happen. And the gangs felt they belonged to Boksburg and we were the intruders.[65]

Many people also worked in the towns from which they had been removed and were now forced to commute daily to these areas at significant expense. Very few coloureds in Reiger Park experienced any demonstrable improvements in their lives and they were mainly confined to the small middle class section of the township. For the rest life seemed to be worse. In the words of Valerie Klou: "We lost our freedom when we came here. We did not feel free anymore."[66]

Reiger Park became home to coloureds from the East Rand as well as from areas as far as Herschel (in the Eastern Cape) and the Northern Cape. By mid-1965 about 8000 coloured people had been resettled in Reiger Park, comprising 1107 families from Benoni, 170 from Germiston, 38 from Putfontein and 33 from Heidelberg. A further 298 families originated from Boksburg and an undisclosed number came from the outlying areas.[67] It is unclear precisely how many from outside the East Rand were moved to Reiger Park, but there were probably only a few dozen families. The diverse origins of Reiger Park's population laid down some of most antagonistic lines of division during the first decade or so of the area's history. George Du Plessis' vivid description of the hostile relations in Reiger Park at the time is worth quoting in detail:

> The only people we had trouble with were the Herschel and Germiston people. Benoni coloureds were the kind of elite people. More a cultured type of people. Even those who were living in the shacks that got houses here were people who knew jazz and culture and so on. The Germiston people were just a lot of spirits drinkers. It's not that we want to degrade them. Very few of the Germiston people were on top. But if you've gone to Dukathole you could see how they lived there. There was not anything that inspired them. With us there were ballroom dancing group, soccer group, political groups, religious groups. There was always something to do where people got prominent... Trying to readjust themselves with the different types of people coming in,

> whether you like it or not it's not easy. Here living together it was terrible. Different cultures, different ways of living. People living opposite each other. Especially in Galeview. There you had one toilet for two families. And the fellows from Benoni would clean their toilets but the fellows from Germiston never knew that the toilet must ever be cleaned. So there was always frictions and fights, until they had to build toilets for everyone.[68]

He particularly singles out the people from Herschel for scathing criticism. According to him they were 'domkoppe'. Ironically for someone steeped in progressive politics George Du Plessis ascribes the 'backwardness' of the Herschelites to assimilation of numerous African customs: "When they came here they still had *indabas*, they still smoked those long pipes." The Herschelites, with their rural roots, kept together to protect themselves against urban youth. Everyone knew they were dangerous because "if you interfere with anybody from Herschel the whole families will come together and they will talk about it and then they will go out with their *kieries* to go and bugger you up. And the police were afraid of them."[69] Some of these Herschelites had been small farmers in the Eastern Cape but were forced to give up their farms when the government introduced its new 'homelands' policy in 1959. They were thus aggrieved by the government's forced removals policy, but in a curious twist of political logic they resented Africans even more for taking over their farms. In a further paradox, the Herschelites became among the most ardent supporters of coloured nationalist ideas, despite their much closer affinity to Africans.

In the 1960s Reiger Park became a notorious haven for gangs, which were mostly formed by youth originating from different towns on the East Rand. In 1965 the police reported a sharp increase in gang violence in the area, which court records confirmed as coinciding with the arrival of people from other parts of the East Rand.[70] Boksburg youth were the first to form gangs because they regarded the newcomers as intruders in their area. The new arrivals in Reiger Park were also easy prey because of their unfamiliarity with the area. Boksburg youth gangs mainly targeted Benoni residents. The fiercest of these gangs – Big Fish, the Dirty Dozen, Vultures, Vikings and Tigers - consisted of youth from Boksburg and

Germiston. Big Fish (named after its leader) was the most notorious of the lot and consisted of Boksburg youth who openly despised youth from Benoni. They ran a reign of terror in the township and were feared by everyone, except the Herschelites.[71] Initially the youth from Benoni were unable to counter the menace posed by these gangs and were attacked with impunity. But they too eventually became impatient and formed their own gangs. Inter-gang fights became such a common feature in Reiger Park that people were afraid to walk around.[72]

The enmity between Benoni residents, on the one hand, and Dukathole and Stirtonville residents, on the other hand, seemed to be ubiquitous.[73] Benoni's coloureds adopted a condescending demeanour towards coloureds from other towns who, in turn, despised the elitist attitude and perceived arrogance of the former. When Reiger Park was established a proportionally larger number of Benoni residents could afford to buy houses in the new 'middle class' extension of the township. The impression therefore existed that they benefited from the group areas policies at the expense of poorer residents, many of whom came from other towns. The manner in which leading figures from Benoni acquired properties and businesses in the new township reinforced this attitude. Residents from Stirtonville were especially aggrieved by the apparent domination of Benoni residents of their town. The discrepancy in the living conditions between those living in the new middle class area, where freehold was also available, and those residents who were squeezed into the municipal houses in Galeview and Stirtonville was stark. In the latter areas families were forced to live in one or two rooms, with only the most elementary facilities. In some instances the bucket system was still in operation. A class division thus emerged that was perceived to coincide also with people's places of origin. This perception seemed pervasive despite the majority of former Benoni residents living in the poorer sections of Boksburg.

So while there was some acceptance of the description coloured, there was much greater emphasis placed on these other social divisions, which in turn shaped the character of politics in this coloured group area during the first decade of its existence. The Theron Commission reported in the mid-1970s that the majority of coloureds identified positively with the definition of coloured.

However, this was mostly a manifestation of their preference to associate with other coloureds, not an unusual finding considering that people lived in 'racially exclusive' areas and had very little contact with other 'races'. At the same time the Commission found there were "considerable differences within the ranks of the coloureds as regards the intensity of their sense of coloured identity." For example, coloureds in the Cape and urban-based coloureds identified less with the concept. On the other hand, Afrikaans speakers had a stronger identification with the idea of a coloured identity.[74] The idea of 'colouredness' was far from uniform and was certainly subject to considerable contestation.

Coloured Nationalism

In 1963 the Boksburg Council formed a local Coloured Consultative Committee (CCC) for Boksburg onto which conservative politicians were appointed. J.J. Collins and C. September, both principals of local schools, were its most prominent members.[75] Like its counterpart in Actonville the CCC was merely an advisory body but, unlike the ICC under Mayet, the CCC had very little impact on the politics of Reiger Park. Instead, political parties vying for support in the first CRC elections dominated the political scene from the mid-1960s.

The National Coloured People's Party (NCPP), an ultra conservative Transvaal-based organisation, was the first party make its mark in the area. Dr. Clifford Smith initially led the party but was soon replaced by Mr. C. September, the leader of Reiger Park's CCC. The NCPP was a staunch supporter of the government's policy of separate development and, according to R. Van Der Ross, it was especially anti-Indian and anti-Muslim.[76] Until his appointment to the CCC, September played no role in politics. He lived and taught in Benoni before the removals to Reiger Park, where his activities seemed to have been confined to teaching and serving on the local Anglican parish council.[77] In Reiger Park he earned notoriety for his persistent attempts to evict African and Indian people from the township and for refusing to accept at his school any child who, in his racist opinion, did not look coloured.[78] As chairman of the CCC he tried from 1967 to convince the authorities to invoke the policies of the Group Areas Act in

order to get rid of a popular Indian doctor, Dr. Ebrahim, from the area. However, his witch-hunt failed as residents rallied behind the doctor, and sent a petition to the authorities demanding that he be allowed to practice in Reiger Park.[79] The racist policies of the NCPP were succinctly captured in September's appeal in 1969 to the Boksburg Town council to 'extradite' Africans and Indians:

> There are several Africans in the township and, although they are holders of Coloured identity cards, we regard this as an abomination and injustice to the Coloured community... Coloureds are proud of their nationality and have no wish to become anything else. That is why I am making this earnest appeal to the Town Council to help us before we are swallowed by other nationalities.[80]

Cravin Collis who was part of a group of radical students in Reiger Park in the late 1960s believes September was "an excellent educator, but poor politician [who] read the situation wrongly. He believed in a so-called pure coloured approach. He would have opted for a homeland."[81] September was a strong advocate of coloured exclusivity, which he believed could best be achieved by supporting apartheid. Few people were, however, attracted to these ideas at the time.

September also appeared strangely out of touch with what was happening in the area. A case in point was the crime wave that engulfed the area in the mid-sixties. When the Anglican priest, Reverend Habberton, complained about the high levels of crime in the township, September was totally incensed. He immediately issued a public statement on behalf of the CCC expressing "grave displeasure, profound shock and deep regret" at the "unfounded and unjustified allegations". The statement went on to assert that "The ordinary law-abiding Coloured lives a decent Christian life."[82] The Town Council fully supported September's denials. Yet a month later the police complained of vicious gang fights especially between the Viking and Vultures. Court records revealed a string of cases involving youth from Reiger Park with charges ranging from theft to murder.[83]

September and his party also seemed to have fundamentally misread the main issues affecting residents. Ever the defender of separate development he argued that "The resettlement has proved a boon to the majority of Coloureds and has resulted in better living and working conditions for them."[84] His defence of the government's policies occurred at the time when the residents of Reiger Park were confronted by housing shortages and steep rent increases. By mid 1966 Reiger Park's coloured population had increased to approximately 10 000 and it was already claimed that a saturation point had been reached.[85] Overcrowding in the poor working class sections was becoming ubiquitous.

Coloured people had hardly settled in the new group area when they were hit by rent increases. In 1965 the Boksburg Council began implementing its plan to convert the sub-economic housing schemes to economic ones. The effect of the plan was substantial rent increases for tenants in Stirtonville and Galeview. It was proposed to increase the rent of the four-roomed and three-roomed houses in Galeview from R5 and R4,50 to R7,90 and R6 per month respectively. The increases in Stirtonville were even greater: the rents for three-roomed houses increased from R6 to R11,72 and for two-roomed houses from R5,50 to R14,42.[86] These huge hikes proved well beyond the means of many families. Within months of the introduction of the rent increases the number of families in arrears rocketed to over one hundred. In April 1965 the total owed in arrears stood at R1370 but by August it had more than trebled to R4316.[87] Poorer people, for example those who had been lodgers in the Indian Section in Benoni, mostly occupied these dwellings. Many of them willingly left the insalubrious and expensive accommodation in the old location in the hope that their living conditions would improve in the new group area. They were quickly disappointed. These people now became aggrieved. Residents were disappointed by the ineffectiveness of the CCC,[88] but in the absence of alternatives they looked to September to represent their views. Poorer people especially hoped he would deliver more houses and effect social improvements in the area. George Du Plessis admits that September enjoyed support among the poorest people:

> That's the beauty of it. The doubles, he got all his support from the very poor people, the singles and Galeview, the three rooms. So he got most of his support from them and not from the people here... there was already a housing shortage. The areas was built for 10 000 people but very soon there were [many more]. So accidents trebled, violence also, homelessness started. He knew about that and he thought he can perhaps ask them [the government] for houses and more ground.[89]

By the late 1960s this conditional support had dissipated further as he failed to deliver and as other political parties successfully mobilised support for their policies. In the CRC elections of 1969 the NCPP won only one seat nationally.[90] September and Clifford Smith lost their local contests and as a result their party rapidly faded into obscurity.

The Labour Party

This growing discontent among coloureds was channeled from the mid-1960s mainly into the newly formed Labour Party. The formation of the Labour Party in 1966 was a watershed in the politics of the 1960s and specifically in 'coloured politics'. Unlike other parties formed in anticipation of the CRC elections the Labour Party vocally opposed apartheid. The preamble of its constitution explicitly opposed "all forms of racial discrimination". The party also claimed it would campaign "for effective participation of all people in the government of the country."[91] Such public criticisms of the government at the height of apartheid were unheard of and earned the Labour Party the ire of the authorities. It was nevertheless reluctantly tolerated because its leaders, such as R.E. van der Ross, were known moderates[92] and the party intended in any event to participate in the CRC elections, despite its criticisms of separate representation. Notwithstanding its advocacy for non-racialism, it was an exclusive coloured political party operating in a system it purportedly rejected. These contradictions between the party's rhetoric and practice featured centrally throughout its history.

In the 1960s the Labour Party represented a legitimate voice of opposition for many young coloured radicals. When compared to the pro-government parties around at the time, the Labour Party unquestionably occupied the left end of the spectrum, albeit of 'coloured politics'. For Cravin Collis the Labour Party

> was the then allowed left-wing. It pursued the policies of the ANC given the constraints. It was a non-racial party. It believed South Africa should be shared by everybody.[93]

George Du Plessis shared this view and became an enthusiastic local leader of the party in the 1960s. He was first attracted to the Labour Party because the government labeled it 'communist'. Above all else the party appeared to endorse the policies of the Congress Movement, which he had supported in the 1950s. He recalls studying the Labour Party's constitution and found that it

> had almost everything that the Freedom Charter had in it. There should be affordable houses for people, education should be free, hospitalisation should be free. Beautiful things. And when the LP started, I can tell you this much, we were some of the first that went to Sonny Leon and Mr. Domingo in Bosmont to say that we'll start the LP. It was when the government regarded the LP as the terrorist group, the revolutionaries, the communists. We were called every bad name under the sun as far as the government was concerned. It was not easy. I remember I was picked up now and again for just being in the LP.[94]

These ideas also attracted many other young radical such as Don Materra, Mohamed Dangor and Hennie Ferris into the ranks of the Labour Party.[95] The idea that the party represented a continuation of the Congress Movement resonated strongly among such individuals. George Du Plessis claims the ANC in exile supported their entry into the Labour Party, an opinion shared by Dangor. The ANC and CPC for their part publicly criticised the Labour Party for being 'outright opportunist' and of "kowtowing to the Nationalists with hopes that they

could win anything for the Coloured community by waving about racialist and opportunist policies and rejecting unity with other groups."[96] The CPC also opposed the CRC elections, which it viewed as being 'undemocratic'.[97]

A branch of the party was formed in Reiger Park under the leadership of Simon Mentor, a local teacher who had been dismissed from his post and was then employed in a factory in the area. The oppositional policies of the party also attracted interest and support from a group of students at the local high school, especially the matriculant class of 1969. Two of the most prominent members of the latter group were Cravin Collis and Johnny Issel.[98] These students organised demonstrations against the first CRC elections and only supported the Labour Party because of its promise to disrupt the CRC. From the late 1960s the Labour Party was unquestionably the most popular party among coloureds nationally. It maintained this position throughout the 1970s, although the level of support for parties participating in government structures declined at the same time.

The party was nevertheless riddled by contradictions. It claimed to be a workers' party but its constitution explicitly repudiated communism.[99] It claimed to be a non-racial party but accepted the law that prohibited members of other 'races' from joining it, albeit under protest. Perhaps most important, the Labour Party purported to oppose the undemocratic and non-representative structures established by the government, but participated in the CRC elections, which in turn lent these structures some legitimacy. In the 1960s and early 1970s the party leadership successfully managed these obvious contradictions by arguing the party was intervening in the CRC in order to disrupt it. The radical matriculants of Reiger Park accepted this as a legitimate tactic. They believed the Labour Party "would go in to wreck the system, make it unworkable. To participate and to show it up as a fraud."[100]

Reflecting on his support for the Labour Party at the time, George Du Plessis acknowledges that there was a contradiction. But he argues,

> I could either sit back and say wait until I believe in non-racialism and do nothing. Be an arm-chair politician. We were living in a coloured township where all the blacks have moved out. I could go to Daveyton and speak to my friends and do

> nothing. Or I can be more active, do something and educate the people.[101]

For as long as the Labour Party appeared to be a genuine opposition to apartheid, activists of George's calibre were willing to support it. In reality though its attempts to make the system 'unworkable' were largely symbolic and ephemeral. The party boycotted the opening ceremony of the CRC and refused to participate in budgetary debates. However, from 1972 it abandoned this tactic and began participating fully in the important budget process.[102] Although the party retained a rhetorical opposition to apartheid, in practice it was more intimately drawn into the political system of separate development and representation, the very policies it previously rejected. From the early 1970s it also accepted executive positions on the CRC.[103]

As a result tensions emerged between the leaders of the Labour Party who justified this as a tactic designed to alter the system from within and those militants who remained committed to 'wrecking' the entire system. In the early and mid 1970s a number of young radicals, including Don Materra, Johnny Issel and George Du Plessis, parted ways with the Labour Party. Their growing disillusionment with the direction undertaken by the Labour Party was intensified by the emergence of a more radical political alternative – the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The arrival of BCM on to the political scene represented a turning point in the political lives of people like George Du Plessis. When he joined the Labour Party "there was no other political alternative available at the time, the realities of the situation limited the scope for radical alternatives. I knew at the time we could not have a non-racial type of thing." But, he recalls the profound influence of Black Consciousness at the time:

> when BC came up, people felt we can belong to other parties. They cannot have everybody put into jail.[104]

George remembers being influenced by students from the area. Johnny Issel, Cravin Collis and other colleagues from the matriculation class of 1969

enrolled at the University of the Western Cape in 1970 where they were immediately exposed to the BCM. They were influenced by fiery speeches by the likes of Barney Pityana, Strini Moodley and Themba Sono. According to Cravin Collis the students were exposed to

> A totally different ideological explanation about blackness. It was a refreshing thing to hear. We were slightly in a state of limbo. We started reading books by Fanon, Stokeley Carmichael, Malcolm X. The ideological framework these guys explained made total sense to me. For instance you're black and should be proud, black awareness, black actualisation.[105]

Collis believed the Labour Party embraced these ideas. The party's leadership consciously, and perhaps opportunistically, adopted some of the political discourse of Black Consciousness. David Curry, the deputy leader of the party, defended the Labour Party's association with black consciousness. In his view,

> Black identity is basically not a colour identity but a discovery by the person of his own worth and dignity. The oppressed classes, the so-called 'non-Whites', need this identity so that they can escape from the dehumanising process that is practised in South Africa. The term 'Black' is just a label given to this self-awakening... Black consciousness is discarding class structure the Whites have given us.[106]

In this way the Labour Party succeeded in retaining the support of even some young militants, like Collis. For most of the radical minority, however, the Labour Party had become anachronistic. For them the call for black unity was primary and parties that continued to be 'racially exclusive' and that worked in the system became obstacles to the struggle for black emancipation.

Nonetheless, the Labour Party continued to build on its already huge support among coloureds. The party's popularity was confirmed in the elections

of 1969 when it won 26 out of the 40 seats on the CRC that were up for contest. It was denied control of the CRC by the government's appointment of a further twenty members from the pro-government Federal Party. The Labour Party's strong showing in all the elections was due largely to its vociferous criticisms of the government, which resonated with the deep dissatisfaction felt by most coloureds. However, despite the party's overwhelming support nationally, it did not win the Reiger Park seat. The Labour Party's support was largely drawn from the middle class section of the area. These people were attracted to the party's political programme, especially its opposition to group areas. Many of them came from Benoni and still felt deep resentment over the forced removals. But the party failed to make serious inroads in the poorer, working class sections of the community. The Labour Party seemed to have paid less attention to bread and butter issues, which were of course most important to the poorer sections of the community. As a result it was perceived mainly as a party for the elite, especially those from Benoni.

Jac Rabie's Victory

The Federal Party, which until 1969 enjoyed hardly any following in the Transvaal, was the surprise winner of East Rand for the CRC. The Federal Party was the first coloured party to be formed, in July 1964, after the government announced plans to hold elections to the new body. Under the leadership of Tom Swartz, the Federal Party became a close ally of the government and openly endorsed the policies of separate development and group areas. Its economic policy explicitly called for the "protection of the Coloured People against infiltration by other races in their business areas".[107] The party's weak showing in the elections was mainly due to its conservatism. It attempted to mobilise support for the ideas of coloured separateness but found coloured people, especially in the urban areas, generally unreceptive to these ideas. Why then did it win in Reiger Park? More pertinently, did its victory mean that the residents of Reiger Park supported coloured nationalist ideas?

A few months before the 1969 elections it appeared the NCPP and Labour Party would be the only parties in the running for the East Rand seat. However, only months before the election the Federal Party convinced Jac Rabie to leave his hometown, Potchefstroom, to contest the election in Reiger Park. According to Rabie he did not even know where the place was and it took him some time before he found Federal Party supporters in the area. At that stage the party was the weakest of the main parties, with only twenty members in the local branch.[108] But, as his opponents soon discovered, Rabie was ambitious and determined to win the seat. His *modus operandi* caught the other parties by surprise. Cravin Collis who campaigned against the Federal Party reveals a grudging respect for Rabie:

> Rabie is a political animal. He is a politician by birth, he is a different kind of fish. He eats and drinks politics. Rabie could link politics to delivery. He was shrewd politician in terms of pragmatic things.[109]

Above all else Rabie successfully exploited the divisions in the community while promising at the same time that he would deliver houses. He was able to ward off the threat posed by September by accusing him, as the chairman of the CCC, of being responsible for not delivering houses and social amenities to poor people. Rabie argued that September had had six years to deliver on his promises, but had failed to do so and therefore could not be trusted with the leadership of the community. He was also able to downplay his party's conservative politics by criticising September's rigid nationalist position. September, in turn, accused Rabie of not being a 'pure coloured' because he looked like an Indian, but could not win much support for his racist invective. Moreover, September's racist outbursts allowed Rabie to conceal his own party's pro-segregation policies. He even publicly criticised apartheid.[110]

However, it was the manner in which he dealt with the Labour Party that illustrated his awareness of the divisions in Reiger Park and his astute ability – or shrewd opportunism – to exploit them. A central plank in Rabie's campaign was to accuse the middle class residents of Reiger Park of having sold out their poorer neighbours. He constantly reminded his growing band of supporters that these

were the people who opposed forced removals, but were the first to 'grab the best houses'. He singled out Bob Triegaardt as a prime example of how the middle class sold out the working class.[111] Rabie rarely played the 'race' card. Instead, this conservative politician used the 'class card' to win against a party that claimed to be a 'workers' party'. His cause was hugely assisted when his opponent labeled him a 'location rat', which pejorative label they thought would weaken his campaign. Instead this type of attack against Rabie only won him more support among the people living in the 'location' of Reiger Park. . Thus, the Labour Party's support among the township's elite (especially those originating from Benoni) turned out to be its undoing. Rabie's criticisms of the established leaders of Reiger Park were successful because he was new in the area and was untainted by the internecine conflicts that characterised politics in Reiger Park throughout the 1960s.

Rabie also argues that the Labour Party's criticisms of the CRC did not receive the same positive reception as it did in the Cape. Unlike coloureds in the Cape, those living in the Transvaal had never possessed the franchise. The removal of coloureds from the common voters' roll especially affected people from the Cape, who perceived it as a major blow against their democratic rights and from whom there was a universal rejection of the separate voters' roll introduced in the 1950s. Thus the creation of the CRC, and the concomitant racialised voting, held few attractions to coloureds from the Cape. The Labour Party's promise of 'wrecking' the system therefore had a much greater appeal to them. But for coloureds in the Transvaal the flawed franchise given to them by the government was a novel experience. In the Cape, the CRC election was viewed as a step back, in the Transvaal it seemed to open the way for further political advances. As a result there was an 81,5% poll in Reiger Park.[112] Finally, Rabie won the elections because he successfully canvassed in the outlying areas of the constituency, which included all the areas on the East Rand, as well as the adjacent peri-urban and rural areas. His opponents completely ignored coloured voters outside Reiger Park, much to their detriment.

Therefore, in contrast to his colleagues in the Federal Party, Rabie did not contest the elections on the party's political programme. He recognised the limited

support pro-apartheid ideas had among coloureds at the time. Whereas the Labour Party and the CNNP campaigned on the basis of their respective and divergent party programmes, Rabie did so by promising to improve the lot of poor people. Whether he was committed to effecting such improvements was a secondary issue at the time.

From 1969 Jac Rabie won every election held in Reiger Park with increased majorities each time. He was able to secure his position primarily because from 1970 the government began to provide housing and amenities in the area. In 1970, for example, a new extension (the so-called MMs) consisting of 152 houses were built. The authorities allowed Rabie to take the credit for these developments. Rabie and his cohorts in Reiger Park also effectively played one section of the state against the other to win some reforms for residents. The Boksburg Council objected to any extension of Reiger Park and refused to negotiate with Rabie over this matter. However, Rabie went over their heads and appealed directly to the Department of Community Development, which was more aware of the housing crisis facing coloureds nationally. At this stage the central government proved more willing to make more land available for coloured group areas. Rabie convinced the Department of Community Development to intercede in the dispute between it and the Council, which resulted in the Council conceding the creation of further extensions to Reiger Park. It was also during this time that the policy of separate development gained more support because it began to be associated with material improvements in the lives of the poorest sections of the coloured community.

From the time the government announced its plans to establish the CRC, Reiger Park (as well as other coloured group areas) entered a new era of politics. Party politics, which had previously been absent among the East Rand's coloured population, burst onto the scene and gained momentum in the run-up to the first elections to the CRC in 1969. Two distinct trends emerged in 'coloured politics' during this period. First, was the birth of a new breed of politician, whose character and existence were determined by its close association with the government. These politicians generally had no previous record of community or political involvement, enjoyed little public support and were invariably

conservative. The emergence of party politics also created the space, albeit very limited, within which oppositional groups could operate. The Labour Party effectively used this space to articulate its objections to apartheid, while simultaneously participating in 'racially' exclusive structures. Politics in the Indian group area was less developed than in Reiger Park, mainly because the government had delayed creating a national structure such as the CRC for Indians. In addition, the TIC, the predominant political organisation of Indians on the East Rand since the 1940s suffered heavily under the state's repression. Without it, politics in Actonville was subdued and alternative political organisations found it extremely difficult to build any meaningful support, even in the 1970s. As a result the activities of the Consultative Committee became the focal point of politics in the area. Despite this parochialism, opposing political trends also developed in Actonville. Abram-Mayet represented the strong pro-government tendency, which controlled the ICC from its inception. His opponents were largely drawn from the ranks of the TIC. The latter were not as well organised as the critics of the government in the coloured group areas, but nevertheless used the limited space available to them to articulate oppositional views. These local examples of opposition suggest that the politics of the 1960s were far more textured and varied than has been suggested by the literature on the period. This is hardly surprising considering that there existed deep-seated animosity towards the government in the wake of the forced removals and repression. The state's repression and forced removal dealt severe blows to the black opposition movement. However, even at the height of the apartheid state's power, the voices of opposition in the black communities were never completely silenced.

ENDNOTES

[1] G. Bloch, 'Sounds in the Silence: Painting a Picture of the 1960s' in *Africa Perspective*, No.25, 1984, pp.6-7

[2] For example the Defence Amendment Act of 1961, Sabotage Act of 1962 and the ninety-day detention law of 1963.

[3] G. Bloch, 'Sounds in the Silence' This important article directly challenged the idea that the 1960s were simply 'a time of silence and defeat'. The article, however, fails to live up to its promise and focuses mostly on the 'contradictions and strains' prevalent in the apartheid system. These issues were undoubtedly important. But the article does not show that there were many local opposition voices. These took on different forms from that of the 1950s or post-1973 periods, but they were nonetheless important, especially in the context of severe repression.

[4] *Benoni City Times*, 29.08.58

[5] Interviews with P.R. Deeva, Benoni, 17.11.2000, Harriet and Abel Cindi, Daveyton, 13.11.2000 and George Du Plessis, Reiger Park, 27.10.2000

[6] *Benoni City Times*, 13.03.59

[7] Interview with John De Jager, Midrand, 11.11.2000

[8] Central Archives Depot (CAD), Files of the Department of Planning (BEP) 172, G7/143/4, "Memorandum from the Asiatic Association of Asiatic Bazaar to the Under Secretary of Indian Affairs, 17/05/62"

[9] Ibid

[10] CAD, BEP 172, G7/143/4, "Letter from Department of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Department of Community Development, 25/05/62"

[11] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 02/10/59, "Council wants to improve Indian living conditions"

[12] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 09/10/59, "Smuts-Gandhi agreement allows Bhyats to trade in Boksburg"

[13] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 09/10/59, "Smuts-Gandhi agreement allows Bhyats to trade in Boksburg"

[14] Reiger Park was the new extension built next to Stirtonville. Once all the African residents had been removed from Stirtonville, the whole area was renamed Reiger Park.

[15] Interview, Bob Triegaardt, Reiger Park, 10.11.2000

[16] Ibid

[17] Interview,Cravin Mxolisi Collis

[18] Interview,George Du Plessis

[19] Interviews, George Du Plessis and John De Jager

[20] Ibid. Because Mary Moodley was married to an Indian man she was allowed to stay in the newly proclaimed Indian group area. Don Mateman was barred from Benoni and eventually moved to Newclare, then Eldorado Park where he became a member of the Management Committee in the 1980s.

[21] CAD, Municipality of Benoni Records (MB) 2/3/97, AN.10 (1), Extracts from Minutes of the Management Committee, 12.11.63, 'Resettlement of Residents from Benoni Bantu Township'. The Ministeries of Bantu Affairs and Community Development were especially concerned by the delays in the removals.

[22] Dinah Maile and P.P. Legodi remained on the Payneville Advisory Board in the 1950s, ensuring the Board retained a measure of opposition to the authorities.

[23] CAD, Municipality of Springs Records (MSP) 1/2/1/13 Minutes of the Management Committee, April 1962 and CAD, MSP, Minutes of the Management Committee, Copy of the Minutes of the Payneville Advisory Board, January 1963

[24] *The World*, 22.03.63

[25] Interviews, Alekiah Nyamane, Daveyton, 08.11.2000 and Harriet and Abel Cindi, Daveyton, 13.11.2000

[26] *The World*, 22.03.63

[27] *The World*, 11.04.63

[28] *The World*, 12.06.63

[29] CAD, MB 2/3/97, AN 10 (1), Extracts from Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting, 5.12.62 The first step after objections were lodged was for the same valuator to reconsider his initial recommendation. If there were further objections residents could take the matter to a revision court. Residents realised there was little chance of success.

[30] Ibid

[31] CAD, MB 2/3/97, AN.10 (1), Extracts from Minutes of the Management Committee, 10.03.64

[32] CAD, MB 2/3/97, AN.10 (2), Benoni Town Council to The Bantu Affairs Commissioner, 27.11.64

[33] CAD, MB 2/3/97, AN.10 (2), Extract from Minutes of Management Committee, September 1966, 'Disestablishment of Benoni Bantu Township'

[34] CAD, MB 2/3/97, AN.10 (2), Extracts from Minutes of the Management Committee, 8.11.66, Pamphlet by Benoni and Wattville Action Committee

[35] Interview P.R. Deeva. John De Jager, George Du Plessis and Ed Cindi are among the prominent activists who chose this kind of activity in the 1960s

[36] Interview, S. Abram-Mayet, Benoni, 28.10.2000

[37] Interview, P.R. Deeva

[38] CAD, Department of Community Development (DCD), 16/7/3/5 (1), undated newsclipping from the *The Graphic*

[39] *Benoni City Times*, 05.03.65. The first five members appointed to the ICC were S. Abram-Mayet, G.R. Moodley (owner of fruit business, honourary life vice-president of the Benoni Tamil School Board), A.A. Karolia (businessman and chairman of the Benoni and District Muslim Jamaat, and chairman of the Benoni District Commercial Association), Moonsamy Thaimen (businessman and chairman of the Benoni Tamil School Board), A.A. Louton (secretary of the William Hills High School for 15 years)

[40] *Benoni City Times*, 07.04.67

[41] Mayet, who was only twenty-five at the time, lived in Brentwood Park (a peri-urban area next to Benoni) and played no role at all in the politics of the area. Despite his endorsement by the authorities and white society, Mayet had no experience in politics. Interestingly, he continued to live in Brentwood Park until the early 1970s.

[42] *Benoni City Times*, 07.04.67

[43] *Benoni City Times*, 29.12.67

[44] Ibid

[45] CAD, GEM H8/1/8 Vol A, 'Lys van name van Indiers vir aanstelling op Raadplegende of Bestuurskomittee' and CAD, TPB 27-3-5 (1), 'Raadplegende Komitee, Actonville, Benoni', 22.02.67

[46] *Benoni City Times*, 12.03.65

[47] CAD, TPB 27-3-5 (1), S. Abram-Mayet to T.B. Verschuur (Department of Local Affairs), 10.01.66. Mayet wanted Daya to publish a statement to this effect in the local press.

[48] CAD, TPB 27-3-5(1), Secretary of Indian Affairs to Secretary of Community Development, 'Raadplegende Komitee, Actonville, Benoni', 22.02.67

[49] CAD, DCD 903, 16/7/3/5 (2), 'Memorandum from the Secretary of Indian Affairs', 02.04.71. In 1971, after repeated denials of this fact and defence of Mayet, the government acknowledged that controversy surrounded the ICC and Mayet from its establishment in 1965.

[50] CAD, TPB, 27-3-6 (2), 'Memorandum: Sale of houses to Indians, Actonville Extension No.3, 1.08.66

[51] A Mr. Naicker and M. Padayachee were in the forefront of this campaign

[52] CAD, TPB 27-3-6 (2), See Affidavits by residents.

[53] CAD, TPB 27-3-6 (2), Report of the Management Committee, 30.11.67, Letter from the Director of Non-European Affairs, 2.10.67

[54] Interview with Joyce Moodley

[55] CAD, TPB 27-3-6 (2), Report of the Management Committee, 30.11.67, Report by the Chairman of the Indian Consultative Committee, 19.09.67

[56] CAD, TPB 27-3-5 (1) 'Petition, Re: Renaming of the streets, Actonville Township Benoni', undated

[57] CAD, TPB 27-3-5 (1), Notice of the 'Mass Inauguration Meeting to be held on 4 September 1966'

[58] B.R. Dewa played a prominent role in the Passive Resistance Campaign in 1947 for which he was imprisoned and in the 1950s served on the local executive of the TIC. He was the brother of P.R. Deeva.

[59] Interview with P.R. Deeva

[60] CAD, DCD 903, 16/7/3/5 (1), 'Raadplegende Komitee: Actonville: Lys van moontlike komiteelede' (undated)

[61] CAD, DCD 903, 16/7/3/5 (1), 'Verslag oor Indierraadplegende Komitee – Actonville, Benoni: Dienstermyn 3 Maart, 1965 – Maart 1967' (Written by Abram-Mayet)

[62] CAD, DCD 903, 16/7/3/5 (2), Actonville Indian Ratepayers' and Tenants' Association to Mr. M.E.Sultan, 10.03.71. A cheque of R200 was made out to Mayet as a bribe for obtaining a house

[63] CAD, DCD 903, 16/7/3/5 (2), Regional Representative of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of Indian Affairs, 08.03.71

[64] S.T. van der Horst, *The Theron Commission Report*, p.63

[65] Interview, Valerie Klou, Reiger Park, 10.11.2000

[66] Ibid

[67] *Boksburg Advertiser*, July 1966

[68] Interview, George Du Plessis

[69] Ibid

[70] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 23.04.65

[71] Interview, D. Cassel, Reiger Park, 30.10.2000. The Herschellites eventually grew tired of Big Fish, beat him up and then handed him over to the police.

[72] Interview, Valerie Klou

[73] Interviews, Valerie Klou and Bob Triegaardt.

[74] S.T. van der Horst, *The Theron Commission Report*, pp.113-114

[75] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 29.11.63

[76] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*, p.307

[77] Interview, Bob Triegaardt, who was his neighbour in the Cape Section

[78] Interviews, D.Cassel and George Du Plessis

[79] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 30.10.70

[80] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 31.01.69

[81] Interview, Cravin Collis

[82] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 12.03.65

[83] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 23.04.65

[84] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 26.03.65

[85] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 04.07.66

[86] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 30.04.65

[87] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 30.04.65 and 27.08.65

[88] *Boksburg Advertiser*, 30.07.65

[89] Interview, George Du Plessis

[90] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*, p.311

[91] Ibid, p.307

[92] Soon after playing a leading role in forming the Labour Party, van der Ross resigned as leader to take up a senior post in the Department of Coloured Affairs

[93] Interview, Cravin Collis

[94] Interview, George Du Plessis

[95] Numerous activists and leaders of the liberation movement from the mid-1970s were involved in the Labour Party at its inception. Mattera became a Black Consciousness activist and Dangor and Ferris were ANC members. Henry Ferris' funeral is often cited as one of the key moments when the ANC emerged publicly in the country. The ANC's flag was defiantly hoisted by mourners at the funeral.

[96] A. la Guma, 'The Time Has Come', *Sechaba*, May, 1967

[97] University of the Witwatersrand, Historicaland Literary Papers, African National Congress files, AD 2186, M6, Coloured People's Congress pamphlet, 'We Shall Win', undated

[98] Johnny Issel later became a leading figure in the United Democratic Front in the Western Cape.

[99] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*, p.307

[100] Interview, Cravin Collis

[101] Interview, George Du Plessis

[102] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*, p.311

[103] S.T. van der Horst, *The Theron Commission Report*, p.111

[104] Interview, George Du Plessis

[105] Interview, Cravin Collis

[106] *The Argus*, 7.02.72

[107] R.E. van der Ross, *The Rise and Decline of Apartheid*, p.307

[108] Interview, Jac Rabie, Boksburg, 10.11.2000

[109] Interview, Cravin Collis

[110] Interview, Jac Rabie

[111] Ibid

[112] Ibid

CONCLUSION

This study has shown how urban apartheid came to be implemented on the East Rand from 1948 to 1973. It has stressed that the key imperatives behind this exercise in urban social engineering were the stabilisation and control of the urban black population, and the imposition of compulsory 'racial' segregation. The achievement of these objectives became especially urgent during the 1940s when the urban areas were engulfed in crises caused by the rapid industrial expansion and the ensuing mass influx of tens of thousands of job-seekers, especially Africans, into the urban areas. It has been argued that the inability of the state, and particularly the local authorities, to manage this transformation was the prime cause of these strains escalating into a full crisis. The urban black population responded to this situation be engaging in numerous struggles to improve their living conditions. The white population for their part was gripped by the fear of being swamped by a politically militant black population. Industrialists were concerned about the instability of labour, which threatened to undermine their businesses. Under these pressures the state began to formulate policies to address the urban crisis.

The thesis has demonstrated that the Nationalist Party adopted many of the policies developed by the United Party in the 1940s when it came to power in 1948. Some emphasis has therefore been placed on the continuities between the policies of these two parties, especially in relation to the urban black population. Whereas the United Party often prevaricated in the adoption and implementation of these policies, the Nationalist Party pursued them with single-minded determination.

Yet, the Nationalist Party did not come to power with a blue-print of apartheid. Hence a central piece of apartheid legislation, the Group Areas Act, was bereft of details and strategy of how it would be implemented. A primary focus of this study is the attempts by the apartheid government to provide the detailed plans, strategies and mechanisms to realise its ideological objectives. The government only began to give serious attention to these matters towards the end

of its first term of office. After adopting the recommendations of the Mentz and Subsidiary Planning Committees, the government was armed with a 'grand plan' for the restructuring of the East Rand and the scene was apparently set for the rapid 'racial' restructuring of the region.

However, throughout the 1950s the government was unable to implement this 'grand plan'. The mounting black resistance in the 1950s, and especially the Transvaal Indian Congress' opposition to the GAA, placed serious obstacles before the government. The opposition that emanated from local authorities and other local white institution also caused considerable delays in the implementation of the government's policies. A central theme in the thesis is the examination of the local government-central government relations. During this period the balance of power between the central government and local authorities, and between the state and the black population was still too evenly balanced for the authorities simply to impose its policies as it wished and local authorities were able to exert considerable influence on the process of the implementation of apartheid. Thus the introduction of group areas in the East Rand was delayed until the 1960s because local authorities objected on certain issues.

The government enjoyed much greater success in the 1960s in implementing its policies. From the early 1960s forced removals escalated and group areas were declared. But as a consequence of poor planning on its part, as well as the continued objections from black communities and certain municipalities, the government was forced to abandon its 'grand plan' for group areas on the East Rand.

The one area where the authorities did succeed in implementing an important part of its restructuring of the East Rand was the establishment of Daveyton. This study has stressed the importance of Daveyton's establishment because it represented a major success of *practical* apartheid. During the first ten years of its existence Daveyton was regularly hailed as having solved a serious squatter problem and for providing housing to thousands of African residents. It has been demonstrated that this township played a crucial role in **stabilising** and **controlling** Benoni's restive African population. In the early 1960s this was augmented by improved job opportunities. Many of the first residents of Daveyton

also had positive views about it. They were squatters and lodgers in the old location and thus benefited from the mass housing provision in the new township.

This thesis has argued that the successes represented by Daveyton were made possible by the political convergence between the conservative United Party-dominated Benoni Council and the *practical* wing of the Nationalist that controlled the government. The study also highlights the pivotal role played by local 'native affairs' officials in shaping and determining the implementation of urban apartheid. Thus J.E. Mathewson's concurrence with the views espoused by Verwoerd on stabilising urban Africans was a critical factor in the development of a co-operative relationship between these tiers of the state. It is suggested that if any township were to succeed as a model of apartheid engineering it would have been Daveyton.

However, even as the township's successes were being lauded, the government began to introduce policies that would ultimately undermine these successes. The thesis supports and expands on Posel's view that the policy changes introduced in the late 1950s and early 1960s marked a turning point in apartheid. The shift to apartheid's second phase was characterised by the policies of 'separate development' and 'community development'. This involved both the promotion of the 'homelands' for Africans and 'racialised' governance for coloureds and Indians. The establishment of these bodies illustrated the government's policy of separate political representation, which aimed to develop national and local political structures in which the different black 'races' could exercise the limited political 'rights' given to them. A primary consequence of this shift in policy was that the 'rights' of urban Africans came under systematic attack in the 1960s.

This study places the residents of the urban 'black spots' of the East Rand at the centre of its analysis and narrative. Their struggles, trials and tribulations and suffering are constantly highlighted. Urban 'black spots' were, in the words of an informant, 'homes to strange nation'. The social and political relations between the various 'races' in these locations are subjected to scrutiny. This thesis argued that they were diverse and ambiguous, and were simultaneously prone to conflict and harmony. It also rejects any simplistic characterisation of these relations.

Notwithstanding the numerous social cleavages that existed among the residents of these locations, the 1950s witnessed the emergence of nascent black working class unity. This occurred unevenly but was most developed in Benoni Old Location where the Congress Movement gave political expression to it in the late 1950s. The resistance against forced removals in the late 1950 was an important example of this unity.

However, as the thesis shows, this unity was shattered by the repression of the early 1960s. The effects of this repression and the institution of 'racialised' political structures fundamentally altered the character of politics in the 1960s. The thesis analyses the ways in which the government attempted to engender support for group areas, but failed to convince the majority of coloured and Indians whose main experience of the government's policies was of displacement and social decline.

This study has stressed the importance of analysing the making of apartheid during the 1960s. The analysis provided here shows some of the stresses and strains that were developing during this period of 'high apartheid'. Moreover, it highlights the revival of political opposition from the mid-1960s. The rapidly declining social conditions of African townships from the late 1960s contributed significantly to igniting the political upsurge of the 1970s. The stabilisation of the urban working class provided the primary actors in that revolutionary movement. Thus any analysis of the huge anti-apartheid struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, which have received so much scholarly attention, should necessarily proceed from an understanding of the dynamic processes of the 1960s.

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Files of the Secretary of the Land Tenure Advisory Board (ARG)

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6643	179/313v
7154	971/323
7685	241/332
7689	325/332
7691	365/332
7694	436/332

8056	1039/400
9761-2	903/400
9795	1039/400

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1/4/9 – 1/4/35: January 1946 – February 1961

Municipality of Brakpan Records (MBP)

Minutes of the Native Affairs Committee

Boxes	*Files*
2/2/154 – 5	2/4/15 (2)
2/2/211	3/3/1
2/2/283	3/8/25
2/2/340	3/12/1 (4)
2/2/709	13/2/1 (1)
2/2/747	14/1/5
2/2/754 – 758	14/1/9
2/2/759	14/1/10 – 12
2/2/761	14/1/14
2/2/763	14/1/17
2/2/768	14/1/20
2/2/769 – 773	14/1/21
2/2/773	14/1/23
2/2/774	14/1/26
2/2/775 – 6	14/1/30
2/2/791	14/1/44
2/2/793	14/1/53
2/2/794	14/1/58
2/2/798	14/1/75-6
2/2/819	14/2/18
2/2/823-26	14/3/2
2/2/859	14/6/26
2/2/863	14/6/26
2/2/866	14/6/35
2/2/867	14/6/38
2/2/868	14/6/41
2/2/869	14/6/43
2/2/871	14/6/47

2/2/937 16/6/11
2/2/1060 – 1 18/7/6 (1-3)

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1/3/5/25 – 13/5/1/45: July 1950 - February 1961

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Files: H5/57/5, H5/57/14, H5/57/15, H8/1/23

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Municipality of Benoni

Boxes	*Files*
207 – 230	G1/4
388	G1/4

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