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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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Title: "Because Your Yard is too Big" : Squatter Struggles, the Local State and Dual Power in Uitenhage, 1985-1986.

by: Mark Swilling

No. 227

I

"Because Your Yard is Too Big": SQUATTER STRUGGLES, THE LOCAL STATE AND DUAL POWER IN UITENHAGE, 1985-1986

> "I will build my shack right in the back yard of the white man's house. And when he wakes up the next morning and asks why I have built a shack in his yard, I'll say: 'Because your yard is too big.'" - Langa Resident

INTRODUCTION

By focussing largely on the struggle Langa's squatters waged against forced removal, this chapter will attempt to analyse the complex interactions between local township administrators, the white establishment, employers, community organisations and trade unions. To understand this complexity, the romantic conception of unstratified communities united against a monolithinc state needs to be jettisoned. Instead, the internal workings of both the social movements and state apparatuses must be studied. This cannot be achieved, however, without taking into account the impact social movements have on the state and how the actions of state officials affect the strategies of social movements. Furthermore, this relationship does not exist outside the influence employer interests exert on the local state and the way this influence is mediated by trade union pressure.

As this chapter will show, once the object of study is extended in this way, social processes come to light that call into question two teleologies. The first is the optimistic view that social movements are only important to the extent that they contribute to the build-up of a national movement that will, at some moment in the future, detonate the collapse of the state. The second is the pessimistic view that social movements only win those concessions that structural conditions allow ruling class interests to concede (1). In both cases, the impact of local movements and how they determine the terms of social organisation is ignored. For the former, the structure of society will only be transformed when the moment of revolution arrives and not before. As far as the latter is concerned, any changes that do take place, occur on terms determined almost entirely by the ruling class.

The struggle of Langa's squatters helps demonstrate that gains can be won through struggle prior to the moment of fundamental change and that these concessions are not necessarily congruent with what the dominant classes aimed to achieve.

Langa was a township of about 1000 houses and 6000 shacks. It used to be adjacent to Uitenhage's central business district and contained about 50 000 residents. Although designated for removal in terms of the Group Areas Act since the 1950s, and despite forced

removals in the 1960s and 1970s, Langa survived. This is the story of its last stand before being finally wiped out in July-August 1986 (see maps in Appendix A + B).

To anticipate the argument, there were in fact five aspects of Langa's pattern and form of political mobilisation and organisation that determined its impact on the state. Firstly, and most importantly from a symbolic point of view, there was the Langa Massacre. This generated enough national and international attention to prompt the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. Secondly, Langa had become one of the most organised working class communities in the Eastern Cape. Thirdly, Langa's squatters had begun to construct their shacks in a way that made police patrols impossible, thus effectively rendering parts of the community, in the words of a local policeman, "uncontrollable". Fourthly, the community leaders were prepared to enter the risky area of negotiations. Finally, by forging unity within the working class between community organisations, youth movementes and trade unions, and then using this to force business to support key community demands, the Langa community signficantly increased pressure on the state to address its grievances.

The power mobilised by the social movement was enhanced by tensions within and between the state apparatuses and employer organisations. The collapse of the council, trade union and international pressure on Volkswagen, rightwing political tendencies in the white community and tensions between local and central state representatives and between these and the security forces, all played themselves out in ways that initially gave the social movement space to win some key victories. However, as the next chapter will show, these forces eventually lined up behind a coercive option after the declaration of the 1986 State of Emergency that led to the decimation of the social movement.

FROM MOBILISATION TO MASS ORGANISATION

The massacre, the revenge on Kinikini and rising levels of conflict between the community and security forces in Langa, transformed popular consciousness. As thousands flocked to join community organisations, the activists had to find new creative ways of coping with a mass base in the context of heightened repression.

The most significant feature of the post-massacre period is the rapid mobilisation and organisation of different constituencies; a process which was uneven, frequently undirected and often contradictory. It was this process that transformed daily life in Uitenhage's townships as schools, factories, community halls, shebeens and shacks all became abodes for the relentless struggle for control and power. Weza Made described the atmosphere when he said:

> "Uitenhage is the Ovambo of the Eastern Cape. What you hear about Ovambo, its happening in Uitenhage. Brutal killing of people, kidnappings, disappearances, lot of things." (2)

Throughout 1985 and into 1986, resistance of one form or another disrupted schools and factories. (These workplace and educational struggles will not be discussed here because community struggles are the focus of this paper.)

The so-called "youth" were the most potent force to emerge from the battles of township resistance during 1984-86 (3). In Uitenhage the "youth" became important in a number of roles, i.e. defense, door-to-door organisation, ideological direction and crime control. Although the details of youth organisation will be dealt with in a later section, it is necessary at this stage to unpack the rather amorphous meaning of the word "youth". In general, the "youth" in township political culture refers roughly to a political generation that lies somewhere between the school pupils and employed workers. There are, however, important overlaps. In the Uitenhage area, those who constituted the "youth" can be divided into roughly 3 categories. The leadership of the youth congress came essentially from a farely well educated group of young workers, unemployed young men and students. It was largely male and most were in their mid-1920s. This group had a remarkably clear political ideology derived from a reading of the alternative media, banned literature (usually ANC material) and some well used Marxist texts (especially Lenin) published by Progress and Lawrence and Wishart. Other influences included regional or national gatherings, workshops and discussions with leaders or old timers from the 1950s. Many of these people remember 1976 and the leaders of that period as important early political experiences.

There was a relatively small group of young employed workers who were less politically articulate and probably the least significant component of the "youth" constituency. Although this group overlaps in obvious ways with the formal employed working class constituency, it did nevertheless constitute an important grouping active in both youth congress and trade union activities. As such, it helped bridge differences later on.

From the perspective of shear numbers, the most important component of the "youth" were the largely uneducated unemployed. These people were the product of prolonged school boycotts that had forced them out onto the streets, age limit restrictions and structural unemployment. Exacerbating this was the fact that because there were no schools in Langa for africans, it was frequently too expensive for the poorest parents to afford the busfares pupils required to travel to Kwanobuhle. All these pressures produced desperate young men who lived on the fringes of legality and who soon found a home in the social movements as political tensions rose. Their ages ranged from between twelve and twenty-five, although most were teenagers. A large number came from extremely poor families who lived in shacks and whose main breadwinner would invariably be unemployed. Interestingly, some of the more renowned members of this group came from families who had strong rural links and still displayed traditional dress and make-up, such as ocre-painted faces and headdresses. Some of the men dressed up as women.

Out of this lumpenproletariat came essentially two types of political actors. The one was the person who had for some time been a petty criminal and came into the social movements largely because by adopting an anti-state resistance ideology he could legitimise

his illegal activities by defining them as being in the interests a social good. Their anti-social sub-culture and predisposition to use violence to give effect to policy decisions existed uncomfortably alongside the social and communal morality that imbued the ideology of national resistance and their own desire to be re-absorbed into the community. However, there were elements who were products of the schools movement rather than lumpen groups and they joined the youth movement because they were disillusioned with non-violence. It is essential to note that the youth congress leadership and the UDF affiliates in general had very little control over these so-called "amabutho" groups (4).

Finally, there was the constituency loosely referred to in township political jargon as "the residents". Obviously this group also overlaps with the employed working class and "youth" constituencies, but given an unemployment rate of at least 56% - a figure that is usually based on records of job seekers (5) - there was obviously a sizeable proportion of family heads who were unemployed (6). The residents of Langa, then, were those employed and unemployed working class people who were responsible for the erection and running of the household, most of which were shacks. White opposition to the existence and spread of Langa soon mobilised the residents in tightly structured organisations aimed at "protecting the community".

After the massacre, community organisations experienced a huge inflow of members and for the first time, mass-based grassroots structures were established. Two interlinked forms of organisation emerged. To represent specific constituencies, there were a range of constituency-based organisations. These included UYCO, Uitenhage Womens Organisation (UWO), Uitenhage Students Congress (USCO), Uitenhage Parents Crisis Committee, Uitenhage Traders Association, Consumer Boycott Committee and trade unions. In January 1986 the Uitenhage Residents Civic Organisation (URECO) was formed specifically to take up "civic" issues, a function that UYCO had been fulfilling up until then. Alongside the constituency-based structures, locality-based multi-constituency structures emerged, namely the street and area committees. Although these were started as early as 1984 by people who simply needed to coordinate social functions in an unregulated unserviced commuhnity, by the end of 1985 they had been politicised and became the bedrock of a tight well organised resistance network. Nearly all Langa's streets had street committees which in turn elected representatives to five area committees. Whereas the actual membership of the street committees varied in size, the area committees stabilised at about ten members each (more on this later).

The first community-based campaign that was mounted after the massacre was the consumer boycott. Although originating from within the youth congress, the initial boycotts gained support. Uitenhage experienced more consumer boycotts than any other town during the 1985-86 period. Consumer boycotts were called for the following periods:

* April-July 1985;
* late July - 27th September 1985;
* 11th October - 14th December 1985;
* 1st January 1986 - 10th March 1986;

* June 1986 - 4th January 1987.

Four out of five boycotts were triggered by a decisive state action that directly affected the community: the first was a response to the massacre, the second followed the declaration of the 1985 State of Emergency, the third was called three days after eviction notices were handed out to 426 squatter households and the fifth was announced after the 1986 State of Emergency was declared.

The consumer boycott demands can be divided into local and national ones. The local ones were: students be allowed to form SRCs; reinstatement of dismissed workers at Volkswagen; upgrade rather than removal of Langa. The national demands were release of detainees; unbanning of UDF meetings; withdrawal of troops; killers of CRADOCK leaders be charged (added in July); leaders must not be killed, kidnapped or harassed.

Unlike the Port Elizabeth boycott, the Uitenahage boycott was not nearly as successful, nor did it have as dramatic an impact. There were four reasons for this: firstly, unlike most Eastern Cape towns, Uitenhage's african community is located in two townships to the north and south of the white town. This made it difficult to organise a united and synchronised response from the two communities because each faced very different problems related to the fact that in Langa people were poorer, black shops with appropriate goods were less available, the imperatives of the anti-removal struggle often conflicted with those of the largely Kwanobuhle led consumer boycott, and anatagonisms between the youth and residents often produced a reaction against the boycott. Secondly, the trade unions never threw their full weight behind the boycotts. Thirdly, the consumer boycotts dragged on for too long without any meaningful concessions being won. Fourthly, Uitenhage did not have a local Chamber of Commerce imbued with the same liberal ideological bias that Tony Gilson and his colleagues gave the Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce.

To emphasise the role of the youth in the boycotts, it must be pointed out the militaristic sub-culture of the amabutho militated against the successful implementation of this strategy. Shaped by the dynamic of ongoing street battles with the security forces, the consciousness of the amabutho was not sensitive enough to the complex task of organisation, persuasion and tactical decision-making. Furthermore, smouldering power struggles between the UDF and trade union leaderships, created considerable tensions between amabutho groups and NAAWU workers. It was these tensions between the unemployed, unionised workes and residents that undercut the consumer boycott.

The rest of this chapter will show that it was the struggle over the terms of reproduction of the labour force rather than consumption or production struggles that was to facilitate the building of working class unity in Uitenhage. There is little truth in Glenn Adler's callous generalisation that in Uitenhage "working class responses to worsening social and economic conditions were at best completely uncoordinated during 1985, or at worst in direct conflict." (7)

WHITE FEARS VERSUS SQUATTER RESISTANCE

The squatter's struggle against removal began in earnest in May after 350 white ratepayers signed a petition drafted by the deputy Mayor, Mr. Bokkie Human, handed to the deputy Minister of Cooperation and Development, Dr. G de V Morrison. It called for the removal of Langa's squatters. Refuting press reports that East Cape Administration Board (ECAB) was planning the removal, the Director, Louis Koch, quickly pointed out that Langa fell under the jurisdiction of the Kwanobuhle Town Council (KTC) and that ECAB's only function is the technical provision of housing and infrastructure (8).

By this stage, however, KTC was not only defunct because the Council had resigned, but also because an Administrator had yet yet to be appointed. This bureaucratic confusion within the state was a crucial moment for the Langa community because it meant there was no coherent or capable authority that could respond immediately and with sufficient force to implement the demands of the white community. Nor was there sufficient agreement on the issue between the local NP MP and the Uitenhage municipality over how to deal with the issue (9). There is very little likelihood that Langa's community organisations could have instigated united resistance against removal if the state had acted immediately, coherently and with sufficient force. In the event, bureaucratic confusion meant there was sufficient time and space for the community organisations to organise a response and develop appropriate organisational forms.

Soon after the press carried reports of the white petition, a meeting of 1 800 people representing youth, student, women's and community organisations met on Sunday 26th May to discuss the threatened removal. The meeting called on the KTC to upgrade Langa and rejected the proposed removal. It was decided that a delegation should meet the KTC to inquire about plans to remove Langa. The delegation comprised youth congress, area committee and trade union representatives. Its leader was B. Haas (UYCO activist and chairperson of the coordinating committee of area committees in Kwanobuhle), and the rest were W. Made (UYCO - Langa), B. Sandi (area committees), S. Mandabana (MACWUSA), P. Speelman (area committees), G. Nojilama (area committees) and S. Nxusa (area committees). Significantly, this delegation excluded FOSATU unionists and the clergy.

Deftly exploiting the bureacratic confusion in township administration, the spokesperson for the delegation, Weza Made, said that "since Mr. Louis Koch made it clear that he was not responsible for the removals and said that it was the council, we would like to ask [the ex-mayor] Mr. Tini to clarify that comment." (EPH, 20.5.85) Made went on to say that the Sunday meeting had resolved to call on the KTC to upgrade rather than remove Langa, and to build "decent low-rent houses". According to Made:

> "The people decided they will not be able to afford the high rents in Kwanobuhle. Most of the squatters are unemployed or on short time. Most people are dependent on pensions and money paid by their lodgers. The people are aware that living

> conditions in the area are bad in terms of health. But the people [have] asked the town clerk to develop the area and make it healthier." (10)

When the press contacted Tini, he referred all questions to the town clerk claiming he had disassociated himself from the council. Coetzee, speaking for the KTC, said that he had recieved no requests from the community to upgrade Langa. He said: "If I recieve such a request I will evaluate it and discuss it with the Department of Cooperation and Development. Those concerned may either come and see me or put their request in writing." Before Langa is removed, he claimed, a long negotiation process would have to be completed:

> "I must first find out what the people want. I'm not going to force anyone to move." (11)

Coetzee maintained that KTC was doing three things to control Uitenahage's squatters: firstly, it had already prepared 3 000 sites in Kwanobuhle but was planning to more than double this number to cater for Langa's "6 600" squatter families. Secondly, strict measures were being taken to ensure that no new squatter families arrived in Langa. Thirdly, illegal residents were being warned to move out but no-one was being fined or prosecuted. Fourthly, steps still needed to be taken to "clear" shacks that had been erected on roads thus barring the path of sanitation and refuse removal trucks. More to the point, the inability of police and army vehicles to enter some areas of Langa was even more perturbing for the authorities (12).

The delegation met the officials on 11 June 1985 at 3.30 in the Langa offices of the KTC. The officials were J. Coetzee (town clerk), P. Veldtman (acting deputy secretary), S. Somtsewu (superindendent of Langa), and R.D. Basson (administration officer). (Barry Erasmus was not present because he had yet to been appointed as Administrator.)

The meeting, which lasted an hour and forty minutes, never got much further than both parties stating their case (13). However, it started with both parties applauding the fact that such a meeting had taken place.

Some keys issues were discussed during the course of this meeting. Firstly, in response to the claim by the delegation that Langa residents do not want to move because they believe they cannot afford the rents in Kwanobuhle, the officials spent some time explaining the affordability advantages of moving to Kwanobuhle. These included, (a) a built-in R63.81 subsidy per site to be carried by the government so that service charges could be pegged at R19.90 per month; (b) rentals calculated according to income on a sliding scale; (c) the right to purchase a house for R6794 plus smaller costs. As far as the officials were concerned, all employed people should have been able to afford these rates.

The delegation asked questions about what provision had been made for unemployed and retrenched workers; why the Kwanobuhle houses are being used to rehouse Langa residents when there were people in Kwanobuhle in need of houses; and why the KTC thinks Langa cannot be upgraded. Coetzee said he supported the idea in principle but gave

reasons why the upgrading of Langa was practically not possible: (a) Langa was only big enough for 2000 sites, whereas 8000 were needed; (b) no funds were available to cover the high costs of upgrading Langa's infrastructure; (c) there is no adjacent land into which Langa could expand; (d) in sutu upgrading was impossible. Nevertheless, Coetzee promised at the end of the meeting to submit a report to the government.

The importance of the land issue was brought home to the delegation during the meeting, prompting Made to coin a phrase that he used often in the months to follow: "The squatter's struggle is a struggle for land." More importantly, the leaders realised how seriously the officials took the community's capacity to resist. Mades' implicit threat that confrontation and unrest would result from removal pointed to the only real form of leverage the community had over the KTC. It is also interesting that many daily grievances unrelated to the removal were also raised.

Towards the end of the meeting, Coetzee summed up the situation by saying the committee has to decide which option was in the best interests of the community: remaining in Langa and bearing the cost of upgrading it, or moving to Kwanobuhle where sites have already been prepared at very low cost. The delegation responded by saying that it has no mandate to make that choice. It is only there to communicate the demands of the community and intends returning to discuss the outcome of the meeting with the community.

As far as the delegation was concerned, they were well aware of the fact that a choice in economic terms had to be made about which option was in the best interests of the community. However, they had no way of making such a calculation. They were well aware of the dangers of either depending on the "expertise" of the officials or simply rejecting the Kwanobuhle option without offering an alternative to the community. It was to resolve the above dilemma that Made and a few of his comrades decided to seek professional assistance in Johannesburg.

Through friends, Weza Made and his comrades made contact with various support groups and pressmen. These groups pledged their support for Langa's anti-removal struggle and during the coming months he was to work closely with academics connected to the Durban-based Built Environment Support Group (BESG), Sue Lund of the Grahamstown Rural Committee (GRC) and Mono Badela of City Press. Resulting from discussions with members of these groups, Made proposed that the community organisations initiate their own upgrading proposals as an alternative to the removal plans of KTC. A group of Natal, Johannesburg and Grahamstown academics were assembled and plans made to travel to Uitenhage in late July to assess the viability of this suggestion. However, these plans were aborted when the Emergency was declared.

By June-July, the leadership was faced with a range of related problems that demanded organisational solutions. These included: (a) appropriate means of defense against both official repression and vigilante action; (b) the necessity for finding ways of re-organising to cope with expanding membership and rising levels of mobilisation; (c) how extra-state organisations move beyond reaction and boycott politics to proactive strategies aimed at

resolving the crisis of daily life in the townships, i.e. the role of negotiations in particular. In other words, the leadership were searching for a balance between challenging the state, defending the community against repression and negotiating with officials to find solutions to local problems. At a national level, the UDF was faced with similar problems and responded with the call "Mobilisation to Organisation. Protest to Challenge" (14). However, the call for "ungovernability" - a popular slogan of the time - reflected more accurately the nature of popular politics in mid-1985: rising levels of mobilisation, violent attacks on councillors and police, collapse of township administration and spreading consumer boycotts. The declaration of the State of Emergency in July and the detention of established leaders, enabled the militant youth and their belief that violence must be met with violence, to take control of township politics. This pattern repeated itself in particularly violent ways in Langa.

EMERGENCY RULE, UNGOVERNABILITY AND THE RISE OF THE AMABUTHO

There is little doubt that the rising levels of police violence and community counter-violence in Uitenhage were related to the threat of removal. The youth squads by this stage were becoming increasingly organised. Whereas outsiders visiting other communities were greeted with the familiar clenched fist and pointed thumb sign accompanied by the shout "Amandla", in Uitenhage they were greeted with the call "Asiyi Kwanobuhle" ("We will not move to Kwanobuhle"). By July some of the youth squads were armed with stolen arms and captured R.1 rifles. They would agree amongst themselves who would stand guard at selected points, watching for any attempt to demolish shacks. They had their own quasi-military command structure and identity. Crude gueriall tactics were devised to harass SADF-SAP patrols. The most famous was the "hippo trap". A hole longer than the length of a caspir and about four feet deep would be dug in the road. Sheets of corrugated iron were then place over the hole and disguised with a layer of sand. The next unsuspecting caspir that came along would drop into the hole at which point a large contingent of crudely armed youths would pounce on the caspir from different sides. They would invariably be repulsed but, according to some sources, not before a number of stones and petrol bombs were thrown.

In addition to the military tactics of the youth, a politicised culture emerged, spread and gained acceptance throughout the community. The "toyi toyi" was the most visible manifestation of this culture. These were dances performed in the streets by large groups of mainly young people ranging in age from young children to people in their early twenties. It took the form of a slow forward moving jog accompanied by rhythmic freedom songs, most of which were about or in praise of armed resistance, the ANC and its leaders. Winding their way through the dusty dilapidated streets, these groups performed two crucial political functions: they

absorbed into their ranks increasing numbers of young people and acted as effective means for communicating political messages on a regular basis. Given that the style of this communication was repetitive, relatively simple and widespread, it is not surprising that their depiction of the threat of removal was in terms of a white challenge to the "unity" of the Langa community. It was this emotive rejection of removal, coupled to a political discourse of national anti-Apartheid resistance, that underlay the determination of many youth squads to meet violence with violence (15).

Alongside the youth groups, street committees had begun to emerge as early as May in certain parts of Langa, i.e. some months before they were being written about in the press and before they were evident in other parts of the country (except, of course, in Cradock). Nevertheless, although ever-widening layers of the community were being politicised, the volatile and violent state of conflict between the security forces and youth squads militated against the organisational priorities of the activist leadership. The declaration of the State of Emergency forced them underground or into detention leaving the youth squads free to pursue their own voluntarist strategies.

When Made got to Johannesburg in mid-June, foremost in his mind was the rising level of violence in the township and its link to the threat of removal:

> "We now have a problem in Langa. It is surrounded by the coloured area,the white area and the business sector area. The white people of Levyvale, they made a petition asking the government to remove the people from Langa to Kwanobuhle because they said in their petition that they feel unsafe. They said that Kwalanga is too near to them. The people of Langa asked the whites to stop demanding the removal of Langa and pointed out that it is the people of Langa who are unsafe from these white soldiers and SAPs who enter our township carrying guns, killing the people, killing the children and innocent people. But the people of KwaLanga never signed a petition about that. (16)

Another well-known Kwanobuhle-based UYCO activist was also in Johannesburg at this time. He presented a similar picture of escalating violence but went further to say that activists who still supported non-violent methods of organisation and resistance were finding it increasingly difficult to justify their position and even prescence in the township. He told one of his friends in Soweto that he decided to come to Johannesburg after a crowd forced him to light the petrol of a knecklace after he voiced strong objections to that method of punishment (17).

Although the position of the activist leadership became even more tenuous after the Emergency was declared in July, they were painfully aware at this stage - as were the national leadership - that unless "mass mobilisation" was turned into "mass organisation", township politics could degenerate into a straight military confrontation which the communities could never win.

For the next few months the Uitenhage leadership ceased to operate as a coherent force. Although some were detained (e.g. Haas), others disappeared underground. The only groups who remained organised and retained the capacity to mobilise opposition to the security forces were the amabuhto. The trade unions concentrated on protecting the union's base in the face of mounting repression and increasingly politicised communities.

Rather than resolving Langa's problems, the State of Emergency exacerbated them. With the security forces and amabutho squads battling it out on the streets, the township administrators were unable to restore the council's authority and it was too risky for community activists to pursue above-ground legal organisational methods. Not surprisingly, negotiations on the removal question in this context were remote. In any case, Mr. Haas, the leader of the delegation that met KTC in June, was detained. The only communal response to the Emergency was the consumer boycott which was resumed in late July after being called off in early July. However, in the absence of an organisational infrastructure capable of coping at this stage with extreme repression and given the militarised nature of daily conflict, the renewed consumer boycott was coercively enforced by the amabutho who staffed "people's roadblocks" to check whether residents had purchased goods in town.

SHIFTING BATTLELINES, NEW TACTICS

As endemic violence continued, both the state and community organisations realised new strategies were required to move beyond this no-win situation. Whereas the state decided to proceed with the removals in a more direct and purposive manner, the community activists attempted to establish new structures to cope with repression, removal and mass support.

By the end of October conditions began to change in two respects. Firstly, leaders began to re-emerge determined to operate underground in ways that kept them out of sight as far as the security forces were concerned but in contact with their constituencies. Having monitored the methods and strategies of the security forces fairly closely so as to identify predictable patterns, the activists decided to re-emerge and operate in ways they thought least risky. This is when the street committees became crucially important as defensive structures. Secondly, and related to the new organising style of the activists, older residents began reacting to youth domination of township politics by establishing their own structures to represent their interests. This led to the spread of the street committees and the formation of Parents Crisis Committees in line with the national SPCC initiative to bring the schools boycott to an end.

The semi-underground activist leadership plugged into these street committee and parent's initiatives because they supported the need to establish organisational bases capable of countering the power of the amabutho. What followed was an important series of conflicts

over the control and direction of the street committes and Parents' Committees as older residents and activists struggled to assert a less militaristic and non-voluntarist approach. Ironically, it was renewed attempts by KTC to evict 426 squatter families in October that galvanised older residents into action.

It was in this light that it became necessary for the leadership to find strategies to deal with new needs and pressures. These included: (a) space to organise; (b) the need to reassert political authority to displace the dominance of the youth squads; (c) concessions to sustain organisation; and (d) defense against repression. This was the context that led key Langa leaders to the conclusion that firstly, negotiations with the local authority must be re-initiated; and secondly, that organisational structures must be decentralised along street committee lines, a particularly important step if the support of the older residents was to be retained (18).

By late September the KTC and its Administrator, Barry Erasmus, appointed on 13th September, was caught between two contradictory pressures. Firstly, the Uitenhage municipality, responding to renewed demands from its white ratepayers for the removal of Langa, was becoming increasingly insistent that KTC do something about the expanding squatter camp. To increase its pressure on KTC, the Uitenhage municipality appealed to Minister Heunis at the National Party's congress held in Port Elizabeth in September, to intervene directly on its behalf (19). Secondly, the continued unrest in Langa that repressive tactics seemed unable to quell, virtually brought daily township administration to a standstill. This enabled incoming squatters to erect shacks in the 4th-9th ave area (more on this later) thus fueling white opposition to the continued existence of Langa. KTC realised that a resolution to the squatter problem was impossible without bringing an end to the unrest (20).

It took the KTC until September to work out a clear strategy because of bureaucratic confusion within the local state. Although Erasmus was formally appointed as Administrator on 13th September in terms of the Law on Co-operation and Development Second Amendment Act, he had been what Heunis called an "advisor" to KTC's town clerk since June (21), i.e. one month after his early retirement from Uitenhage Municipality where he was town clerk. Furthermore, lines of authority were unclear because responsibility for Black Local Authorities was transferred to the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning in July following the cabinet reshuffle that finally dismantled that old Verwoerdian empire, namely the Department of Cooperation and Development.

Significantly, Erasmus said he turned down the offer of a senior management position at Volkswagen in order to accept his post (22). This points to a link between Erasmus and Volkswagen that was to crucially affect the outcome of the Langa struggle in 1986.

As the bureaucratic dust began to settle, KTC devised two strategies to deal with the pressures it was facing - one coercive and the other concessionary. The concessionary response arose out of a memorandum that Coetzee sent to the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning (DCDP) reporting the demands expressed by the Langa delegation that met KTC in June. Responding to the

community's strong demand for upgrading, the DCDP appointed a special Task Group to investigate the Langa problem (23) and its existence was publicly announced by Heunis at the NP Congress (24). The Task Group comprised members of various government departments including the police and army, Barry Erasmus and was chaired by Dr. Scheepers, deputy director-general of the DCDP. The Task Group's brief was to investigate the feasibility of upgrading the area between 22nd and 9th avenues and to compile a Guide Plan.

Two points must be noted: firstly, the fact that squatting was only taking place between 22nd and 9th avenues up until June, and that the Task Group's brief was limited to this area, meant that no account was taken of how rapidly the shack settlement was growing. This meant that agreements reached in June were irrelevant by October when literally hundreds more shacks had been erected. Secondly, the Pretoria-based state engineer who worked on the project was told to operate within a conventional planning framework which is deeply hostile to the concept of in sutu squatter upgrading along lines proposed by the Urban Foundation (25). Nevertheless, the seniority of the chairperson bears testimony to the importance attached to the Langa problem.

It was also at this point that the NP MP for Uitenhage, a Mr. D. Le Roux, got directly involved in the Langa problem. Le Roux is an extremely confident and bright man in his late thirties. He is the senior partner of the most prestigious firm of Uitenhage attorneys whose offices are located in the old colonial magistrate's building, complete with palm trees and colonades at the entrance. His office is lined with hunting trophies, pictures of afrikaner ancestors and of his old rugby and 'varsity teams. His firm acted for the Kwanobuhle Town Council and because Erasmus used to be Uitenhage's Town Clerk, Le Roux new him intimately. Together Le Roux and Erasmus made up a formidable duo of skilful manipulators.

Although KTC's coercive response was formulated in a private caucus between Le Roux and Erasmus, it was formally recorded at a meeting of "the council" (i.e. Coetzee and Erasmus) held on 30th September 1985, shortly after the NP Congress. On this occasion, a resolution was taken to empower the Town Clerk to instruct the KTC's attorneys (i.e. Le Roux) to institute an action or alternatively an Application in the Supreme Court to secure the "removal of all illegal shacks/homes and/or structures in and the eviction of all persons living in the area between 9th avenue ... and 4th" (26). Having chosen not to go for a Supreme Court Application, on 8 October KTC served eviction notices on 426 squatters living between 9th and 4th avenues. The notices were delivered between 2am and 4am by KTC officials accompanied by a phalanx of SADF troops who aggressively broke down doors and damaged shacks. This response was clearly designed to remove squatters closest to the white areas in order to temporarily assuage white fears until a more permanent solution could be found. It was no coincidence that the 426 squatters occupied the only part of Langa that was visible from the white suburbs. However, the carefully worded eviction notice prepared by Le Roux, gave very different reasons for the removal.

The notice pointed out to each shack dweller:

* his/her shack was erected without "any permit or authority from KTC" and is "accordingly an illegal structure";

* the shacks are a health hazard with the danger of a cholera outbreak beause in the area between 9th and 4th avenues there are no toilets, water supplies, drainage or sewerage;

* the area is a fire hazard because the shacks have been built in a manner which prevents "proper access".

It must be borne in mind that the eviction orders were violating the patronage contracts between councillors and squatters, contracts which squatters could "prove" because councillors issued them with "Lodger's Permits" in the name of the Cape Midlands Bantu Affairs Administration Board and stamped with a Uitenhage-Despatch Community Council stamp (this patronage network was analysed in chapter 7)). Consequently, the eviction notice contained a paragraph which clearly stated that if "you have been shown a site by certain persons who have taken it upon themselves to allocate sites in the area for shacks" and/or if "you paid any money to a person in order to allocate a shack site to you", then this person acted illegally. This legal protection against potential claims that squatters were given "permission" to reside in the area was coupled to another more serious measure. When the KTC officials and SADF troops served the notices, they asked the squatters to surrender their permits. Although most unsuspectingly obliged, a few wiley old women with years of experience that had taught them that possessing official-looking documents is better than having nothing, simply refused by saying they had lost their permits (27). Nevertheless, by surrendering their permits the majority gave up their only proof that someone officially sanctioned their right to reside in the area. By defining this sanction as illegal the eviction notice overturned the community's popular conception of the existing consensus and their residential rights.

Aware of the political consequences of this violation of popular norms and patronage contracts, the KTC attempted to establish and legitimise a new norm. The eviction notices stated that the KTC is "aware of the need for housing" and has, therefore, provided fully serviced sites in Kwanobuhle at a monthly cost of R19.90. In addition, the notice stated, KTC will transport all belongings from Langa to Kwanobuhle free of charge.

The notice ends by stating that the shack dweller has ten days to remove his/her structures. If he/she fails to do so, the KTC will assume that he/she "thereby contest[s] the right of the Council to remove you" and it will then apply for a court order to remove the shack by force.

The eviction notices generated a sense of panic and outrage in the community as a whole. Panic because the removal of the 426 squatters was seen as the first step towards the removal of Langa as a whole. Outrage because a popular norm - despite it being rooted in the patronage networks of the councillors - had been violated. The effect on political consciousness was immediate and electric. Fortuitously, the following day was October 9, the Day of Peace and Reconciliation that Bishop Tutu and other prominent clergy had called to protest against the State of Emergency. Although there was

general confusion in most parts of the country as to whether this day was meant to be a stayaway or not, in Langa the message was rapidly spread through the street committees that no-one must go to work and that as many people as possible must squeeze into Langa's eleven churches to discuss Langa's problems in general and the evictions in particular. Disguised as "prayer meetings", discussion about the evictions and other problems went on throughout the day, providing activists with a rare opportunity to canvass a broad spread of opinion at a time when all meetings were banned under the Emergency regulations. It also enabled discussions to take place that led to the re-imposition of the consumer boycott two days later.

The activists, taking full advantage of the opportunity, divided themselves into groups and took charge of proceedings in the churches. They had agreed amongst themselves that although the usual speeches, freedom songs and discussion was important, the main aim should be to ask the meetings to throw up demands related specifically to Langa. These were written down in order of priority. At the end of the day the activists met and, as one of them put it, "Congress of the People style" put all the demands together, categorised and prioritised them. The result was six key demands (wording as in original):

"* lifting of influx control;

* relieving unemployment;

* upgrading of township: who is the cause of health and fire hazard?

* people must be allowed to live where they like;

* schools, clinics, creches, playing grounds;

* allow us to hold meetings and air our views."

These demands were, in effect, thrown up from the grassroots in a popular manner. They represented, therefore, the community's answer to the Task Group whose recommendations were bound to be purely technical and conventional and were kept secret and never revealed to the community.

A committee was elected from these meetings to represent the squatters and mandated to meet KTC to appeal against the eviction. The committee comprised Freddie Magugu (FOSATU), Weza Made (UYCO), Sipho Mandabana (MACWUSA), T.E. Majoka (UYCO - Kwanobuhle), Z. Mge (UYCO - Kwanobuhle), M.E. Antonie (FOSATU), Nelson Teyise (street committees), Rev. Bashman and A.F. Diko (?). This committee became known as the Langa Coordinating Committee (LCC) with Made, Magugu, Mandabana and Teyise as the core actors. Significantly, the LCC included FOSATU representatives thus signalling the beginnings of cooperative relations that transcended the old animosities between the Gomomo and Kobese groups. It was Magugu, Made, Mandabana and others who represented the new generation of trade union and community activists who decided to ignore divisions in the

established leadership and forge working relations between the street committees and shop floor structures. To quote Lund's observation on this issue:

> "Leaving aside the most vocal and vociferous feuders, they set about work at grassroots amongst the bereaved and frightened, building new forms of organisation in Langa." (28)

Although the anti-removal struggle provided a material basis for cooperation between community organisations and trade unions, this was soon extended into other matters. After the formation of COSATU in late 1985, trade unions got direct representation on street committees, Consumer Boycott Committee, the LCC and the Uitenahage Residents Civic Organisation (URECO).

LOCAL MOVES BEYOND EMERGENCY RULE

The LCC immediately contacted KTC and requested a meeting to discuss the removals and urged KTC to stay the evictions. KTC agreed not to go ahead with removals until the meeting had taken place. The fact that the meeting took place on the 22nd October, i.e. four days after the deadline to move had elapsed, greatly strengthened the resolve of the squatters and activists who interpreted this concession as a sign of weakness on the part of KTC. In reality, the local state was deeply concerned about the political implications of the evictions (29). This concern was motivated by the fact that Volkswagen wanted to avoid at all costs another blow-up in Langa because of the international profile of the township. Le Roux, the KTC and elements in the municipality were well aware of the conseqeunces of a Volkswagen pull-out if the international spotlight on Langa resulted in disinvestment pressure on Volswagen's German headquarters. KTC tried on several occasions prior to October 8th to arrange meetings with the LCC, but the response was that no meetings would take place until Mr. Haas was released from detention (30). In the end, mounting pressure from Uitenhage municipality forced KTC to issue eviction notices (31). When this galvanised the community organisations into action, including the LCC's decision to request a meeting and drop its pre-condition that Haas be released, the KTC was more than willing to find a way of going ahead with the removal without escalating the unrest. Coetzee and Erasmus genuinely believed they could convince the leaders to support the removal with scary reports about health hazards, welfarist housing concessions in Kwanobuhle and denials about the influence of white pressure on their decision.

The meeting was delayed because the LCC knew that meeting KTC to simply appeal against the removal was too weak and reactive. They were aware of the need to make concrete counter-proposals in line with the community's demands. As a result, they contacted the group of Johannesburg and Durban-based academics they had had contact with before the Emergency and urged them to come down before the meeting with KTC.

The meeting with the KTC took place on the appointed day at 4.00 pm in the KTC's Langa offices. As far as upgrading was concerned, Barry Erasmus said that the Task Group was favourably disposed towards this idea, but agreed with the KTC that Langa was only big enough for 2000 sites and that 8000 sites were needed to accomodate all Langa's inhabitants. Erasmus informed the LCC that the Task Group would be holding its first meeting on 28th October in Uitenhage.

Erasmus explained that eviction notices were served on the 426 squatters living between 9th and 4th avenues because of the appalling living conditions in the area and the constant threat of a cholera outbreak. He rejected press speculation that the evictions were motivated by a concern for Group Area boundaries. He said that those who moved to Kwanobuhle would be given a serviced site, free transport to the new area and unemployed people would not be required to pay service charges. Employed persons who wanted to erect houses would be given loans from the council to purchase on-site materials and council-paid labour would be made available.

In short, KTC was making every possible concession to attract people to Kwanobuhle. Free services for unemployed people and cheap loans and labour for those who wanted to erect houses were, in effect, welfarist policies.

Made responded on behalf of the LCC delegation by pointing out that the community is prepared to negotiate solutions to any problems and difficulties it experiences. He then went on to say that the LCC called the meeting to discuss the eviction notices that were handed out. He pointed out, (a) that the squatters were unhappy about the 10 day ultimatum to move to Kwanobuhle, (b) that people were angered by the actions of soldiers who damaged shacks when doors were kicked open, (c) that the LCC was discontented by the fact that KTC went ahead with the eviction notices without consulting them, and (d) the people want their permits returned to them.

Much of what followed amounted to argumentation about various conflicting perceptions and reports about what was happening between 9th and 4th avenues. In particular, it became evident to the officials that the LCC was not buying their arguments. The former's position was finally discredited when at one stage Erasmus found it necessary to defend white fears by pointing out that Levyvale residents complained of regular burglaries, seven petrol bomb attacks and dropping property values.

Erasmus said there were three ways to deal with the squatter problem: (a) shacks could be demolished by KTC officials immediately; (b) a court order could be obtained from a magistrate; (c) an application to the Supreme Court could be made. As far as Coetzee and Erasmus were concerned, the latter option was best because it would allow the community to put forward its case following which the Supreme Court decision - which they were confident would go in their favour - could be implemented. This would create the appearance of neutrality and fairness (32) by redefining the issue in legalistic terms. Le Roux worked out this scheme to use the Supreme Court to depoliticise the issue (33). In the long run, as the local state intended, this forced the community organisations onto a terrain where they were weakest.

In response to Erasmus' proposals and in a clear bid to retain control of the decision-making process, the LCC requested a meeting with the Task Group and if this failed, that Erasmus ask the Task Group to include the 9th-4th ave area into the upgrading plan. The officials recommended that the LCC submit a memorandum to the Task Group. The officials agreed to request that the Task Group meet the LCC. In return, however, they requested the LCC to ensure that no further shacks were erected. The Committee, unlike the Councillors before them, refused to give this undertaking.

On a number of levels the activists felt "the negotiations" were a success: the removal had been stalled; the KTC had effectively recognised the LCC as the representative of the Langa community; KTC agreed to support the inclusion of the 4th-9th ave area into the definition of the area which must be upgraded; and the KTC's support for the proposal that the Task Group meet the LCC was won (34). The other gain - that activists never percieved as such because it was not related directly to the removal question - was the welfarist housing and settlement policies the KTC was proposing for Kwanobuhle. These were substantially improved concessions to what they were offering in June.

On the negative, the community organisations were being drawn into legalistic struggles coupled to a dependence on experts that was to weaken rather than strengthen organisation in the long run. Some activists were keenly aware of these dangers. However, they were not simply strategic or organisational problems. They were, in fact, inscribed into the institutional framework within which the community organisations and trade unions had to operate. This applies to their inability to challenge the decision to take the matter to the Supreme Court, the necessity for "experts" once the decision was taken to enter into negotiations and the sustained level of repression that severely constrained mass participation in the complex and intricate negotiation and planning processes.

After the meeting with the KTC, activists brought Dr. Mike Sutcliffe, an urban planner and member of the Durban-based Built Environment Support Group (BESG), to Uitenhage. He compiled a memorandum entitled A Feasibility Survey of the Prospects for Upgrading Kabah, Uitenhage that supported all the basic arguments of the community.

Sutcliffe's memorandum was handed in to the KTC early on the morning of Monday 27th October in time to be discussed at the Task Group meeting that day. Not unexpectedly, the KTC officials were extremely surprised when the LCC arrived with the memorandum. They never thought the LCC had the resources or the inclination to compile a memorandum during the short time since the last meeting. In the event, the Task Group did not discuss the memo that day.

The LCC met the KTC again on 28th October. It started off with a report back by Erasmus of the Task Group proceedings the previous day. Erasmus pointed out that the Task Group was of the opinion that urbanisation was inevitable, but that the most pressing problem was the influx of unemployed people into the urban areas. Nevertheless, the Task Group favourably regarded the prospects for upgrading Langa. That this view was expressed then is significant, because it

pre-figures government thinking that eventually led to the scrapping of influx control in July 1986. This might suggest that Langa's struggle and the very real difficulties it posed for the state, made a direct impact on central government policy.

The LCC forcefully expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the Task Group never considered their memorandum and that the only firm decision concerned the need to go ahead with a court order. Magugu submitted that this indicated a refusal by government to listen to the Langa community's demands and that there is, therefore, no reason why there should be further negotiations. The KTC replied by trying to re-define the issue in legalistic and technicist terms. The legalistic solution lay in the KTC's constant insistence that the LCC respond in court to the KTC's application, i.e. they clearly percieved that the community's willingness to "participate" in the legal action would ensure its "success", no matter what the outcome was. Keeping the conflict off the streets was their only concern.

Contrary to Lund's suggestion that negotiations had "come to nothing" (Lund, 1986: p. 59) because the KTC and Task Group were of the opinion that upgrading would only be considered after the court ruling, the evidence seems to point to a much more sophisticated divide through concession and rule through repression strategy: concessions to those living in the 22nd-9th ave area and repression for the 9th-4th ave area. This is why

Finally, and confirming the Task Group's technicist thrust, when the LCC asked whether Erasmus had asked the Task Group to meet the Committee, Erasmus said the request was denied because "the politicians" would be brought in and deliberations would be delayed. Later, when the Urban Foundation attempted to urge Scheepers to meet the LCC, the Task Group's response was that its task was technical, not political. Only after he had reported to Heunis, Scheepers pointed out, could this decision be made (35).

Although the Task Group did not oppose the need to apply for a court order to remove the 9th-4th ave squatters, there is no evidence that any clarity existed in state circles on whether Langa should be retained and upgraded and, if so, how this should be done. This reflected an uncertainty in government urbanisation policy as a whole. The conflict in Langa, therefore, came at a time when two contradictory tendencies were reaching a head at national level: on the one hand the squatter communities were clearly winning the battle against influx control and their struggles helped destroy the classic myth that the urban areas were an exclusive white abode. These struggles finally buried the Riekert Commission's urbanisation policy and the intentions of the fated Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill. On the other hand, by the end of 1985 policy makers had come to support the Urban Foundation's argument that influx control needed to be scrapped, but like the Urban Foundations' policy makers they were unclear about what should replace it (36).

In light of the LCC's firm position, the Task Group's confusion, right-wing pressure from Uitenhage and spreading shack construction, the KTC decided to apply for a Supreme Court order.

By the beginning of November the community organisations were uncertain where they stood: negotiations had broken down, the Task Group engineer claimed he was still conducting his study, and KTC was probably preparing its case but this was by no means certain. The KTC strategy only became clear on 8th November when the KTC served notices of motion on the 426 squatters in the 9th-4th ave area. These notices were handed out between 2.00 am and 4.00 am in an extremely provocative manner. One policeman said to a resident: "We know you are going to resist, but let us see who is going to win." (37)

The notice of motion that was given to the 426 squatters was a lengthy 78-page document with detailed maps, photographs and affidavits to back up its case. The KTC supported its case with the following basic arguments:

(a) uncontrolled squatting in the 9th-4th ave is taking place at such a rate that 10 new shacks are erected each day; (b) the structures were put up without the Applicants permission or knowledge; (c) there are no taps, sewerage or refuse removal services in the area, thus creating the real danger of a cholera or typhoid outbreak; (d) proper roads do not exist because of the unplanned nature of the area, which means that in the event of a fire, the Fire Brigade would be unable to stop it; (e) 400 residents of Uitenhage signed a petition that prompted the Uitenhage Municipality to lodge a formal complaint with the KTC about the "dangerous and unsanitary conditions" in Langa; (f) the drainage and slope of the land is such that "while upgrading of this area may be theoretically possible, it is not possible at any practicably acceptable cost level"; (g) fully serviced sites have been made available in Kwanobuhle in an area that "is about the same distance from the Uitenhage industrial area ... as the illegal shacks"; (h) attempts to encourage the squatters to move voluntarily by negotiating with "unofficial representatives" failed, thus leading the KTC to conclude that the "Respondents dispute the illegality of their occupation in the area".

The key component of the notice was provided by an affidavit from Major Theron. Theron was in charge of Uitenhage's Riot Control Unit as of March 1984. He argued that the "high density" and "unplanned" nature of the shack area has given rise to a situation that "is extremely difficult to patrol and to police properly".

> "There are no proper streets or street numbers - nor are there any passable roads. Attempts to put up street numbers have been frustrated by elements in the population who remove the numbers or over-paint them. Because this happens at night, it is not possible to say who is responsible." (38)

Criminals are protected in the area because it is "very difficult to trace witnesses afterwards who melt away into the mass of unplanned, haphazard shacks". However, Theron proceeds, the same does not apply to the new area in Kwanobuhle to which the KTC would like to move the squatters. Revealing the intimate connection between urban planning and police control, Theron points out that "[i]n this area Police protection of residents will become vastly facilitated [sic] and investigation of crime tremendously simplified." (39)

It is important to note that Coetzee's affidavit specifically pointed out that the 9th-4th ave squatters had erected shacks without in any way notifying or informing the KTC. This is significant because it means that unlike the 22nd-9th ave squatters, the 9th-4th squatters erected their shelter without the condonement of councillors and their patronage networks. The resignation of the councillors, therefore, had two contradictory effects: it removed the protection of patronage but simultaneously created the impression that official obstacles to the erection of shacks had also been removed. The ideology of ungovernability served to confirm this latter impression. But when it became clear that the KTC was still able to function and threaten the squatters, it was not the patronage networks that they turned to for support but rather the extra-state organisations whose commitment to oppose the state offered a solution that made sense to people whose attempts to find an accomodation within the system had failed.

The delivery of these notices clearly drew the battlelines. As far as the local state was concerned, the first priority was the clearing of the 9th-3rd ave area to satisfy the white residents. Once this was achieved, the rest was negotiable. However, given the politicised nature of the community, the KTC was attempting to legitimise the removal by way of a Supreme Court Action that would require the "participation" of the community in a process which had a disguised in-built bias against them - an advantage for the state that was absent in the negotiation process. KTC officials hoped in this way to at least diminish to acceptable levels the confrontational aspect of the removal.

Between November 1985 and May 1986, a stalemate existed. Except for the demolition of twenty newly erected shacks on the outskirts of the 4th-9th ave area "because they were challenging the authority of the Kwanobuhle municipality" (40), neither side opted for negotiated or coercive strategies to win the strategic initiative. The community needed to build organisation and formulate its alternative to removal, while the KTC waited for its case to be heard by the court. This stalemate was not affected by moves to suspend the consumer boycott and bring about negotiations in accordance with the Port Elizabeth example (41).

The Uitenhage Consumer Boycott Committee said its demands were the withdrawal of troops and members of the SAP's reaction unit from the townships; lifting of the State of Emergency; an end to the harassment of community leaders by security forces; that all workers sacked because of stayaways from work or through detention under the Emergency be reinstated; that Langa be upgraded and the forced removal of residents to Kwanobuhle halted; the prosecution of the killers of the Cradock leaders and the location of the missing Port Elizabeth leaders (42).

On Sunday 8th December, a mass meeting took place in Jabavu Stadium in Kwanobuhle to discuss the consumer boycott. Permission was granted by the magistrate when applications to hold the meeting were supported by the KTC (43). The meeting agreed that negotiations with the Chamber of Commerce could take place only if Uitenhage's

detainees were released (44). In the event Uitenhage's Consumer Boycott never culminated in the high profile negotiations that ended the Port Elizabeth boycott.

There were three reasons why the consumer boycott "talks" in Uitenhage went in a very different direction to those in Port Elizabeth. Firstly, unlike the Port Elizabeth chamber, the Uitenhage Chamber of Commerce was National Party dominated. Secondly, the pillar of economic power in Uitenhage was industrial capital, not commerce - this is why the (Midlands Chamber of Industries (MCI) and not the Chamber of Commerce eventually came to play such a crucial role later on. Thirdly, unlike the Ibhayi Town Council, all the councillors resigned from KTC leaving the white officials with much greater scope for proactive intervention and unconventional action.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the KTC became the central actor. During December and January Erasmus went on the offensive to coopt Kwanobuhle and Langa leaders into a multi-racial ad hoc committee to discuss new local authority arrangements for Uitenhage as a whole. Despite the failure of this committee, Erasmus was deeply impressed with the URECO leaders he spoke to (45) and his optimism was reflected in a press statement he made at the time:

> "There is a conciliatory spirit at the moment. There is an atmosphere of change." (46)

It was in this context that Erasmus called for a local power-sharing option for Uitenhage. He made this suggestion at a special symposium for the public and private sector in December 1985 to consider Uitenhage's future prospects. He suggested that black community leaders be incorporated into the special "contact committee" that the Uitenhage municipality had recently established in response to the consumer boycott. He argued that this will help improve Uitenhage's image as a place with one of the worst race relations problems in the world (47).

Even the school pupils voted at mass meetings in stadiums at Kwanobuhle and Langa that they should return to school on the 28th January in line with resolutions taken at the Johannesburg conference of the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee.

The easing of tensions in the Eastern Cape from the end of '85 and into January '86 was clearly part of a shift in state strategy. Withdrawal of the massive security force prescence, negotiations with UDF organisations, release of detainees and other moves were also coupled to an injection of R43 million into township development. Minister Heunis personally handed the cheque over to the ECDB in November. To be used for unemployment relief, infrastructural upgrading, self-help housing and the training of municipal police, these funds were distributed to 35 E. Cape townships with Aliwal North, Bedford, Cathcart, Cradock, Fort Beaufort, Grahamstown, King William's Towm, Kirkwood, Molteno, East London, Queenstown, Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth recieving the largest amounts (48). These areas, not surprisingly, were the most well organised E. Cape towns. Although the municipal police forces this fund helped establish were to play an important repressive role later on, this was not immediately apparant at this stage.

BUILDING PEOPLE'S POWER

(BECAUSE OF STRICT SPACE LIMITATIONS THIS SECTION HAS BEEN LEFT OUT. It covers the origin, structure and compositon of the street committees and a breakdown of popular ideology and consciousness.)

EXPLOITING THE CONTRADICTIONS

Given the context within which popular mobilisation was taking place, the mere existence of popular structures was insufficient when it came to making gains. This grassroots power needed to be coupled to the use of a range of instruments if the outcome was going to be anything other than straight repression. From late 1985 but more concertedly from early January 1986, a combination of tactics was devised by the activists to complement grassroots organising.

Realising the importance of communicating their demands as widely as possible, the activists cooperated with their allies to publicise Langa's struggle. Working closely with Sue Lund of the GRC, Mono Badela of City Press and the author, the activists attempted to build Langa into a story that could remain in the headlines. This turned out to be remarkably successful.

With regard to KTC's supreme court application, a decision was taken to contest it. Significantly, this decision did not follow a debate in the organisations. As far as the activists were concerned, they constantly reiterated the danger of a full-frontal violent confrontation between the authorities and the squatters if the removals went ahead. The prospect that this moment could be postponed by way of a protracted legal battle was more than appealing to them. Nevertheless, in a brief meeting that the LCC initiated with the KTC in February, Made urged the KTC to withdraw its case because the people were unwilling to defend themselves in court and would not, in any case, respect the findings of the court (49).

The most important part of the overall strategy used to counter the removals - besides grassroots organisation - was the commissioning of an alternative development plan. GRC, BESG and PLANACT were instructed to proceed with the survey as the first step towards formulating an alternative upgrading plan for Langa. The brief to BESG and PLANACT was to formulate an upgrading plan based on four principles: (a) upgrading must take place for the whole of Langa, not just a part as the KTC was recommending; (b) the plan must take into account the needs of all strata, particularly the unemployed; (c) financial formulae must be based on what people can afford; (d) the upgrading process must be democratically controlled. The decision to go ahead with this initiative without official sanction was communicated to the KTC at a meeting on 3rd February. One of the resolutions taken at the end of this meeting that expressed the feelings of the LCC went as follows:

> "That all planning with regard to the upgrading of Kabah BE DONE in conjunction with the Coordinating Committee of Kabah. Furthermore that it BE NOTED that any planning done without the consent of the committee would be rejected by the people of Kabah." (minutes of KTC-LCC meeting, 3.2.86, emphasis in original)

It was decided not to abandon negotiations. However, the activists ruled out any possibility of talking sense into the KTC officials and decided, therefore, to meet the Task Group which was percieved as a higher authority that may be more rational and responsive. To reach the Task Group, activists decided to try to go through the KTC once again and also the Urban Foundation. At the February 3rd meeting with the KTC, the LCC's main request was that the KTC make contact with the Task Group to ask it to meet the LCC. In addition, the academics were requested to set up a meeting with the Urban Foundation which, the activists decided, would be requested to support Langa's struggle and take steps to pressurise Dr. Scheepers into meeting the LCC. It was this meeting that saw the beginning of the most interesting phase of the Langa story: the development of an alliance between business, trade unions and community organisations. However, unlike in the Crossroads case, this alliance was not characterised by the dominance of business and reformist interests (50).

The Urban Foundation (UF) meeting took place on Sunday 10 November, two days after the notices were handed to the 9th-4th ave squatters. An agreement was reached that the UF would try to secure a meeting between the LCC and Scheepers and that in the event that upgrading is allowed to take place, the UF would work with the community and not the state. Underpinning this was UF support for Langa'a anti-removal struggle (51).

As far as the activists were concerned, this meeting was a success because it won them a powerful ally and the UF could provide crucial technical skills in the event of state approval of upgrading. The significance of this alliance only emerged later when the state attempted to undermine it. The UF team was under surveillance when it arrived in Uitenhage (Erasmus and Coetzee, 26.5.87). That night, the UF's Port Elizabeth offices were broken into and searched. More significantly, Heunis later communicated his displeasure to the UF's Jan Steyn questioning why the UF had agreed to cover the legal costs of the Supreme Court action. Heunis communicated this grievance to Fred du Plessis as well. As far as the KTC officials were concerned, PLANACT and BESG were merely UF fronts that Matlock established to hide his involvement in Langa (52).

Made was under no illusions about the game that needed to be played. He said this to a visiting UDF organiser:

> "We called the director of the Urban Foundation and its eastern cape director. We told them that the people see the foundation as a government created structure and the people are aware that the Urban Foundation was created immediately after the 1976 riots for the purpose of neutralising and normalising the situation. In its projects it works hand-in-hand with the councillors which are not representing our community. We told

them that most of their projects are unpopular among the people. They build houses which people cannot afford, and the rental of their houses is expensive. We even told them that they are helping the government by forcibly removing people for its strategic reasons by building these houses. We asked them to disassociate themselves from the government if they want to regain credibility. We told that in future if they want to build houses they must consult with the people." (53)

This meeting resulted in a re-allignment in relations between the UF and extra-parliamentary organisations in the Eastern Cape. Obviously, this re-allignment affected the UF's relationships with the state. In particular, in a letter to Erasmus, Matlock spelt out his support for, (a) "process oriented housing mechanisms as opposed to the normal product oriented housing delivery mechanism"; (b) in-situ upgrading of informal settlements; and (c) the necessity for "forming a coalition with communities in the planning and implementation of select projects" (54). Obviously these policies differed drastically from the KTC's technicist top-down approach and should be interpreted as a response to pressures and demands emanating from the black communities that the UF had to deal with.

During December, January and the early part of February, the activists concentrated on building organisation and completing the surveys. By mid-February they had been sent to Sutcliffe who began processing them.

About the time the questionaires were completed, the lawyers notified the activists that the date set for the court case was 25 March. This gave the activists little over a month, but they also realised the need to take full advantage of the fact that the court case was to take place four days after the first anniversary of the Langa massacre. In conjunction with PLANACT and GRC members, the LCC activists formulated a strategy. This involved the completion of an upgrading report under the auspices of PLANACT and in conjunction with GRC and BESG. This report, the LCC decided, should be completed before the court case so that a press conference could be held to announce the community's own proposals for a peaceful solution to the Langa problem. Significantly, the LCC decided to invite everyone to this press conference: the UDF affiliates, trade unions, all Uitenhage employers, the KTC, Dr. Scheepers, Minister Heunis and his senior officials.

In the meantime, the number of Langa squatters was increasing. During the week of 10-14 February, eviction notices were served on 72 families who had built shacks alongside Kamesh Rd near the coloured Community Centre. The case was heard on 15 April and an order was granted that declared the shacks illegal and gave them until April 30 to move to Kwanobuhle failing which their structures would be dismantled. This effectively meant that if the squatters failed to move, forced removals would take place on May Day, the day COSATU planned on staging South Africa's biggest ever national stayaway. Clearly the pressure was building up to a climax - some residents could not handle it and about 70 families moved to Kwanobuhle at this point (55) By this stage, however, a new set of negotiations had been initiated that were to substantially alter the balance of forces in the area.

Surprisingly, everything worked according to plan. The academics completed an upgrading report entitled Langa: The Case For Upgrade, and a large press conference was held on 19 March attended by a number of TV crews, journalists and business representatives. The KTC never came and Heunis sent a telegram to Made's home address apologising for not being able to attend. Press reports and editorials remarked on the constructive nature of the press conference and the report.

Weza Made opened the conference with these words:

> "By calling this press conference it is our last attempt to find a peaceful solution; this is out last attempt to prevent bloodshed and confrontation with the government. ... We want you to save the townshihp from explosion because if the government can force us to move to this place we don't want, we therefore have no alternative but to use force to use anything at out disposal." (56)

The Eastern Cape's most prominent political and trade union leaders were present and expressed solidarity. Stone Sizane of PEBCO and the UDF Eastern Cape Executive, Michael Dube of COSATU's Eastern Cape interim executive, and Gugile Nkwinti of Port Alfred who threatened solidarity action from the hinterland towns if the Langa removals proceeded. The report's basic conclusions were delivered by PLANACT representatives who used socio-economic data, survey results and urban planning theory to make a case for the feasibility of upgrading Langa and the need for subsidised development.

Two days later the whole of black Uitenhage forcefully demonstrated its unity and power by giving 99% support to the stayaway call on 21 March. Furthermore, 82% of Uitenhage's coloured workers also heeded the stayaway call (57). Over 60 000 people packed the Kwanobuhle stadium for a day long rally in commemoration of the the victims of the Langa massacre.

This stayaway marked the highpoint of community-union solidarity. In dozens of factory meetings during the weeks leading up to the stayaway, workers had debated the issue and come to a decision to call a full day stayaway. This decision was widely supported in street and area committee meetings. The combined impact of tight workplace and community organisation around basic material grievances ensured the success of the stayaway. This is why grassroots activists were more than a little peeved when two days before the stayaway the Kwanobuhle leadership issued a directive that all workers must stayaway. (58).

Langa's problems, however, were by no means over. The court case took place as scheduled on 25 March. It was clear that the state was under tremendous pressure to find an amicable settlement by this stage. Le Roux had this say about that period:

> "There was active agitation to encourage people to move in and squat. It became a real problem from the point of view of control. There was nothing anybody could do to stop this flow because the police, municipalities and management committees

all feared an eruption. It then became a political test of wills: the squatters defiantly moved towards the white areas. The position was out of control. Everyone was scared of an international incident. Everyone knew it was a bomb with a lid on." (59)

Roger Matlock of the Urban Foundation phoned Dr. Scheepers of Constitutional Development and Planning on the 21st to propose a deal that went as follows: after KTC obtains a court order to evict the squatters on the 25th, this should be used as a stick to negotiate with the community from a position of strength. He urged that direct removals should be avoided at all costs.

No doubt responding to international media coverage of Langa on the anniversary of the massacre, from business pressure and from the threat of extensive disruption, KTC's lawyers arrived with a message from Heunis on the morning of the 25th urging them to reach an out-of-court settlement with the squatter leaders. The deal KTC offered was that if the 9th-4th ave squatters agreed to move to Kwanobuhle, they could live there rent free; while the rest of Langa would be upgraded. Realising that if they agreed to this offer without consulting the people, serious divisions could open up in the community, the LCC turned it down. The case went ahead and judgement was reserved indefinitely.

It appeared at this stage as if the LCC had now rejected the state's final offer. The imperatives of extra-state organisation and the potential for division if agreements were reached that resulted in the sacrificing of the interests of even a minority group, were pressures the LCC could not have ignored. Some of the LCC leaders were well aware that it was "divide-and-rule" deals like this that resulted in bloody intra-community conflicts in the western cape.

As mentioned above, the Kamesh Rd squatters case came to court on 15 April and a removal order was issued instructing squatters to vacate the premises by 30 April. Obviously the Langa conflict was reaching a head and the potential for major confrontations prompted community, trade union and business leaders to seek last minute solutions. Using the LCC call made at the press conference urging business to involve themselves in the Langa conflict, and under pressure from the unions to do likewise, the Uitenhage branch of MCI decided to take action. Ronny Kruger of VW commented on this decision by saying that "business has a responsibility to get involved in issues that affect their workers. ... Happy employees make for happy consumers." (60). The LCC met the MCI for a preliminary meeting on the 25th April and it was agreed that future meetings would take place to hammer out a compromise.

The MCI then took steps that managed to convince the KTC to stay the removal of the Kamesh Rd squatters for ten days on the grounds that the MCI wanted to meet trade union and community representatives in an attempt to find a less violent solution. This intervention was timeous because the Uitenhage municipality was under tremendous pressure from its Conservative Party members to go for a full-on armed confrontation to remove the Kamesh Rd squatters - an option with widespread support in Uitenhage's white community. Using their considerable influence, Le Roux and Erasmus - responding largely to pressure from business - managed to convince the Deputy Sheriff and

the Mayor to stay the removals for ten days. This bulwark against an ultra-rightwing line brought together an informal five person caucus of Uitenhage's most powerful white leaders - Le Roux, Erasmus, Coetzee, Kruger, and Robyn Williams, Uitenhage's town clerk. They met regularly to plan strategy and agreed to support a negotiation/compromise position for the moment (61). This crucial alliance between multi-national capital and the local state revolved largely around two concerns: (a) the international consequences of a violent eruption, and (b) the potential advantages of upgrading. It was agreed that Kruger would act as the broker between the state and community. Their objective was twofold: (a) to secure the removal to Kwanobuhle of the Kamesh Rd squatters and the 9th-4th ave squatters; and (b) upgrading of the rest of Langa (62). Their weapons were the stick of forced removal and the carrot of upgrading.

Two mass meetings took place that cemented the alliance between community organisations and trade unions that was to carry the next round of negotiations through. The first was a mass political funeral in Langa stadium where Weza Made spoke on the removal issue. This was the first high profile mass meeting he had ever spoken at. The second was a mass indoor meeting on Mayday. The speakers at this meeting included Freddie Magugu, Wonga Nkala (UYCO President and staunch socialist), John Gomomo of NAAWU and Weza Made. Made's comment after the meeting was: "For the first time we see unity between unions and community organisations. It was decided that whatever we do, there should be joint decision-making." (63). From this point on, the LCC became a core of leaders that comprised the original four, i.e. Made, Magugu, Mandabana and Teyise, plus the NAAWU leadership centred around Gomomo.

The meeting between the LCC, trade unionists and the MCI took place on 2nd May - the day after all Uitenhage's workers stayed away for political reasons. Only 11 africans out of a total of 7 615 employed at Uitenhage's major enterprises turned up for work (64). The MCI delegates arrived at the meeting with a discussion paper relating to solutions to the question of the Kamesh Rd squatters only. The paper started by saying that any solution arrived at must be acceptable to all the major political interests in Uitenhage. The paper defined the root of the problem as the conflicting "interests arising from the problems of rapid urbanisation".

Accepting the squatter's reasons for not wanting to move as being ease of access to places of employment and the high cost of living in Kwanobuhle, the MCI paper said it was prepared to "lobby support for the implementation of the following":

1. that the Kamesh Rd area be zoned for community recreational activities;

2. that Langa be upgraded and, if necessary extended to the north;

3. that any upgrading or other improvements be undertaken in a way that alleviates unemployment in Langa, i.e by utilising labour from the community.

In return for its support for these proposals, the MCI argued that the community should agree that the Kamesh Rd squatters be "temporarily and acceptably ... accomodated elsewhere."

The LCC responded by making four points (65): firstly, if the Kamesh Rd squatters agreed to move, this would be a sign of weakness that could set a precedent for the removal of all Langa's squatters in the future. Secondly, the leaders said they would refuse to agree to any compromises until the basic principle that Langa be upgraded is approved. Thirdly, and related to the second point, the leaders argued that upgrading must be planned to ensure that it does not only benefit the better-off sections of the community, but that the poorest elements also benefit. Fourthly, they said it was unacceptable that the only reason why people could not live in the Kamesh Rd area was because it was zoned in terms of the Group Areas act as "non-residential".

The MCI and LCC agreed to meet again on the 9th. The MCI delegates went back to discuss the issues raised by the LCC with the caucus of white leaders around Le Roux. The LCC returned to discuss various options with the community. A special meeting for all Uitenhage's organisations was held on Sunday 4th to discuss the removal and the neeting with MCI. On the same day Made gave a moving speech to the Kamesh Rd squatters. Relating the stories of Sofasonke's struggles in Johannesburg in the 1940s and the contemporary struggle for Crossroads, he reinterated his view that "the struggle of squatters is the sruggle for land". On the court case, he related how Mandela refused to recognise the legitimacy of the South African courts at his trial. He concluded be saying that all that squatters have is the power to organise and that "there is no easy walk to freedom". The Kamesh Rd squatters, he suggested, should agree to move to another area in Langa so that the whole of Langa could be saved. The meeting was very emotional and many, including Made, broke down and cried. By this stage the Kamesh Rd area committee was meeting on a daily basis to discuss plans for resisting the removal. Eventually, this area committee decided at a meeting on the 6th that the Kamesh Rd squatters would agree to move voluntarily to another location in Langa if this would ensure the upgrading of the rest of Langa. The activists, who had spent literally dozens of hours in talks with the Kamesh Rd squatters, were elated with this decision. However, the amabutho leaders and some Kwanobuhle leaders were opposed to the decision argueing that this in effect meant recognising the Group Areas Act. They also argued that the "black man's struggle for the return of his land" must not be reversed for the sake of compromise.

In the meantime, the LCC and the unionists had decided that a mass meeting needed to be held to get a general mandate for the Kamesh Rd compromise. The white caucus agreed to support the LCC appplication to the magistrate to hold such a meeting. The result was that the LCC applied for permission to hold a meeting with letters of support from the KTC, MCI and Uitenhage municipality. Not surprisingly, the magistrate gave permission for the meeting. The meeting took place on the 8th in a soccer field in Langa. It lasted most of the day with speeches from all the major Uitenhage organisations, including the trade unions. The LCC leaders chaired the meeting.

Two further meetings with the MCI took place in May during which the various principles and details were discussed. The final meeting was held on the 11th June where agreement was reached on all the major points. Because they represent the basis of an agreement arrived at

democratically through negotiation, compromise and community participation, they will be quoted in full as they appeared in the minutes of the meeting:

"The MCI is prepared to recommend and lobby support for the implementation of the following:

1. Kabah/Langa will indefinitely remain an area zoned for Black residents. 2. That Kabah/Langa be upgraded and, if necessary, extended on the Northern side, to accomodate the existing residents within sound town planning principles. 3. That such upgrading be planned to accomodate all income groups, which would include, i.a., shack dwellers. 4. That any such upgrading programme be undertaken utilizing the labour of residents presently unemployed, in order to help alleviate the hardships experienced in the present economic recession. 5. That the Municipality of Uitenhage obtain the support of PLANACT for the master plan to upgrade Kabah/Langa, and to clearly define the future of zone 61 [Kamesh Rd]. 6. It is understood that if the authorities agree to the above, the squatters will agree to voluntarily move."

And then in a separate section:

"1. That the Committee accepts on behalf of the Langa squatters, the MCI's proposals as set out [above]. 2. That the squatters are prepared to voluntarily move to an alternative and acceptable location within Langa/Kabah. 3. That the committee will, before the next meeting between the Committee and the MCI, identify such acceptable locations in Kabah/Langa. 4. That representatives of the local authorities of Langa and Uitenhage attend the next meeting of the Committee and the MCI; that they bring with them a plan clearly defining the boundaries of Langa and Zone 61; that the representatives of the local authorities, together with the Committee, under the chairmanship of a representative of the MCI, at that meeting find a suitable and acceptable location where the squatters can be moved without further delay. 5. The meeting referred to in 4 above is to be held on 15hoo on Friday, June 20, at the Goodyear Recreation Centre. 6. It was agreed that the members of the Uitenhage branch of the MCI will be approached by the MCI in order to ascertain to what extent the squatters can be assisted with material for shelter when they move to an alternative location."

This deal meant the Langa squatters were being offered much more than before the court case in March when the offer was the removal of 9th-4th ave and upgrading of the rest. They were, in fact, being offered almost all of what they had struggled for from the beginning.

With this agreement under his belt, Ronny Kruger of VW and the MCI convinced the Uitenhage Muncipality to allow him to talk to the Council as a whole. It was this talk that convinced the Mayor to agree to come to the June 20th meeting to discuss the upgrading proposals. Largely because of pressure from VW, by the middle of June all the major interests in the white establishment had accepted the proposals, i.e. the KTC, Uitenhage municipality, Le Roux, and the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning. (66) As far as the community leaders and unionists were concerned, the June 20th meeting accepted the proposals the MCI and LCC had agreed to on

the 14th. Although the coloured and Indian Management Committees were not there, the KTC, Uitenhage municipality, LCC, trade unionists and MCI sat around a table and, with a map of Uitenhage on the wall, discussed the most suitable areas into which Langa could be extended.

Heunis visited Port Elizabeth at this stage to hold discussions with MPs and officials where he expressed support for the retention and upgrading of Langa (67). This message was communicated at the time to the MCI (68).

As far as the Task Group was concerned, Scheepers abandoned his early position that stipulated that his brief was strictly technical and therefore he could not meet community representatives. Prior to the June 20th meeting in Uitenhage, Scheepers led a delegation of Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth MPs (Dawid Le Roux, Sakkie Louw and Gert Van Der Linde) that met representatives of the UDF's Eastern Cape Regional Executive on June 4th. The meeting was held at the offices of S.A. Bottling and was chaired by Mr. P. Gutsche, an S.A. Bottling director. Also present were representatives of the Eastern Cape Chamber of Commerce, the Eastern Cape branch of NAFCOC.

Scheepers defined the purpose of the meeting as being the need to discuss the future upgrading of infrastructure in the Port Elizabeth - Uitenhage region in terms of the Rive Plan guidelines for the Eastern Cape. Scheepers pointed out that government had allocated R200 million rand for this purpose. The UDF delegates, who were all from civic organisations, emphasised their commitment to non-violent solutions and the need for joint negotiation over the upgrading and development of infrastructure.

The meeting ended with agreement that further meetings were essential and the next meeting was scheduled for 23rd June, three days after the Uitenhage meeting and, in the event, eleven days after the State of Emergency was declared. By this stage, all the community leaders at the meeting were in detention.

To all intents and purposes, therefore, the struggle for Langa had been won. Through grassroots organisation, mass struggle, negotiation, compromise and the building of alliances, Langa forced multi-national capital, the local state and sections of the central state apparatus to agree on concessions that favoured the majority of Langa's residents. In addition, the function of Scheepers' Task Force changed towards the end when agreement was reached with the UDF regional leadership that planning would take place within the context of genuine negotiations.

In the end, however, these gains were reversed. The unique and fragile balance of forces that made possible mass organisation in the township, divisions in the white power bloc and negotiations over realisable concessions, changed fundamentally when the declaration of the State of Emergency imposed an external dynamic that subsumed by its shear force all other local dynamics. Working closely with the SADF and SAP, Le Roux and Erasmus reneged on their commitment to negotiation and used their newly trained "greenbeans" (municipal police) to engineer one of the most sophisticated and precision timed forced removals in recent years. They succeeded because the security forces had the necessary powers to forcibly

change the rules of the game and alter the balance of forces in a way the social movement could do nothing about. Capital did little to stop the process and the LCC leaders were detained. In short, the State of Emergency re-united the power bloc of dominant white class interests and destroyed the social movement that represented the popular classes.

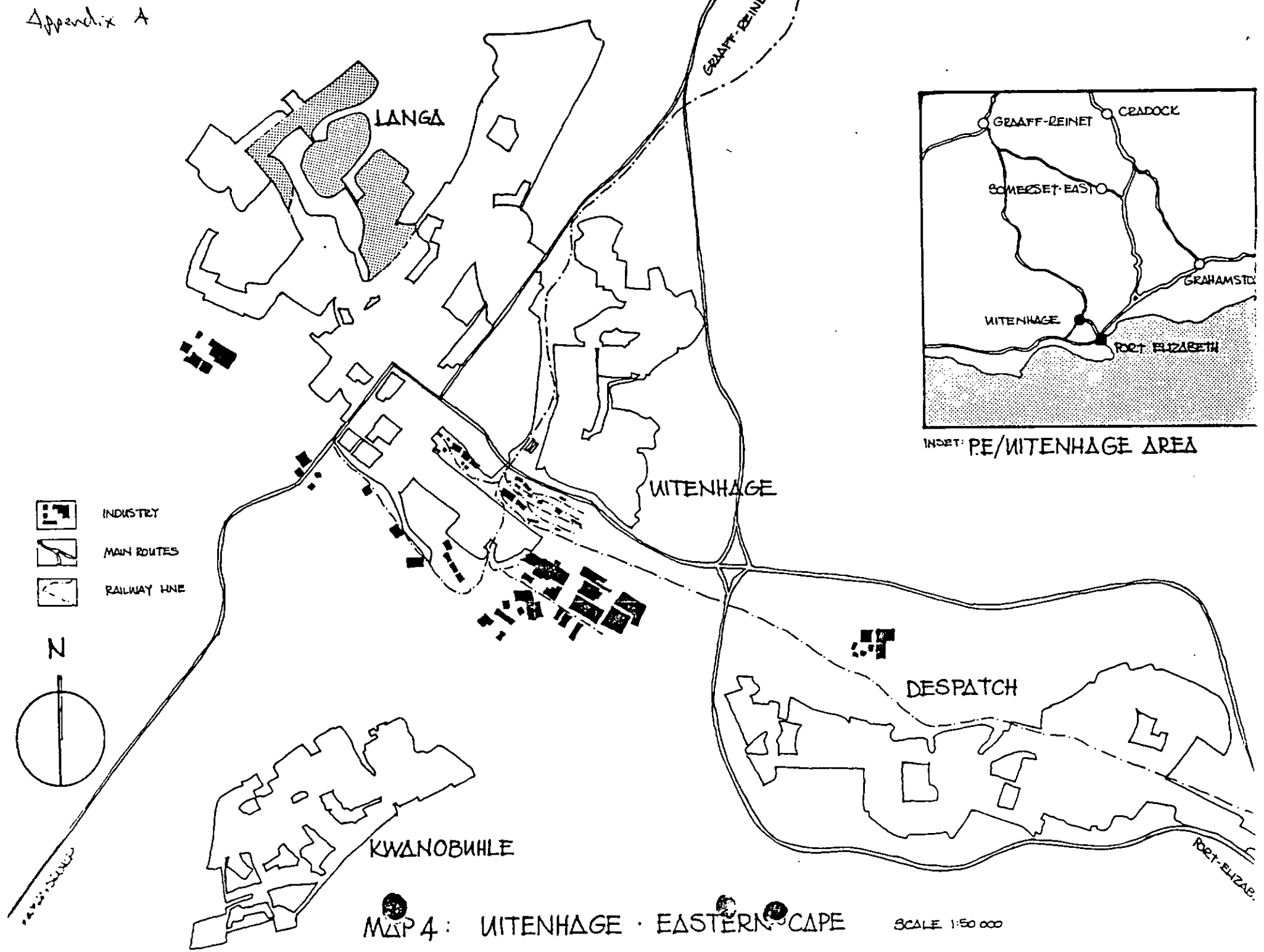
PEOPLE'S POWER OR DUAL POWER?

Once community organisations have, in effect, taken "political and ideological" control of a township, they do not have coercive control. They therefore have a choice. They can take on the state and risk a full-frontal confrontation, or reach a temporary accomodation with the state. The former option would have involved turning the townships into "liberated zones". However, in the absence of a permanent "people's army" to defend these zones along lines seen in northern Mozambique during the anti-colonial war, the communities had no chance of winning a confrontation. The result would have been the immediate decimation of their organisations. This is why its a misnoma to refer to the process as the birth of "rudimentary organs of people's power" (69)

The alternative, therefore, lay in demanding recognition as the representative of the community. This is a classic pattern of power distribution during times of intense conflict and struggle. It goes back to the Paris Commune in 1848, the soviets in Russia in 1917, Barcelona's communes during the Spanish Civil War, and the US ghetto revolts of the 1960s (which is where the notion of "ungovernability" was first used). It is a situation that Lenin referred to as "dual power" because like the relationship between the Provisional Government and the Soviets before October 1917, the existing duly constituted state agrees to recognise a rival source of power. This arrangement is usually transitional and will only culminate in a revolution if the security forces cease backing the state (like in Russia). However, in cases where the security forces remain loyal but are not used to totally smash the alternative power structures, "dual power" can lead to negotiation and greater democratisation as the rival points of power are absorbed on terms more favourable for the popular classes. This is what happened to the US ghettoes, the South American squatter movements, the Spanish Citizens Movement during the 1970s, the Phillipino protest movements after Marcos, Solidarity in Poland, Mau Mau in Kenya, the guerillas in Zimbabwe and many similar examples.

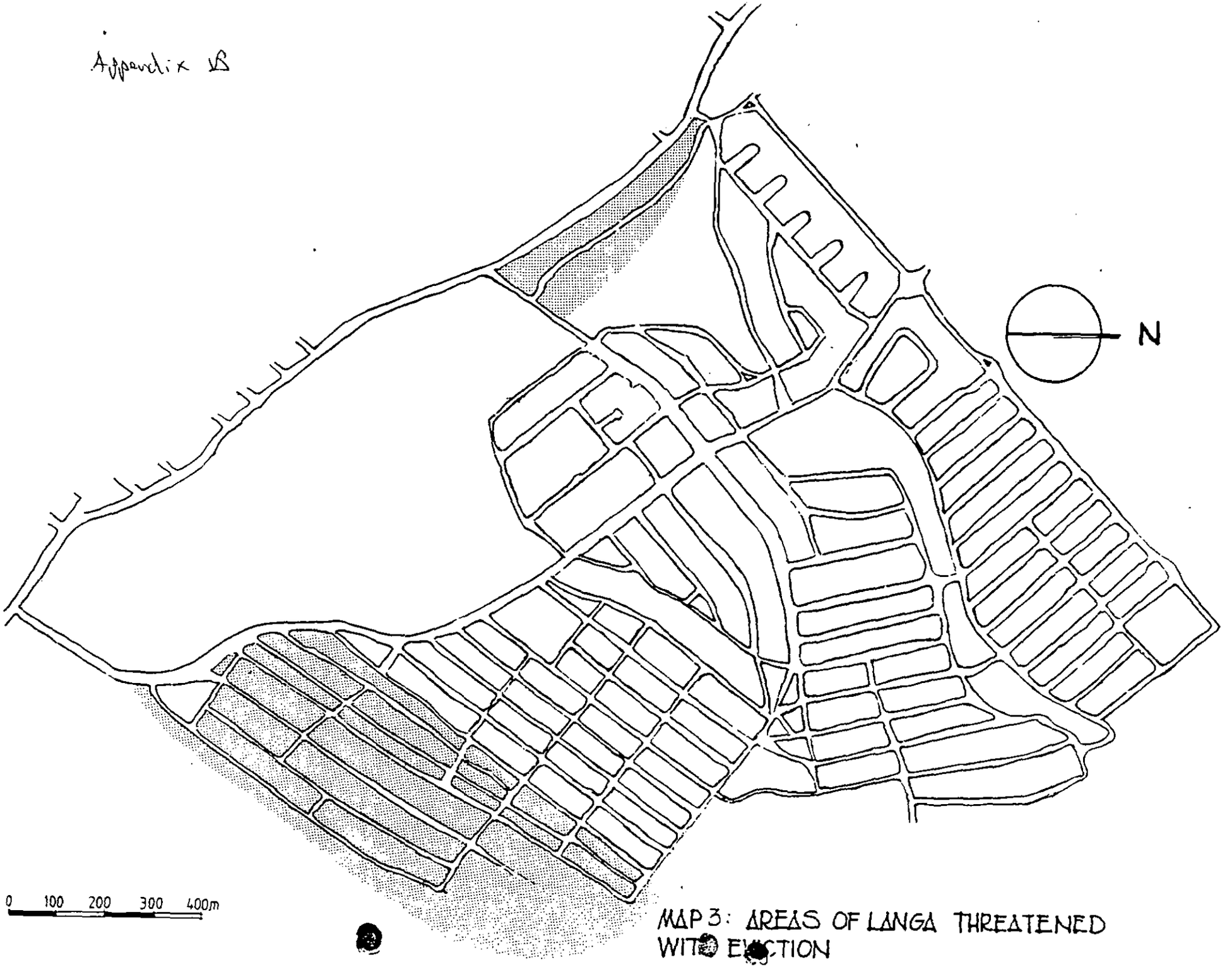
The implications of this process for the South African context are far-reaching to say the least. It boils down to the fact that movements can only be revolutionary when they operate under revolutionary conditions. Although social movements like the one discussed in this paper were smashed despite their desire to negotiate, a less repressive and a more democratic long-term alternative was available for all sides.

Appendix A



MAP 4: UITENHAGE · EASTERN CAPE SCALE 1:50 000

Appendix B



MAP 3: AREAS OF LANGA THREATENED WITH EVICTION

11) Ibid.

12) See Affidavit by Major Theron in Notice of Motion in the matter between The Kwanobuhle Town Council and David Andries and Others, Case no. 2966/85, Supreme Court of South Africa, South-Eastern Cape Local Division.

13) "Minutes of the meeting between officials from the Kwanobuhle Council and a delegation representing the residents of Kabah held on Tuesday 11 June 1985 at 15h30 at the township offices Kabah".

14) For an account of this see Swilling, M., "The United Democratic Front and Township Revolt", in Cobbett, W. and Cohen, R., Popular Struggles in South Africa, (London: James Curry, 1988).

15) Interview with Amabutho leaders in Langa, June 1986.

16) Interview with Weza Made, 20.6.85.

17) Discussion with Soweto Youth Congress leader, June 1985.

18) Interview with Weza Made, 20.6.85.

19) Eastern Province Herald, 31.10.85.

20) "Minutes of a meeting held between the Kwanobuhle Town Council and a delegation from the residents of Kabah held on Tuesday 22.10.85 at 16h00 at Kabah Township Offices Kabah."

21) Eastern Province Herald, 12.7.85.

22) Interview with Barry Erasmus and Eddie Coetzee, 26.5.86.

23) Minutes of meeting, see footnote 20.

24) Eastern Province Herald, 31.10.85.

25) Conversation with M. Sutcliffe in November 1985. He was in touch with the state engineer on the Langa issue.

26) See Appendix C in the Notice of Motion cited in footnote 12.

27) Interviews with groups of these women in October 1985.

28) Lund, S., "The Battle for Kabah: Orderly Urbanisation and Control", South African Labour Bulletin, 11, 8, Sept/Oct 1986.

29) Interviews with Erasmus and Coetzee and with Le Roux, op. cit.

30) Minutes of meeting cited in footnote 20.

31) Ibid.

32) "Minutes of meeting held between the Kwanobuhle Town Council

FOOTNOTES

Methodological note: the interviews cited have been conducted by the author who was, at times, accompanied by other researchers. All documents referred to are in the possession of the author. Most of the information, however, has been obtained from literally hundreds of informal interviews and conversations with groups during the course of a lengthy "participant observation" experience in the author's capacity as a PLANACT representative. Notes of these interactions were kept and then used to re-construct the events analysed in this paper. Quotes, however, usually come from the few formal interviews that were done. Unfortunately an extensive formal interviewing programme using a network sample was about to commence when the 1986 State of Emergency was declared. This not only forced the author underground, but put all the key informants into detention and then led to the complete destruction of the community this project was supposed to be studying.

1) See Stadler, A., "The Politics of Subsistence: Community Struggles in War-Time Johannesburg", in Hindson, D. (ed.), Working Papers in Southern African Studies Volume III, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983), pp. 51-65. This article borrows heavily from the influential text by Piven, F. & Cloward, R., Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeeded, How They Fail, (New York, 1977). For a critique of Piven and Cloward that has informed my framework see the post-marxist work by Castells, M., The City and the Grassroots, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983).

2) Interview with Weza Made, June 1985.

3) For an impressionistic account of the emergeance of youth politics, see Lodge, T. and Swilling, M., "The Year of the Amabutho", Africa Report, January-February 1986; for more systematic accounts see Johnson, S.,?????, Bundy, C., ????

4) Interview with Weza Made, March 1986.

5) Deurbraak, November 1985, p.10.

6) See PLANACT, Langa: The Case for Upgrade, (Johannesburg: PLANACT, 1986).

7) Adler, G., "Unity as a Community", Work In Progress, 50, 1987.

8) Eastern Province Herald, 14.5.87

9) Interview with Dawid Le Roux, 4.11.87.

10) Eastern Province Herald, 20.5.87

and the Kabah Coordinating Committee held on Tuesday 28.10.85 at 16h00 at Kabah Township Offices, Kabah."

33) Interview with Le Roux, op. cit.

34) Telephone conversation with Weza Made, 22.10.85.

35) Various informal and telephonic conversations with Roger Matlock during November and December 1985.

36) Conversation with Willie Breytenbach on 10.12.85 who was then a senior assistant to Minister Heunis and sat on the committee that was reviewing influx control legislation. See also Cole, J., Crossroads: The Politics of Reform and Repression, 1976-1986, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987); Hindson, D., "Orderly Urbanisation: From Territorial Apartheid to Regional Spatial Ordering", Cahiers d' Etudes Africaines, XXV, 3, 99, 1986. It was this moment of reformist reflection amongst certain policy-makers that was captured (albeit too rigidly) in Cobbett, W., et. al., "South Africa's Regional Political Economy: A Critical Analysis of Reform Strategies in the 1980s", in South African Research Services (eds.), South African Review 3, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986).

37) Interview with this resident, November 1985.

38) Affidavit by Major Theron in Notice of Motion cited in footnote 12, p.2.

39) Ibid., p.3.

40) Barry Erasmus quoted in Eastern Province Herald, 9.11.85.

41) On consumer boycotts and the resolution of the 1985 Port Elizabeth boycott see Helliker, K., Roux, A. and White, R., "'Asithengi!' Recent Consumer Boycotts", in South African Research Services (eds.), South African Review 4, (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

42) Evening Post, 3.12.85.

43) Eastern Province Herald, 6.12.85.

44) Evening Post, 3.12.85.

45) Interview with Coetzee and Erasmus, op. cit.

46) Evening Post, 27.1.86.

47) Oosterlig, 28.11.85.

48) Eastern Province Herald, 15.11.85.

49) "Minutes of meeting held between the Kwanobuhle Town Council and Kabah Coordinating Committee on 3rd February 1986."

50) See Cole, J., op. cit. pp.28-43.

51) "Minutes of meeting between the Langa Coordination Delegation and Urban Foundation, Sunday 10 November 1985, 8.00 pm, Uitenhage Catholic Church."

52) Interview with Erasmus and Coetzee, op. cit.

53) Tape recording of this discussion, January 1986.

54) Private correspondence betweeen R. Matlock to B. Erasmus, 25.11.85. (These two men knew each other from the days when Erasmus was town clerk and Matlock was Director of Technical Services in the East Cape Development Board.)

55) Interview with UYCO leader, January 1986.

56) Tape recording of this meeting.

57) Report on survey of Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage stayaway, 21.3.86, by G. Adler and M. Beittel, 24.3.86.

58) Conversations with various union and community leaders during March 1986.

59) Interview with Le Roux, op. cit.

60) Interview with R. Kruger, 27.5.87.

61) Interview with Le Roux, op. cit.

62) Ibid.

63) Discussion with Weza Made, 3.5.86.

64) Eastern Province Herald, 2.5.86.

65) Interview with Weza Made and Freddie Magugu, 8.5.86.

66) Interviews with Erasmus and Coetzee, op. cit., and Le Roux, op. cit. Plus interview with Brian Mathews, Director of the MCI, 25.5.86 and an interview with Minister Heunis and six of his officials on 14.7.87 in Pretoria.

67) Interview with Heunis, op. cit.

68) Interview with Mathew, op. cit.

69) My misconception of township mobilisation and organisation is contained in an unpublished paper written in early 1986 entitled "Apartheid Local Government and the Emergence of People's Power in the Eastern Cape". Similar views are contained in Suttner, R., "Popular Justice in South Africa", paper presented to Sociology Department seminar, 1986. A refreshing and realistic re-think of these issues is contained in an Honours thesis by Kehla Shubane of the Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand.