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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

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A PLACE TO LIVE : *The Resolution of the African Housing Crisis in Johannesburg, 1944-1954.*[1]

by Peter Wilkinson

INTRODUCTION

In March 1944, the African township of Orlando near Johannesburg witnessed the first of a wave of squatter movements which was to sweep across the Witwatersrand during the next three or four years. The movements were, for the most part, a desperate response to the apparent inability or reluctance of the authorities to tackle the massive backlog in housing provision which had developed in the major industrial centres as African workers and their families flooded in to meet the expanding labour demand brought about by the wartime economic boom. Although South Africa had already experienced phases of rapid urbanization during earlier periods (notably the First World War), the magnitude of the problem which now confronted the state's housing apparatus was unprecedented and soon took on the dimensions of a full-blown crisis as decisive action to remedy the situation failed to materialize. By the beginning of 1955, however, not quite eleven years after the squatters had first thrust themselves into the official consciousness, an editorial in *Bantu* - the periodical published by the Department of Native Affairs to disseminate its 'viewpoint' amongst the African population - could claim:

> The solution of the Bantu housing problem has now reached a stage which we can call the end of the beginning. Improved houses are being completed every day. During the next ten years hundreds of thousands of Bantu will be properly housed for the first time.[2]

This paper is an attempt to move towards an explanation of how this 'solution' of the 'Bantu housing problem' was finally achieved and, more specifically, of how the foundations of what we now know as Soweto came to be laid. It focuses on the resolution of certain strategic issues

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linked to the provision of African housing and on the establishment of the particular legislative and institutional framework within which the concrete practices that were to generate the form of the 'modern' township were brought into play. In coming to terms with the mass of detailed and often confusing empirical material on which the paper is based, I have tried to avoid the danger of remaining trapped at the level of merely descriptive narrative by explicitly situating the evolution of African housing policy within the political and economic context on which, I would argue, it was always predicated.

In this respect, I have found what I consider to be a useful point of entry into the labyrinth of 'facts' in Manuel Castells' conceptualisation of 'urban planning' as the theoretical field of state intervention in the 'urban', where the latter "refers not only to a spatial form, but expresses the social organization of the processes of reproduction". More precisely, Castells defines 'urban planning' as:

> ..... the intervention of the political in the specific articulation of the different instances of a social formation within a collective unit of reproduction of labour power, with the intention of ensuring its extended reproduction, of regulating the non-antagonistic contradictions that have arisen and of repressing the antagonistic contradictions, thus assuring the interests of the dominant social class in the whole of the social formation and the organization of the urban system, in such a way as to ensure the structural reproduction of the dominant mode of production.[3]

Despite the elaborate formalism of the theoretical system in which it is embedded, Castells' definition seems to provide effective purchase on the rather intuitive notion that 'township policy' - notwithstanding the more overtly racist overtones of its ideological underpinnings - ultimately constitutes a *class-bound* political practice. Certainly, it enables us to penetrate beneath a superficial acceptance of the 'neutral', 'technical' status of bodies such as the National Building Research Institute, which played a major role both in the development of the township concept as such (i.e. as an urban planning agency in the more restricted, conventional sense), and in the development of the means through which it could be given material form (i.e. as a source of the necessary technology).

It should be emphasized, however, that the definition has not been deployed here as a rigorous analytical tool, but rather as a means of organizing a considerable volume of otherwise largely incoherent material into a working structure which will undoubtedly require revision as analysis proceeds.

The length of the paper and the degree to which it has been shaped by the need to come to terms with the 'facts' rather than to present systematically developed arguments are, I think, indicative of its status as a work in progress. The paucity of existing work dealing with the same subject matter and the lack of theoretical depth in the few accounts which have been produced [4] must remain the ultimate justification for the appearance of such a tentative and preliminary study.

The body of the paper has been divided into four parts. Part I deals with the political and economic context from which the African housing crisis emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War. It locates the failure of the state apparatus to move beyond a somewhat tenuous containment of the squatter phenomenon in the inability of the United Party government to establish a practical and broadly-accepted approach to the problem. Part II examines the evolution of 'Native policy' in the period before 1948 in terms of certain issues which were to become the pivotal points of the Nationalist government's attempts to resolve the crisis during the early 50s. It focuses on the changing responses to these issues articulated in the reports of certain key official commissions or committees of enquiry. Part III sketches the parallel development during the late 40s and early 50s of firstly, the legislative programme required by the Nationalist government to implement its increasingly coherent but controversial African housing policy and, secondly, the 'scientific' research programme co-ordinated by the NBRI to provide the state with the technical means to translate its policy into material reality. Part IV returns to an account of developments in Johannesburg after 1948 in order to illustrate how specific, local conditions affected the implementation of the policy evolved at the national level and attempts to map some of the parameters of the conflict within the City Council, and between it and the central government. A very brief conclusion points to some of the more general theoretical implications of the preceding analysis.

I

In 1939, on the brink of the Second World War, the provision of housing to accommodate Johannesburg's African population presented, according to the Manager of the city's Non-European Affairs Department, "no great problem": only 143 families had registered on the official waiting list for municipal accommodation.[5] To a large extent, the 'constant menace' of the inner city slums - those "plague spots in the moral and social life of the community" [6] which had absorbed a considerable proportion of the city's civic energies over the preceding four decades - had been overcome. Within the city's borders, apart from the municipal 'locations', only the Malay Location (the area now known as Pageview) and the

strongholds of African resistance to further clearance schemes lodged in Sophiatown and the adjacent areas of Martindale and Newclare still contained substantial African populations. To the north, just beyond the municipal boundary, Alexandra had become an isolated 'black spot' disturbing the more bucolicly-inclined members of the white citizenry in their genteel conquest of the countryside, but for the moment of secondary concern to the City Council.

The gradually more efficient machinery of the Council's slum clearance programme, boosted by the passage of the Slums Act in 1934, had earlier resulted in an alarming increase in the population of these areas as the residents of 'declared' areas flooded in to avoid exile to the new township or Orlando in the south west (with its attendant increase in living costs) or simply to escape official detection. Progress in the provision of alternative accommodation in Orlando - the "future great city of Bantudom" as it had been hailed by the *Bantu World* on its inauguration as a 'model township' - had been steady if hardly spectacular. But the construction of some 5 900 houses accommodating an estimated population of 35 000[7] had taken effect and by 1937 the Council had been able to record with satisfaction that 90 percent of the people evicted from the slum areas were now moving to the locations, as compared with only 12 per cent three years before.[8]

The outbreak of war, however, had heralded a new phase in South Africa's economic trajectory and the process of urbanization with which it was articulated. The substantial isolation of the economy brought about by the drastic reduction in the availability of imported commodities and metropolitan technology and the expanded demands of the war effort forced the development of an increasingly sophisticated and diversified secondary industrial sector. Between 1939 and 1945, the value of manufacturing output rose by 116 per cent and the size of the industrial labour force increased by 53 per cent with only 19 000 of the additional 125 000 workers being white. The growth of the armed forces to 300 000 men, many of them skilled workers withdrawn from production, and the expansion of economic activity created an acute labour shortage and Africans in ever greater numbers began to move into skilled and semi-skilled positions previously occupied by whites.[9]

There was, however, a further dimension to the problems which were being experienced by the urban African population. With the expanded labour demands of the war-time economy, the steady pre-war influx of predominantly male African workseekers into the industrial centres had soon swelled to a flood, encouraged at least in part, it seems, by the decision of the Minister of Native Affairs in 1942 to 'relax' the enforcement of the pass laws in the major urban areas.[10] Between 1936 and 1948, the African population of Johannesburg more than doubled - from roughly 229 000 to an estimated 506 500 - and as the Manager of the Non-European Affairs Department

(NEAD) noted in 1948: "During the past few years, there has been a marked and increasing tendency for the Native labourer coming to the City in search of employment to bring his family with thim".[11] By the end of 1941, the number of families on the official waiting list for municipal accommodation had grown to 4 500, increasing by the end of 1947 to 16 000. An NEAD survey in 1946 estimated that the actual demand for housing - that is, including those families not on the waiting list - was of the order of 40 000 dwellings.[12]

The pressures to which the established racial division of labour had been subjected during the war years and the increased bargaining power of African workers had been expressed in a dramatic upsurge of strike action. Between 1940 and 1945, non-whites' had struck for an average of 4,2 man-days and a total of 220 205 man-days, despite the proclamation of War Measure No. 145 in December 1942 which had outlawed strikes by Africans and imposed severe sanctions for breaches of the provisions.[13] Though without official recognition and subject to considerable harrassment, African membership of trade unions had mushroomed, giving the Council of Non-European Trade Unions a total membership of 158 000 in 119 unions by the end of the war. The growth of militant unionism had also been reflected in the spectacular increase in the number of African workers subject to Wage Board determinations during the year 1942/43, from 1 084 to 67 632, and in the 52 per cent rise in the 'real earnings' of Africans in the private industrial sector between 1939/40 and 1945/46 (compared to a rise of 10 per cent between 1930/31 and 1939/40.[14]

But there had inevitably been another side to the coin. The inflationary pressures of an expanding economy and the rising wage bill had resulted in a sharp increase in the cost of living. Between 1939 and 1945, the retail price index on all items had risen 35 per cent, and a study undertaken as early as 1940 had indicated that the cost of certain basic consumer goods (mealie meal, rice, paraffin, coal, etc) had increased by between 20 and 50 per cent since before the war.[15] The official figures for the rate of African unemployment, on the other hand, had in 1942 fallen to well below the pre-war level and had only risen to half of this level by 1944.[16] For many members of the expanding urban proletariat, it is likely that the problem of meeting the costs of their reproduction was less that of securing employment than that of the prevailing wage levels - despite the advances that had been made by unionized and other workers in certain sectors. The deteriorating conditions had been clearly indicated in the 1942 report of the Smit Committee, which compared the amount of £7.14s 6d that had been found to be necessary "under existing conditions in Johannesburg to house, feed and clothe a Native family of five in decency" with the average monthly wage of £5 2s 11d calculated from a sample of 27 994 "unskilled workers in thirty-five industries, including Municipal employees" in the same city.[17]

The growing shortage of accommodation had been further exacerbated when in 1943, the Council's building programme had been forced to close down due to the shortages of both building materials and trained artisans. To the housing stock of 11 046 units distributed between the four municipal locations (Orlando, Pimville, Western Native Township and Eastern Native Township) in 1940, only 750 new houses had been added during 1941 and 1942; no new houses at all had been constructed during 1943 and 1944. The Council had been forced to rescind an earlier decision to permit only one family to occupy each house in Orlando and from 1940 had allowed its tenants to take in sub-tenants. It has been suggested that, given the difference between the estimated and the 'official' population figures, there were also substantial numbers of unregistered sub-tenants in the various locations.[18]

The dam finally burst in March 1944, when James Mpanza, a member of the Orlando Advisory Board and leader of the Sofasonke ('we shall die together') Party, assembled a group of sub-tenants ("predominantly women", the Manager of the NEAD reported) and some families from Newclare and Kliptown to occupy the open ground along the Klip River valley near the Orlando community hall. By early April, between 6 000 and 8 000 people had moved into the area, paying an entrance fee of 2s 6d and a further weekly levy of the same amount to the Sofansonke organisers for the right to erect a shelter from whatever materials were to hand.[19]

Faced with what Alf Stadler describes as "virtually a state within a state" - into which even the access of the 'European officials' was controlled by the Sofasonke Party, as the Manager of the NEAD complained - the City Council appealed to the central government for assistance. The government, however, proved unsympathetic and, faced with the attitude that "nothing could be gained by chasing a number of people from a place where they were settled unless the authorities knew of a place to which they could go",[20] the Council grudgingly accepted responsibility for the provision of alternative accommodation and began to construct rows of temporary one-room 'shelters' using concrete 'breeze-blocks'. When the squatters' camp was finally cleared late in 1945, more than 4 000 families had been accommodated in the 'shelters' indicating that a total of at least 20 000 people had passed through it during its relatively short existence. Mpanza had proved to be a tough and capable, if somewhat unscrupulous leader and through the Sofasonke Party had ruled the camp in a style with more than a touch of the *mafioso* to it. The squatters, on the other hand, had for their part emerged with at least one important gain: official recognition of their need for housing and, since the 'shelters' were to be 'temporary', a committment on the part of the authorities to provide something more adequate.[21]

However, in January 1946, when a second movement of about a thousand families who were obviously inspired by Mpanza's success started to occupy partially completed or temporarily vacant houses in the location, the authorities were less inclined to accept the situation passively. Concerned that "the Native Leaders (had) merged the City's housing deficiency with the general political and economic disabilities (sic) of Natives" and that "squatting was presented to the Native people as a crusade to remove such disabilities",[22] they reacted forcefully. A court order to remove Mpanza from Johannesburg (later successfully appealed) was issued and a large contingent of South African Police and municipal police was assembled to eject the squatters from the houses they had occupied. After the eviction, the attempt of a group of between two and three hundred families to maintain some sort of presence in the area by erecting makeshift shelters on some nearby vacant ground was harrassed continuously by municipal location officials and finally a skirmish occurred in which two people were killed.

Confronted with the arrival of yet another group of people no longer prepared, despite the threat of official violence, to live as sub-tenants under truly appalling conditions in the old Pimville location, the Council again entered into trilateral negotiations with the government and the new group's leaders. By 'mutual agreement', a scheme was initiated to make serviced sites in the nearby Jabavu township available for 'controlled squatting' by members of the group normally resident and employed in Johannesburg. Some 1 700 families were eventually permitted to erect temporary dwellings but were charged a monthly site rental to cover the cost of the communal water supply and bucket sewage disposal service.[23] To fulfil its obligations to the sub-tenants on its waiting list, the Council proposed to continue building breeze-block shelters into which families on the list would move, leaving their sub-tenancies vacant for squatters from the serviced site scheme. But, as might have been anticipated, the squatters declined to participate in an arrangement which would merely return them to the situation from which they had just escaped and the proposal lapsed.

The squatter movement, however, persisted and began to spread with camps appearing almost simultaneously in Pimville and Alexandra, while various groups of more or less adequately organised squatters continued to enter the Orlando area. Within months, it had spread (or the existence of already established camps had been uncovered) throughout the Witwatersrand and adjacent areas and the Department of Native Affairs was anxiously viewing the situation in terms of "a general state of dissatisfaction and unrest", while the Chief Native Commissioner on the Rand was sufficiently agitated to report, menacingly if somewhat obscurely, the existence of "squatting ... specially designed to embarrass the authorities."[24] But by now, Stadler suggests, in Johannesburg at least,

> ... the Council was coming to realise that while small movements were vulnerable, any well-organised movement could not be eliminated simply by harrassing the leadership or by moving them out of town particularly as the central government made it clear that the only acceptable immediate solution was the development of 'controlled' squatting camps, for which the resettlement of Mpanza's camp in breeze-block rooms had provided a precedent.[25]

In March 1947, the municipality established the Moroka Emergency Camp on a site to the south of the Jabavu camp. It was another serviced site scheme with entry once again restricted to people who had been in employment in Johannesburg for six months or more. The screening process excluded only about 4 per cent of those tested and the Fagan Commission later held that even if allowance were made for evasion of the test, it would "safely be said that over 90 per cent were able to comply with the condition laid down". The municipality "accepted responsibility" for some 11 000 families comprising over 50 000 people under the conditions of the scheme.[26] By September, the transfer to the emergency camp had been completed and two months later a protracted rent strike, which had started in Jabavu as early as May, finally forced the council to reduce the exorbitant monthly site rental from 15s to 10s - which nevertheless remained high in comparison with the 13s 4d rental charged for a serviced two-roomed municipal house.[27]

For the moment, it seemed, the squatting movement in Johannesburg could be contained by the judicious use of 'controlled squatting' to disperse the larger or more cohesive groups and by the use of force against the smaller and less organised groups. However, with the memory of the Alexandra bus boycotts of 1943 and 1944 - which had dramatically illustrated the ability of African communities to organize around issues bearing on the level of their standard of living[28] - still fresh, and with the full magnitude of the 'squatter problem' beginning to reveal itself, the mounting uneasiness in official circles was further crystallized by attempts to give the "general state of dissatisfaction and unrest" amongst the African population a specifically political focus.

An anti-pass conference had been convened by the African National Congress (ANC) in Johannesburg in May 1944 - largely it seems, in response to efforts by the rival Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) to initiate a national campaign against passes during the previous year. It had been followed by a demonstration of some 20 000 people in the city centre and although the subsequent attempt to collect a million signatures for the anti-pass petition had failed, the arrest of

one of the organizers - a mission school teacher from Brakpan - had provoked a school boycott and a well-supported stay-away by the inhabitants of the town's location. A second anti-pass conference organized by the ANC in Johannesburg in June 1946 had resolved "to commence a mass struggle within three months of this date, which mass struggle will culminate in the national stoppage of work and the burning of passes".[29] In fact it was to be some years before the shift away from the pattern of constitutional protest led by a small and compromised petty bourgeoisie towards a programme of direct mass action and passive resistance would mature under the leadership of a revitalized ANC in the Defiance Campaign. Nevertheless, with the adjournment of the Native Representative Council (NRC) *sine die* in the wake of the brutal suppression of the 1946 African mineworkers' strike, it was already apparent that the militant tendency in African political opposition to the state was gathering momentum.[30]

The worsening of the political situation elicited two rather different responses from the United Party government. On the one hand, it led to the personal intervention of Smuts in a belated and largely unsuccessful effort to secure some sort of rapprochement with the disaffected leadership of the NRC. On the other hand, it undoubtedly influenced the government's decision to appoint the Native Laws Commission under the chairmanship of H.A. Fagan (a former Minister of Native Affairs) to investigate a far-reaching reformulation of 'Native policy'. The emerging 'squatter problem', however, demanded a material 'economic' intervention by the state which was to prove rather more difficult to deliver. In 1946, when the implications of the influx to the towns had become impossible to ignore, the state's attempts to bring it under control had necessitated the invocation of wartime emergency powers to restrict the rights of Africans to travel by train to the major industrial centres.[31] But in the face of the continued antipathy of many local authorities towards its proposals and certain other problems, the central government remained apparently unable to act decisively to end the escalating housing crisis which confronted it in the post-war period.

In 1944, the Housing Amendment Act had replaced the Central Housing Board, established under the original Housing Act of 1920, with the National Housing and Planning Commission (NHPC) - a body with far wider powers enabling it to undertake its own housing schemes as well as financing local authority schemes from a national housing loans fund set up to complement the existing provincial loans funds. The state's capacity to tackle its proposed post-war housing programme had been further enhanced with the passage of the Housing (Emergency Powers) Act in 1945, which enabled the Governor-General to make by proclamation emergency regulations covering a wide range of matters pertinent to the programme. Under the provisions of the Act - which were eventually extended to

1957 - regulations were proclaimed which broadened the powers of the NHPC to undertake the provision of housing and which covered the granting of State lands and the expropriation of the other lands for such schemes, as well as the training of building workers and the setting up of certain controls over building materials.[32]

In addition, in an attempt to stimulate local authority housing programmes and after protracted negotiations with the United Municipal Executive (UME), the newly appointed NHPC had in December 1944 amended the existing 'sub-economic' subsidy system which, the municipal representatives claimed, had resulted in major losses to the local authorities. Under the National Housing Scheme, the interest rate carried by sub-economic housing loans increased from 3/4 per cent to 3½ per cent (the rate at which funds were allocated by the Treasury to the Commission) but the government undertook to share responsibility with the local authorities for any losses incurred under the scheme in a ratio which could vary between 2:1 and 3:1. The local authorities were further to be permitted to include as charges against the cost of sub-economic schemes expenditure on repairs and maintenance and on various infrastructural and social services.[33]

But, despite what was described as "the very favourable National Housing formula" in an official document reviewing progress under the new arrangement in 1947, the shortage of houses continued to grow. The state's economic and sub-economic housing programmes for all racial groups had been adversely affected by developments during and after the war, and clearly the massive increases in the African populations of the major urban centres had completely overwhelmed the conventional delivery system. The official document ascribed the state's "inadequate contribution" to:

(a) the prevailing high building costs;
(b) the shortage of skilled building artisans;
(c) the acute shortage of building materials, particularly cement and steel; and
(d) the unwillingness of local authorities to face the losses involved (in certain cases with justification.[34]

Apparently accepting its inability to affect this situation, however, the Directorate of Housing (the 'technical' aim of the NHPC) proposed in 1947 to supplement the National Housing Scheme with an 'Emergency Native Housing Scheme' which would allow local authorities to erect temporary dwellings, with an estimated life of ten years, "using local materials and labour" on sites provided with services of a "permanent nature". But in the following

year, it was reported that although "interest in these facilities" had been "encouraging in the initial stages", only a single application for a loan to build some experimental temporary houses had been received and "as a result of this the scheme (had) virtually lapsed".[35] This setback, and the continuing reluctance of many local authorities to undertake sub-economic schemes on the basis of the National Housing formula induced Dr. Gluckman (then Minister of Health, to whom the NHPC were responsible) early in 1948 to propose yet another scheme "to supplement the efforts of local authorities in the field of Native housing". The 'State Housing Scheme' would enable the NHPC to "carry out sub-economic schemes for Natives in the municipal areas of local authorities which so desired and would be prepared to take over the completed schemes from the Commission for administrative purposes". The new scheme, however, was to prove even more short-lived than its predecessor for, with the change of government a few months later, the incoming Minister "instructed the Commission to suspend further action in this connection until such time as further consideration could be given to the matter".[36]

In the event, Gluckman's proposal was to receive no further consideration at all and the inability of the NHPC under the United Party government to come to terms with the problem of formulating a workable policy was to become the object of much pointed comment in Parliament by members of the new government.[37] The problem, on the other hand, could not be quite so simply disposed of, for it had by now assumed staggering proportions. A survey conducted by the Department of Native Affairs for the Directorate of Housing in 1947 had indicated that the country's *immediate* requirements in African housing were 154 000 family dwellings plus single accommodation (in hostels, etc.) for 106 900 people.[38] In Johannesburg alone, the shortage of houses for 'non-Europeans' had been estimated in 1947 to be 40 000 units, but by mid-1948 the city's Non-European Affairs Department was suggesting that some 62 000 houses would be needed to meet the demand over the next five years.[39] The nature and the dimensions of the problem had therefore been clearly revealed and although the new Nationalist government was - for the time being- to remain unfettered by the factionalism which had hamstrung its predecessors in the post-war period, it would require a sustained and systematic attack carried out over the next six years along a broad ideological and political front to arrive at some sort of 'resolution'.

II

In order to grasp the complexity of the political and ideological task confronting the Nationalist government in

1948, we must retrace certain steps in the evolution of 'Native policy' prior to that date, which bear on the question of how the African population of the urban areas was to be accommodated. To achieve a really comprehensive understanding, we would probably have to go back at least as far as an examination of the matrix of social forces reflected in the passage of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act in 1923, and possibly beyond that , to look at what underlay the various administrative and legislative measures which provided the rationale for the first move towards urban segregation during the first two decades of the century.[40] Such an undertaking would, however, require more space than is available here and the investigation will be confined to certain specific issues running through the reports of three Commissions or Committees which, more or less systematically, posed the 'accommodation' question between 1935 and 1948.

The significance of the Departmental Committee appointed in 1935 "to enquire into and report upon the question of residence of Natives in urban areas and certain proposed amendments to the Native Urban Areas Act No. 21 of 1923" [41] lies primarily in the precision with which its report identifies the main parameters of the struggles that were to develop around the 'Native housing problem' during the late 40s and early 50s. In particular, the Committee isolated the three issues that would dominate all official or quasi-official thinking on the matter: the need for a 'permanent' or 'stabilised' urban African labour force, the distribution of the costs of accommodating this labour force, and the role that African building workers could play in providing cheaper accommodation for it. The Committee's terms of reference required it "to recommend the form which legislation should take ":

1. to enforce the principle of limiting the number of Natives in urban areas to the labour requirements of those areas;

2. to provide for controlling the entry of Natives into urban areas; and

3. to provide for the withdrawal of superfluous Natives from urban areas.[42]

The Committee had been appointed in response to "the pressures for tightening up the law in this regard" which would eventually result in the passage of the Native Laws Amendment Act in 1937. As the Fagan Report was to note some thirteen years later, its two members - J. Mould Young (subsequently a member of the Native Affairs Commission) and A.L. Barrett (subsequently a member of both the Smit Committee and the Fagan Commission) - "considered themselves bound by

their mandate to draft amendments (to the Urban Areas Act of 1923) designed to give municipalities and the Government greater powers to restrict all entry of Natives into urban areas".[43] Nevertheless, they had little taste for what they perceived to be the Stallardist ideas underlying their terms of reference [44] and devoted the body of their report to a systematic refutation of those ideas. They found themselves, for instance, "in full agreement" with the view of the Native Economic Commission of 1932 that:

> In the interest of the efficiency of urban industries it is better to have a fixed urban Native population to the extent to which such population is necessary than the present casual drifting population. It is therefore better in the national interest to organize the urban areas in such a manner as to give the most satisfactory results. To continue employing Natives in urban areas, but to treat them as if they should not be there, is both illogical and short-sighted.[45]

And they were "in general agreement" with the "evidence" of the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives that:

> ..... the economic interests of the country will be served best by encouraging a stabilised urban Native population in preference to a large army of periodical workers, since
>
> i. it will lead to greater efficiency;
> ii. by encouraging a rise in wages, it will, not only obviate the present danger to White standards of a low Native wage level, but will increase that consuming power of the home market on which the future of the country largely depends.[46]

They disagreed - "profoundly" - with "the view that it would be sound policy to create a situation in which the great majority of the Natives in the towns would be male labourers, cut off from family life and without any sort of security of tenure".[47]

With regard to the financial burden borne by the local authorities in the provision of housing, the Committee noted that while the use of white labour rather than "sufficiently competent Native labour" had raised the cost of African housing unnecessarily,

> ... The root of the matter is in the inadequate wage paid to Natives which renders them incapable of paying a fair rent for hygienic quarters, and this in turn involves the local authority in loss

> ..... That is to say that the employer is free to engage a cheap Native servant, whereupon the Municipality must subsidise the transaction by providing sub-economic accommodation.. Very many of the difficulties in the way of the successful management of urban locations would be solved if the employer could be made responsible for the rent.[48]

And finally, in the face of African opposition to Hertzog's Native Bills mounted largely through the petty bourgeois All-African Convention, of which both members of the Committee would have been keenly aware, they warned that it would be "desirable to administer with a minimum of irritation to the better educated, a system of restrictions rendered necessary by the preponderating numbers of unattached and uncivilised Natives." [49]

The Young Committee, without transgressing the limits of its political context in a racially exclusive democracy, had in essence presented a proposal for a radical restructuring of 'Native policy' to accommodate the changing labour demands of an economy which was then undergoing a phase of accelerated development in the secondary industrial sector.[50] In 1942, when an Inter-departmental Committee was set up under the chairmanship of D.L. Smit (the Secretary for Native Affairs) "to explore possible ways, other than by merely raising wages, of improving the economic, social and health conditions of Natives in urban areas", [51] the need for a 'permanently' urbanized African labour force was clearly no longer regarded as a matter for debate. The focus of official attention had already shifted to the problem of how the conditions of reproduction of such a labour force were to be secured under the pressures of the wartime economy and can be seen to be part of a more general concern with what Martin Legassick has identified as "the planned development of the economy, and in particular .... the development of a competitive secondary industrial sector". He argues that :

> ..... envisaging the replacement of gold-mining by secondary industry as the principal motor of the economy, the state intended to involve itself in a more coherent way: 'The best economic system is one based on free enterprise but subject to such collective action as may be in the social interest.'[52]

The principle on which Legassick suggests state intervention in the economy was to be based is taken from the

1941 Third (Interim) Report of the Agricultural and Industrial Requirements Commission, chaired by H.J. van Eck, a leading industrialist.[53] It is evident that such ideas were then gaining currency and even becoming dominant within certain branches of the state apparatus. In particular, they seem to have permeated, and indeed to have constituted the fundamental premise of the series of reports issued between 1943 and 1948 by the Social and Economic Planning Council (SEPC), itself perhaps the acme of J.H. Hofmeyr's period of tenure as the reformist caretaker of domestic affairs during Smuts' wartime absences.[54]

However, whether the conclusions of the van Eck Commission directly influenced the members of the Smit Committee or not, the idea of direct state intervention to effect the reproduction of the African labour force is clearly present throughout their report. In examining the relationship between wages and the poverty datum level, the Committee argued that :

> It would of course, be a mistake to think that wages in general can be raised to a point higher than the productive value of the labour they represent ... The money must come from somewhere; and unless profits are already considerable, there are only three ways in which it can be found: either (1) there must be increased productiveness, including better organisation and the elimination of waste, or (2) there must be a scaling down of skilled wages, or (3) the ratio of unskilled to skilled workers must be increased. As our industries are already subsidised to enable them to compete with world prices, it is clear that the price of products cannot be raised.[55]

The second of these methods - that of "scaling down" skilled wages - was discounted by the Committee on the grounds that it would encounter strong resistance from the (largely white) skilled workers and that, in any case, the effect would be "infinitesimal" in most of the "repetitious industries" with a high proportion of unskilled to skilled workers. The third method - increasing the rates of unskilled to skilled workers - was considered to be problematic because, according to "an authoritative source", there was "no fixed ratio regulating the number of unskilled to the various grades of semi-skilled and skilled classes" and when minimum wages had been laid down for unskilled labour, "the initial effect of raising the wages of the class (had) been to bring about a reduction in the number employed, through better organisation and the introduction of machinery wherever possible". This left the first method - increasing productivity - which, the Committee thought, did "not appear to be beyond the limits of practicability." [56]

The inference to be drawn from such a position is that, if the general 'economic' wage of an 'unskilled' labour force is insufficient to meet the costs of its reproduction, then the only way in which the cycle low wages - low productivity - low wages can be broken is for the state to intervene either to supplement real wages through 'social consumption' expenditures (on the components of the 'indirect' or 'social wage': subsidized housing and transport, social security benefits, etc.), or to increase the productivity of labour through 'social investment' expenditures (on education and health care facilities, technical training schemes, etc.). [57] In its report, the Committee did not explicitly identify the link between the policy of 'state interventionism' it had clearly espoused and the unequivocal rejection of the possibility of direct regulation of the wage relation in its terms of reference. The consequences, however, are evident in almost every one of its major recommendations.[58]

With regard specifically to housing, and in keeping with the general thrust of its report, the Committee declined to take up the lead offered by the Young Report on the responsibility of employers in the provision of accommodation for their African workers:

> The real problem of rehousing of Natives is fundamentally an economic one, and as long as an economic wage is not being paid to them, it is necessary for the housing of this class to be subsidized.[59]

Liability for the costs incurred in providing sub-economic housing was therefore to remain within the state apparatus, although some redistribution of the financial burden from the local authorities to the central government was envisaged. To reduce the rentals payable on such housing to a figure compatible with the "low wages" received by African workers, the Committee further recommended the establishment of a "research branch", to be attached to the Central Housing Board "for the purpose of investigating methods of construction and the use of materials which will lead to greater economy in supplying Native housing" [60] - a suggestion which would eventually bear fruit in 1946 with the inauguration of the National Building Research Institute's 'Native housing' research programme.

By 1946, however, as we have already seen, the question of the 'permanence' of the African urban population had once more become the central issue in the formulation of 'Native policy'. The Native Laws Commission, appointed in August of that year "to enquire into the operation of the laws in force in the Union relating to Natives in or near urban areas; the Native pass laws; and the employment in mines and other industries of migratory labour", was to be only tangentially

interested in the question of housing policy as such. Its overarching concern, clearly manifested in the report released in 1948, was to establish a rationale for the proposed policy of "facilitating and encouraging the stabilization of (African) labour": a policy which, outside of the mining industry, was intended to promote the development of a permanently urbanized African labour force. [61] Furthermore, the Commission implicitly endorsed the reservations of the Young Committee concerning "the principle of limiting the number of Natives in urban areas to the labour requirements of those areas"[62] and declared the "idea of total segregation" to be"utterly impracticable":

> The townward movement of Natives is simply an economic phenomenon.... It can be guided and regulated, but it is impossible to prevent it or turn it in the opposite direction ..... We, therefore, have to accept that there is a permanent urban Native population.[63]

In relation to the Young Committee's linking of the "efficiency of urban industries" to the need for employers to bear at least some of the costs of accommodating the 'stabilized' labour force, on the other hand, the Commission was less enthusiastic. It suggested that:

> Theoretically there may be much to say for the contention that the costs (of accommodation) should be recoverable from the employers. If a workable scheme in this direction could be put into operation - e.g. by making the employer liable for the rental, or for a contribution towards the rental of the house occupied by his employee and *leaving it up to the two of them to make such arrangements about it as they can agree on between themselves* - we should in principle see no objection ... This, however, is a relatively minor matter upon which we have formed no strong opinion. (emphasis added)

And concluded (in italics):

> We doubt whether any wholly satisfactory solution will be found until the need for such economic adjustments disappears and the labourers by their own productive capacity attain a position in which they can make their own arrangements on an economic, not a sub-economic basis.[64]

On this point at least, it seems , the Commission was holding firmly, and even agressively to the idea of the 'freely' established wage contract between capital and labour

which had underlain the Smit Committee's terms of reference. Moreover, the Commission's attitude manifestly represented a retreat from the sort of social engineering advocated by the SEPC. The latter, in a report published in 1946, had declared that:

> The Council cannot feel that this scheme (the NHPC's "very favourable" National Housing formula) is altogether satisfactory, in that it is based entirely on capital costs of projects and is not related in any way to family income or to family size. The Council believes that a rental formula which is related to both family size and family income should become mandatory. It appears equitable that such subsidy to the very poor and to large families, since it is the result of national poverty rather than a local responsibility, should be paid by the Central Government.[65]

For the Fagan Commission, however, while it had tacitly accepted that the costs of subsidized African housing would continue to be shared between the local authorities and the central government, the idea that the financial burden on the latter should be further increased by the sort of quasi-Fabian proposal put forward by the SEPC was obviously unpalatable. The conflation of the need to secure a more efficient configuration of the relations of social reproduction with the need to secure 'social justice' had not yet been accepted on the agenda proposed by the ruling class.

To the extent that it considered the problem of actually accommodating the 'stabilized' labour force it had advocated at all, the general approach of the Fagan Commission was that it should as far as possible be placed on an 'economic' basis. Hence the recommendation to use African labour "in the building of houses for their own occupation" and the suggestion that the adoption of the 'Bloemfontein system' - a scheme in which Africans were allowed to build their own houses on serviced sites under municipal supervision, using materials supplied at cost price by the local authority - and the granting of a "permanent stake in the place" based on property ownership would facilitate the development of 'Native villages'.[66] A further recommendation, that "the government should ...be prepared to assume both the financial and the administrative responsibility" for "Native villages outside municipal jurisdiction", was apparently intended largely to facilitate control of the mushrooming growth of 'peri-urban' squatter settlements.[67]

Set against the dimensions of the problem that had already been revealed, it could hardly be thought to provide the coherent overall policy framework within which the NHPC might move more decisively to resolve the housing crisis. In any event, with the change of government and a complete recasting of the fundamental premises of 'Native policy' imminent, the question was about to become merely academic.

III

In the period following its hard-won electoral victory in 1948, Malan's Re-united National Pary began a systematic reorganization of the state apparatus in order to carry out the *apartheid* programme it had presented to its white electorate. On what had been identified as the "colour question", the major parameters of Nationalist policy had been outlined in the report of a Party committee under the chairmanship of P.O. Sauer released during 1947.[68] With regard to certain aspects of a number of important issues - the desirability of residential segregation and separate administrative systems for Africans in the urban areas, the need for centralized rather than local control of African movement through a system of labour bureaus, industrial decentralization and the development of the Reserves - the 'Native policy' proposed in the Sauer Report was in substantial agreement with the policy recommendations of the Fagan Commission. On the absolutely central question of the *permanent* presence of Africans in the urban areas, however, the conclusions reached in the respective reports were diametrically opposed.[69] The Sauer Committee had forcefully affirmed its commitment to the Stallard doctrine:

> The (number of) detribalized natives in the towns must be frozen and preference as far as work and other rights will be given to them in the cities as long as they are there and until such time as the ideal of total *apartheid* is achieved ... The native in the white urban areas should be regarded as a "visitor" who has come to offer his services to his own advantage and that of the white man.[70]

But as the Committee was at pains to make clear, the "ideal of total *apartheid*" could not be achieved with the stroke of a pen. The report was careful to maintain the distinction between 'tribal' and 'detribalized natives' and to note that:

> The ideal which should be aimed at is the *gradual* elimination of natives from industries in white areas but it is realised that it will

> only be achieved *after many years* .....
> A quota system relating to the ratio of white to black workers in industry will, *where desirable and practically possible*, be applied .....[71]

The inference seems clear: while the ideologues of *apartheid* obviously could not concede the contention of the Fagan Commission that "the idea of total segregation is utterly impracticable" because "the townward movement of Natives is simply an economic phenomenon" which, while "it can be guided or regulated, ... is impossible to prevent .. or to turn ... in the opposite direction", they remained - in the last analysis - subject to the reality of the changing structure of economic relations. " For many years", therefore, it would be necessary to accommodate the presence of 'detribalized' Africans in the 'white' urban areas and to cope with the massive housing backlog which recent events had dramatically thrust into 'public' view. Housing policy was nevertheless to be guided by certain principles while reflected the ultimate objective of total *apartheid*:

> ... as long as such ('detribalized') natives remain in urban areas, cognizance must be taken of the different ethnic groups *(volksgroepe)* and separate residential areas must be provided for them where, under the supervision of the relevant local authorities, they will have their own social and welfare services and will be able to choose their own councils. It must be clear, however. that their presence in the white urban areas will be considered as temporary and that they will never be able to lay claim to political rights of any kind equal to those of the whites and that they will never be able to own real estate *(vaste eiendomme)*.[72]

Through the prism of this single-minded determination to enforce *apartheid*, however, the Nationalists appear to have perceived the double-edged nature of the 'urban Native question' with a great deal more clarity than had the policy-makers of the United Party government and their response was to be structured accordingly. On the one hand, it was a matter of immediate concern to choke off the "immense and unbalanced increase" in the African urban population. On the other hand, the principle of residential segregation was to be enforced and the still untidy racial patterns of many of the major urban areas brought to order. Given the 'legitimate' presence of a substantial proportion of the large numbers of

Africans involved, this would require a housing policy considerably more effective than that which had been inherited from the previous government. For, as Legassick has argued "The Nationalist government could not, any more than its predecessor, ignore the *structural* crisis which required the state to involve itself more directly in the reproduction of labour-power" [73] - but neither could it afford to ignore the *political* obligations imposed on it by the ideological doctrine on which it had based its election manifesto.

In relation to its first and more obviously contentious objective of stopping, and if possible reversing the flow of Africans to the towns, the new government was obliged to move initially with some caution. Although a general tightening up of the administration of the existing influx control system produced some immediate results - the Johannesburg Municipality, for instance, refused entry to 14 587 Africans between 1 July 1948 and 31 June 1949 and endorsed out a further 10 439 who were unable to find work [74] - it was to be 1949 before the first legislative measures were taken. The Native Laws Amendment Act of that year amended the procedure for establishing labour bureaus originally set down under the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911: the functions of the bureaus were now to include the registration of unemployed Africans, the placing of work seekers in jobs and controlling the movement of African labour into the 'prescribed' areas. Opposition within the Assembly and the rising tide of protest from commercial and industrial interests against the trend of "continuing Governmental interference in the economy" had induced the government to delete a clause compelling Africans to accept employment offered through the bureaus.[75]

In November 1949, the Governor-General issued a proclamation at the request of twenty-one local authorities (including the Johannesburg Municipality), which closed the urban areas concerned to the entry of Africans except for mine employees, temporary visitors, and those whom the local authority was prepared to allow in to take up employment for which they had already been engaged or to seek work. Early in 1950 the regulations governing influx control and the registration of service contracts were extended by proclamation to 95 urban areas - all the cities except Port Elizabeth and almost all the towns. In addition, successive amendments to the regulations under which certificates exempting certain Africans from the provisions of the pass laws progressively raised the required qualifications.[76]

All these measures undoubtedly made it increasingly difficult for Africans entering the urban areas for the first time to establish a permanent presence there, but the real cornerstone of the Nationalist legislative programme was only to be laid with the passage of the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952. The key amendments were the introduction of the notorious '72 hour' clause into Section 10 of the

Urban Areas Act and the automatic extension of its provisions to all urban areas.[77] Further provisions made the registration of incoming work seekers with the labour bureaus compulsory and increased the powers of magistrates and Native Commissioners to deal with the expulsion of 'idle and undesirable' Africans from the urban areas.[78] The Natives (Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents) Act, passed during the same session was a further important step towards bringing the entire African population under a unified system of control. Far from abolishing passes, it was actually intended to enable the state to extend the controls over influx and urban residence to all Africans by issuing 'reference books' to everyone over the age of 16, including women and those who had previously been exempted through possession of the relevant qualifications.[79]

Despite these measures, Africans continued to enter the urban areas both legally and illegally and in Johannesburg, for example, the NEAD estimates of the total African population within the municipal area (e.g. including mine-workers and people accommodated in municipal hostels and on private premises) showed an increase from some 455 000 in June 1948 to about 516 600 by June 1953.[80] Hence the claim made by the Minister of Native Affairs in the Senate in February 1954, that an estimated 100 000 Africans who would otherwise have been in the urban areas had been denied entry,[81] must be measured against the very real pressures on the Nationalist government to be seen to be living up to the pledges of its electoral platform: labour bureau statistics did not distinguish between initial and repeated attempts to gain entry to the urban areas and would therefore tend to inflate this sort of figure. The fears expressed by representatives of industrial and commercial capital at a meeting with the Minister early in 1951 - that the government would be unable to reconcile its intervention in the 'natural' economic processes of African urbanization with the legitimate demands of the urban economy for African labour - nevertheless retained their currency. Although Verwoerd had "clarified the position" by suggesting that under *apartheid* influx control would not cut off the supplies of labour but would merely prevent the uninhibited growth of the African urban population, which could become a political threat, many industrialists remained unconvinced and continued to voice their opposition to government 'interference'. It would only be in 1956 that a nationwide survey conducted by the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI) amongst its member organizations to determine the extent of their labour shortages would reveal the general absence of such shortages and thus finally allay this particular fear.[82] Throughout the period under review, therefore, concern within the 'business community' that the Nationalist government was intent on hindering the free play of market forces would continue to be a negative factor of some importance in the

relationship between state and capital.

The second objective of Nationalist 'urban Native policy' initially presented a much less fundamental challenge to the received wisdom of South African capitalists and the 'liberal' establishment than had the issue of influx control. Indeed, the general concept of residential and administrative segregation within the urban areas was in no essential way incompatible with the assumptions underlying the conclusions of the Fagan Commission. The latter, while disputing the premises of the Stallardist principle that Africans should be excluded from permanent residence in the 'white' urban areas because granting them the municipal franchise would constitute 'undesirable commingling' of the races, had nevertheless asserted that" ... there are differences between the races to which legislation has to pay due regard and which make a measure of separation in administrative affairs both necessary and desirable.".[83] Nor, other than a passing reference to the "distasteful connotations" of the word 'location' and a suggestion that it be replaced with the term 'native village', [84] had the report anywhere questioned the established practice of residential segregation or the tenor of the provisions pertaining to it under the existing legislation. As long as 'adequate' accommodation was provided for any Africans displaced by segregation measures and as long as their removal did not result in any wage claims to meet increased transport and accommodation costs, or any rises in the municipal rates assessment to balance losses on the local Native Revenue Account, the idea remained essentially uncontroversial - for the white population at least. It would only be when the implications of the National Party's pre-election commitment to the use of "forceful and determined methods" to "maintain the white character of our towns" became unmistakably clear in the application of the Group Areas legislation during the fifties that a serious effort would be made by white liberals to hinder the development of this ultimately logical extension of the original concept.

The more pressing problem confronting the policy-makers of the new government in 1948, however, was not the impure character of 'their' towns but the very real danger that the masses of a homeless people concentrated in the major urban areas might again resort to autonomous action to secure the shelter essential to their physical reproduction. Of the three issues which had been identified in earlier official thinking as bearing on the problem of accommodating Africans in urban areas, the status of one - the need for a 'permanent' urban African labour force - as a question still open to debate had now been categorically denied as a matter of fundamental principle in the *apartheid* programme. But the other two issues - concerning the distribution of the costs of housing the labour force that would nevertheless still be required and the use of African building workers to reduce

these costs - remained central to the formulation of a coherent overall policy framework within which the state's housing agencies might successfully tackle the massive shortage of accommodation. Both were to become the objects of extended and often fierce debate outside, as well as within Parliament during the next four years.

Almost immediately it assumed office, the Nationalist government was faced with the task of trying to reconcile a broadly-based demand for the use of skilled African labour to cheapen the production cost of African housing - emanating from bodies such as the Institute of Race Relations, the Federation of Building Trade Employers and other employer organizations - with the continued intransigence towards such proporals of the white building workers' unions. In September 1946 their predecessors in Smuts' cabinet had decided to extend the Central Organization of Technical Training (COTT) scheme, which had been set up to provide technical training of ex-servicemen in an effort to alleviate the shortage of skilled labour, to the training of African building artisans. Not unexpectedly, perhaps, the (white) Building Workers Industrial Union had perceived the proposal to employ the cheaper labour power of Africans on work which was conventionally defined as 'skilled' as an attempt to drive a wedge into what was then known as the 'job colour bar' - even though it had been indicated that the Africans would only be permitted to work in 'Native areas' on the construction of 'Native housing'.[85] The arrival of the first batch of African trainees at the Milner Park training centre had drawn a strong warning from the Union that their presence there would unleash a major country-wide strike. The threatened strike action had been avoided and the confrontation ended with the government's decision to discontinue the 'experiment' after the first African intake had completed the course.[86] Towards the end of 1947, however, a long-standing dispute with the employers' association on the Rand had sparked off a white building workers' strike which, although it had remained confined largely to the Johannesburg and Pretoria areas, had lasted almost nine weeks and had severely affected progress in the already hopelessly inadequate housing programme.[87]

While the strike had had no immediately apparent connection with the incident of the previous year, it had clearly revealed the disruptive power of the white working class in a key sector of the economy and the lesson had not been lost on those responsible for the formulation of the Nationalists' labour policy. One of the first acts of the new Minister of labour when he assumed office less than a year later was to announce that all training of African building workers would be stopped. Informed by the Department of Education - under which the training schemes then in existence fell - that he had exceeded his authority,

the Minister was obliged to withdraw his statement but in doing so he added a premonitory rider:

> To give the natives the opportunity of being trained in their own areas is part of the policy of apartheid. It is obvious that in applying this policy care will be exercised to obviate any injustice to European artisans.[88]

The meaning of this warning was to be made clear the following year when, in October 1949, a Native Building Workers Bill aimed at determining precisely the degree to which African 'advancement' in the building trades would be tolerated, was gazetted. The heavily restrictive measures it contained - particularly a clause enabling the Governor-General to prohibit Africans from performing "any specified class of skilled work within any area specified in the proclamation in which any wage-regulating measure applies"[89] - provoked concerted opposition both within the House and outside it, and the Bill was withdrawn. It was retabled during the 1951 session with amendments which relaxed the earlier definition of 'native areas' and made it possible for Africans to work outside "their own areas on buildings owned or occupied by them", [90] and in this form was finally passed.

The 1951 Native Building Workers Act introduced - for the first time since the passage of the Mines and Works Amendment Act in 1926 - a'job colour bar' based on explicit legislative requirements rather than on the somewhat tenuous legitimation afforded by the 'traditional' racial division of labour. The capacity of the white building unions to exercise effective control over the use of African labour in the building industry through the Native Building Workers Advisory Board was underwritten by the restrictive conditions embodied in the Act. In the words of a contemporary observer, it was clearly intended "to establish a pattern of apartheid in industry by providing for the training and registration of Natives to build houses for their own people in their own areas at rates of pay differing from those applied by industrial agreements".[91] The restriction on the employment of African building workers to "their own areas" represented a significant achievement in the attempt of the white working class to defend its relatively privileged situation against the threat posed by the influx of Africans into jobs formerly occupied by whites. The strategic position held by white building artisans in the midst of a national housing crisis had merely placed them first in what was to become a queue of white workers demanding such protection as a *quid pro quo* for their continued support in the political arena. [92] Hence, although the passage of the Act was to enable substantial savings to be made on the construction costs of African housing - and so indirectly benefit the employers of

African labour - it had only been secured by conceding the principle of 'job reservation' to the white working class. The resolution of this pivotal issue in the Nationalists' approach to the African housing problem can be seen, then, to have reflected with some accuracy the conjunctural balance of class forces in the South African social formation.

The other major issue thrust into open debate by the new government's determination to take control of the crisis which confronted it was the vexed question of the incidence of financial responsibility in the provision of sub-economic African housing. It emerged unmistakably in September 1948 during the Budget debate, when the Minister of Native Affairs, in a clash with a member of the Opposition over influx policy, denied that there had been a "legitimate" influx of Africans to the urban areas and asserted that the task of providing houses for "tens of thousands of natives" was becoming "intolerable". He then went on to say:

> An amazing feature of the position is this: that, particularly in dealing with urban natives in the past, employers, who are really the people responsible for the natives being in the urban areas, have been left out of the picture entirely ... I think that the time will come - and the matter has been enquired into - when employers will have to assume responsibility for their native employees, responsibility with regard to their housing.[93]

The reaction of employers to the implicit threat contained in the Minister's declaration was predictable. Recognising that to accept some of the financial responsibility for the costs of housing their African labour force would effectively apply a brake to the rate at which the latter's labour power could be substituted for the more expensive labour power of white workers, they fell back on the ideas that had been expressed some months earlier in the report of the Fagan Commission. The President of the Transvaal Chamber of Industries contended that African housing was a "national problem" which could not be thrown on to industry and added:

> We feel that it is a matter for the State, rather than for industry to bear the cost of sub-economic housing for natives. We must gradually work towards a state where the native becomes an economic entity in himself. It will be the responsibility of industry to see that the native ultimately gets an economic wage. That will only come after the native has become more productive. This will only be after some of the restrictions of the job colour bar have been removed and the native is given more opportunity to learn skilled and semi-skilled work.[94]

With the chief protagonists' stakes now clearly on the table and the local authorities standing by to deal with any attempt to pass the main burden of financial responsibility back to them, the Minister convened a conference of the interested parties to discuss the matter on 26 April 1949 in Cape Town. Present were delegates from various state departments, officials of the United Municipal Executive (UMF), and representatives of the major employers' organizations including the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), the Associated Chamber of Commerce (ASSOCOM) and the Handelsinstituut.[95] The proceedings opened with a speech by the Minister in which he warned that people planning to start new industries should "provide in their calculations for the cost of housing their Native employees", adding that he personally envisaged a rent subsidy. With this blunt statement of intent, the industrialists present were forced into a defensive position from which they eventually managed to close the meeting with a resolution submitted by the FCI - castigated by a representative of the UME as "futile and a waste of time" - proposing that the matter be referred to a commission "which could coopt experts" and report back within six months.[96]

Despite what had been reported to be "high hopes in many quarters" that "important steps to formulate a national policy on Native housing" would be taken,[97] the conference had ended with no visible evidence of such progress. And yet, although the wrangling would continue for another three years in various 'consultative committees', another trilateral conference, and - with the introduction and subsequent withdrawal of the Native Housing and Transport Levy Bill of 1951 - in Parliament as well, certain steps towards the problem's eventual resolution had already been taken. The passage of the Native Services Levy Act in 1952 would be the result, on the one hand, of a process of accommodation by both employer organizations and the government of the need to achieve a workable compromise and, on the other, of a substantial restructuring of the state apparatus, reflecting the increasing dominance of the Department of Native Affairs in the formulation of African housing policy.

A necessary preliminary step had involved the reorganization of the Directorate of Housing - on which the National Housing and Planning Commission (NHPC) was dependent for 'technical services' - to bring it more closely under the control of the Minister of Health, and the appointment to the Commission of several members allegedly more sympathetic to the government's aim than their precessors.[98] One of the first decisions of the reconstituted Commission was that the National Housing Scheme, initiated under the previous government in 1944, had "resulted in wasteful expenditure of government funds."

On its recommendation, the scheme was abolished in September 1949 and the interest rate carried by sub-economic housing loans reverted to the pre-1944 figure of 3/4 per cent, but the condition that local authorities should bear a minimum loss of 1 1/4 per cent was dropped.[99] The latter, however, received the announcement without enthusiasm and the Institute of Race Relations was driven to comment in the annual *Survey:* "This virtually means the end of Native housing by the local authorities."[100] Nevertheless, a year later, the NHPC was to take its concern with "wasteful expenditure" a step further and,in accordance with "sound business principles", to suggest that:

> ..... the State and local government should provide only the minimum needs of those who are unable to help themselves. Anything above the strictly minimum requirements must be regarded as non-essential, to be provided by the tenant at his own cost as his economic position improves .... housing should as far as possible be on a fully economic basis and .... the capital cost of dwellings should be adapted to the income of the particular groups .....[101]

The move to place state provision of housing on a "fully economic basis" must be placed in the context of the drastic tightening of the Treasury's purse strings which in 1949 had induced the Secretary of Health, "in his capacity as accounting officer" for the NHPC's budgetary allocation, to unilaterally slash the Commission's request for £18½m to initiate a five-year housing programme to £8½m.[102] The Treasury's position was in turn clearly a reflection of the downturn in the economy which had followed the peaking of the wartime boom in 1947 and which settled during the early 50s (except in the mining and farming sectors) into a period of "virtual stagnation".[103] Beyond these considerations, however, the Commission's insistence that "sound business principles" provided "the only basis upon which both the State and local authorities can afford to undertake a housing programme on as extensive a basis as the urgency of the problem dictates" may be interpreted as an attempt to persuade a wider audience of the state's *bone fides* in demanding a contribution from employers should the costs of such a programme prove to be beyond its financial means. For, despite its contention that "a considerable proportion of the urban Native labour is remunerated on a scale which should make the planning of economic housing possible",[104] the NHPC would have had to allow for the possibility that the "proportion of the population which cannot afford even the most modest dwelling except on a subsidised basis" might turn out to be greater than had been suggested.

At the very least, it must have been aware of the opinion expressed in the annual report of the Department of Native Affairs published only the year before, that:

> The economic status of the great majority of Native families living in towns is such that they are unable to pay normal house rent and must be provided with sub-economic housing.... Though wage levels have risen and cost of living allowances have been added to normal earnings, these increases have not bridged the gap for the bulk of the Native urban population between economic dependance and independence.[105]

Certainly the need to obtain a 'scientific' perspective on this question and on the related problem of how "the capital cost of dwellings should be adapted to the income of particular groups" had already been recognized in the low-cost housing research programme initiated by the National Building Research Institute in 1947 - a point to which we shall return below. It was, however, still possible for the Minister of Native Affairs to announce in the Senate in May 1951 that the government had decided not to proceed with the Native Housing and Transport Levy Bill "in view of the possibility of economic housing schemes for the majority of Africans".[106] But by then "economic housing schemes " were beginning to mean something rather different, and the shift had much to do with the increasingly significant role that was being played by the Department of Native Affairs in defining the direction of African housing policy.

Prior to Dr. W.M.M. Eiselen's appointment as Secretary for Native Affairs in October 1949 the Department's contributions to the problem of overcoming the massive backlog in African housing had remained largely either negative or didactic. In its concern to ensure that "firstly, urban Natives are satisfactorily housed in the shortest possible time and, secondly, that rentals charged for the houses are within the means of the Natives to pay", it had been forced to withhold approval of some of the excessively costly schemes submitted by local authorities under the National Housing formula. More positively, it had called for research into low-cost housing and the "employment of Native artisans on schemes for urban location housing", and had cooperated with ISCOR and "groups of industrialists at Johannesburg and Vereeniging" regarding "the provision by them of accommodation for Native workers and their families .... (as) a means of supplementing the efforts of local authorities to overcome the acute shortage of Native housing".[107] By 1948 the Department was advocating the adoption of the 'Bloemfontein system', because it was "convinced that the acceptance of this suggestion by large local authorities will assist materially in meeting

the situation".[108] But with the appointment of Eiselen, and even more so after Verwoerd was brought into the Cabinet as Minister of Native Affairs in October 1950, the relationship between the Department and the NHPC began to change. In its annual report for 1950, the latter - after recording that a Joint Committee had been established with the Department of Native Affairs "to coordinate all work undertaken by these two bodies in connection with Native housing, with a view to ensuring a uniform policy and uniform requirements" - was to note that: "The full collaberation with the Department of Native Affairs in respect of Native housing, initiated during the year, marks a new phase in Native policy."[109] The progression of the Department from a more or less consultative role to that of at least equal partnership in the formulation of African housing policy was confirmed in the statement, which appeared in precisely the same form in the reports of both bodies, that: "In future, Native housing schemes will be examined by the Commission and the Department of Native Affairs acting jointly and concurrently and not, as in the past, separately and successively."[110]

Under the architects of *apartheid*, however, the Department of Native Affairs could not long remain merely a coequal, and its growing dominance within the 'partnership' can be seen in the way in which the respective annual reports of the two organizations record the development of 'native housing' policy after 1950. The increasingly confident pronouncements of the Secretary for Native Affairs in this respect are paralleled by the diminuition and then the complete disappearance of any discussion of the subject in the NHPC reports. Unquestionably, it was from within the Department of Native Affairs that the 'site and service' approach emerged during 1952 and through its insistent canvassing of support and the application of not always subtle pressure that the idea took root as the putative 'solution' to the African housing problem over the next two years. There is, furthermore, no doubt that the Department's primary interest in the matter was in response to the widespread political mobilization of the African population during the early 50s. Commenting on the "explosive situation" in mid-1951, Eiselen drew some interesting conclusions:

> In the nature of things, the urban areas are in themselves a fruitful breeding ground for unrest because the Native population has increased so rapidly that housing measures could by no means keep pace with the great influx of population. To control the ~~overpopulated~~ villages held in Native ownership such as Sophiatown and Alexandra and the numerous squatter camps around the Witwatersrand and Pretoria efficiently, would be attempting the impossible ... The most pressing single need of the Native community is more adequate housing. *Only by the provision of adequate*

> *shelter in properly planned Native townships can full control over urban Natives be regained*, because only then will it be possible to eliminate the surplus Natives who do not seek or find an honest living in the cities.[111]

The 'site and service' approach then, represented precisely the means by which "adequate shelter in properly planned Native townships" could be provided fast enough to match the urgency of the situation without drawing excessively on the limited allocation of funds available for conventional housing. As one of the prime movers in the development of the concept was to write a few years later:

> To solve this problem (the "Bantu housing problem") as economically and speedily as possible, the Department devised the site-and-service scheme as an adjunct to normal housing schemes. The financial resources of the country do not permit of its solution by means of orthodox methods with any reasonable degree of rapidity ... site and service schemes are complementary to and not in substitution of normal housing schemes. Neither must they be regarded , as is often done, as just a controlled form of squatting ... The initial dwellings, which the inhabitants of a site-and-service scheme are required to erect are only temporary until such time as the local authority or the Bantu himself is able to build a standard type dwelling.[112]

Unstated here, but explicitly recognized by both this and other commentators as the necessary corollary of the 'site and service' approach was the need to secure a source of income to finance its implementation without diverting funds from the 'complementary' effort to provide conventional housing. Quite clearly the establishment of just such a revenue source was the essential object of the legislation finally enacted in the Native Services Levy Act of 1952.

Various proposals to transfer at least some of the financial burden of accommodating the African labour force in urban areas to its employers had been put forward by the government - and contested by the employers - over the three years since the abortive conference convened by the Minister of Native Affairs in 1949. Initially the debate had revolved around the idea that any levy on employers would be used in the provision of housing as such. With the development of the site and service concept, however, it had become apparent that the revenue derived from the proposal levy could be employed a great deal more effectively in overcoming the immediate problem of regaining "full control over urban

Natives" if its use were to be restricted to financing the installation of only those services without which no "properly planned township" could function: essentially the provision of access roads, the supply of clean water and the removal of domestic waste (i.e. sewage and refuse). Furthermore, the ability to present the levy in this way - as a limited, contingent measure to resolve the potentially 'explosive' crisis which had arisen - provided the state with a useful means of mollifying the resistance of employers to its imposition. As Verwoerd, in an address to the FCI in 1954, was concerned to point out:

> It was a clear and definite understanding between myself and representatives of Commerce and Industry that the levy should be instituted for a certain purpose. That purpose was to provide services in each urban area on a sufficient number of sites for housing the requirements of labour in that area ... if within a certain region the levy has provided all the services needed there, then that particular region can approach me to remove the levy.[113]

Although the representatives of commerce and industry had continued to voice their objection "in principle to the form of taxation envisaged in the Native Services Levy Bill because it was tantamount to a discrimination in wages on a racial issue", they had finally had "to agree with the Minister that a positive Native housing programme could be delayed no longer"[114] and the Bill passed into law in June 1952. The provisions of the Act came into operation on 1st January 1953 in 18 major urban areas(automatically in the case of those with African populations of more than 20 000), making it mandatory for employers in those areas to pay an amount of 2s.6d to the local authority "in respect of every six days worked by an adult male Native in his employ"; automatic exemptions were made in the case of domestic servants or where employees were housed free of charge in approved quarters by their employer. In the five largest urban areas provision was made for the payment of 6d. from each contribution collected to the Secretary of Transport "for the subsidisation of Native transport services". All revenue derived from the levy was to be paid into the Services Levy Fund, which formed part of the local authority's statutory Native Revenue Account, and could be used to meet expenditure incurred in "the provision of water, sanitation, lighting and road services *outside* a location, Native village or Native hostel under the control of that local authority for which purposes National Housing Funds are not available".

A further provision enabled the Minister of Native Affairs to authorise the expenditure of levy funds on the same services *inside* a 'location'.[115] It was estimated that the total annual revenue derived from the imposition of the levy would be about £1 750 000, of which employers in Johannesburg would contribute some £450 000.[116]

With the passage of the Native Services Levy Act and, earlier, of the Native Building Workers Act, the government had successfully resolved the two major issues confronting it in its attempt to establish the legislative framework it required to tackle the formidable problem with which it had been presented.[117] Within the framework, a coherent, two-phase strategy had been formulated to enable the state housing apparatus to approach its task systematically: in the first phase, the 'squatter problem' was to be brought under control as quickly as possible through the extensive application of site and service methods; in the second phase, the temporary dwellings in the site and service schemes were to be gradually replaced by permanent, conventionally-built houses, either through the 'self-help' efforts of the inhabitants themselves or through the intervention of the local authorities, as far as possible on an 'economic' basis. Although certain reservations persisted - the Institute of Race Relations, for instance, doubted whether the maximum 30-year leasehold permitted by the government would provide sufficient security of tenure to induce these Africans who could afford it to build their own houses [118] - it was nevertheless clear that for the first time since the squatter movement had revealed itself during the war a policy adequate to the magnitude of the crisis had been arrived at. But perhaps equally significant was the fact that the evolution of the policy had been matched by the development of the 'technical' means of its implementation - the models and techniques through which it might be given concrete, physical form.

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) had been established as a statutory body in late 1945 and charged with the specific role of providing a 'scientific' foundation to the state's post-war reconstruction programme. With a year, the National Building Research Institute (NBRI) had been set up as a relatively autonomous unit within the CSIR and had defined its primary task in terms of a programme of fundamental research into the provision of low-cost urban housing. The initial products of this programme were a study of contemporary sub-economic housing practice and evaluations of certain experimental types of 'Native housing'. By the end of 1947 a Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation in South Africa had been convened at the request of the NHPC to "examine critically the tentative proposals suggested for minimum standards below which no dwellings should be erected."[119]

The objective was to develop criteria - based on "the best available information on the living patterns of the low income groups in South Africa" - "which could be taken by the planner and translated on the drawing board into a house plan".[120] The essential premise on which the research programme had been based was later to be articulated by the first Director of the NBRI in the following terms:

> Housing starts as a social and health problem. Good housing tends to promote good citizens, and hence stable conditions in society; satisfactory housing is essential for the good physical health of a people and for the proper functioning of good family life which is the keystone of our civilization. Conversely, poor housing produces discomfort and discontent leading to an anti-social outlook, an increase in crime, the breeding of epidemics and a host of other social evils.[121]

Other areas of investigation in the programme included an examination of the "economics of housing estate development" (to determine the 'optimum' layout and density criteria for township design), research into minimum performance standards for dwellings (to define 'functional efficiency' criteria for the physical properties of houses), and an extensive and influential study on the costs of 'urban Bantu housing', which focused on the use of alternative materials and improved building techniques and on the 'rational' exploitation of African labour.[122] In addition, a series of standard house plans - including the now ubiquitous Type NE 51/6 and 51/9 designs - based on the recommended minimum space standards and a thorough investigation of internal circulation patterns had been drawn up by the Institute's Architectural Division for the NHPC.[123]

By the early 50s the research was considered sufficiently advanced to require the submission of its findings to the rigours of field testing. The opportunity to test some of the hypotheses concerning the 'optimum' layout of townships arose in September 1949 when the Witbank Municipality requested the NBRI's assistance in achieving a greater density of housing (i.e. increasing the number of units in a given area) in the planning of its new African township. The design exercise, which included a survey of socio-economic conditions in the existing 'location', revealed the need to develop a more systematic approach to such work and the proposal of the Springs Town Council towards the end of 1950 that the NBRI should formulate proposals for an 'experimental' township to relieve overcrowding in the old 'location' at Payneville was enthusiastically received as a chance to do precisely that.[124]

The experiment at Kwa-Thema, as the new township was later named, proved to be something of a landmark in South African low-cost housing practice in at least two important respects. On the one hand, the effectiveness of African building workers operating on a 'task' basis in municipal direct labour teams was convincingly demonstrated when production figures of more than 8 houses a day were achieved.[125] The role played by the Springs Town Engineer, A.J. Archibald, in successfully applying the production techniques developed by the NBRI was to lead to his appointment as the Johannesburg Municipality's first Director of Housing in 1953 and his methods were soon being emulated by local authority housing departments throughout the country. On the other hand, the results of the survey carried out in Payneville by the NBRI's sociological research team were soon recognized as "very important" with possible "far-reaching effects on the Native housing situation everywhere in South Africa". The key finding was that, in a sample of 319 African families in Payneville, some 40 per cent could be said to fall into a category capable of paying 'economic' rentals, while 13 per cent fell into a 'sub-economic' category and 47 per cent into a 'sub-sub-economic' category.[126] The 'scientific' discovery of a relatively large proportion - but in no way the majority - of African families able to pay 'economic rentals' flatly contradicted the prediction made some months earlier by the Minister of Native Affairs that economic housing schemes had now become a possibility for the majority of Africans in urban areas.[127] The Department of Native Affairs nevertheless saw in the result a vindication of its attempts to induce local authorities to place the provision of African housing - "wherever possible" - on a "fully economic basis". Its annual Report for 1950-51 noted that "the inability or apathy of many local authorities to embark upon extensive housing schemes for Natives" was "no doubt" due to the "heavy financial losses" suffered on sub-economic schemes, and continued:

> Surveys indicated, however, that many Natives, especially in the larger urban areas, were earning economic wages, but occupying sub-economic houses. As a result of these surveys several local authorities such as Benoni, Vanderbijl Park and Bloemfontein tackled the question energetically and every effort was made to house their Native population on an economic basis. It is hoped that other Municipalities will follow their lead and provide economic houses for Natives earning economic wages.

And, for those "Natives who could not afford economic rentals" the Report tersely added, "'austerity' sub-economic houses were provided".[128]

On the basis of the Payneville study, it was decided to set up a Committee on Socio-Economic Surveys for Native Housing Research consisting of representatives from the CSIR, the National Council for Social Research and the Department of Native Affairs to direct similar surveys in other centres in order to "obtain a national picture of the rent-paying ability of urban Native families in South Africa". With the assistance of Professor E. Batson - a key figure in the Cape Town poverty studies of the early 40s - surveys were eventually carried out in Cape Town, Durban, New Brighton (Port Elizabeth), Vereeniging and Katlehong (Germiston).[129] At its final meeting in 1958, the Committee confirmed that the three socio-economic groups identified in Payneville were valid for the other centres and categorized each group's capacity to pay rent as follows:

> (a) " ... an important proportion of urban Native households can afford to pay economic rentals for adequate houses without jeopardizing their health and basic requirements for living";
>
> (b) "... a relatively small but significant proportion of households which, although capable of paying some rent, cannot pay a full economic rent"; and
>
> (c) ".... a large proportion of the urban Bantu community, generally the largest of the three socio-economic sub-divisions, which cannot afford to pay any rent without jeopardizing their requirements for the minimum necessities of life, or alternatively, forcing them into illegal and other anti-social practices for augmenting income."

It concluded, finally, that:

> The situation ... is a complex of factors that include the level of earnings and taxation and the cost of food, clothing, fuel and transport as well as the cost of housing. To attempt to solve 'the housing problem' in terms solely of bricks and mortar, of site and service, or even of rent and accommodation would be to mistake the nature of the problem.[130]

But by then, of course, "the housing problem" was already well on the way to being 'solved' - by a massive effort directed precisely at "bricks and mortar... site and service"

- and the adequacy of the 'solution' was not to be seriously challenged for almost two decades.

In its annual Report for 1955-56, the CSIR noted that: "The emphasis of work on housing (in the NBRI), which has hitherto been concentrated on various aspects of accommodation for the urban Bantu, has now shifted to housing for Europeans in the lower income groups."[131] We may conclude that the task of the NBRI and the agencies with which it had co-operated in developing the techniques and practices to enable the state to realise its African housing policy in material form had been successfully completed. In essence, the 'scientific' contribution to the resolution of the African housing crisis consisted of a set of cost-efficient methods of building cheap but 'adequate' housing to minimum space and material standards in 'optimally' rationalised layouts - its product can be seen in almost every township in South Africa. It is to an account of how the resolution of the crisis was achieved in one particular urban area - Johannesburg - that we now turn.

IV

The establishment of the Moroka Emergency Camp in 1947 and the acceptance of a policy of 'controlled squatting' had provided the Johannesburg City Council with an at least temporarily effective means of containing the threat posed by autonomous squatter movements. It also seems to have marked the moment at which the Council's never really whole-hearted commitment to accommodating its African population faltered and then simply fell apart. Certainly the task with which it was confronted was of an overwhelming magnitude - estimated in mid-1948 to involve the provision of some 62 000 houses over the next five years[132] - and the apparent inability of the NHPC to formulate a coherent and practicable policy approach at the national level in the period before 1948 had obviously done little to instil any confidence that effective action might be taken by the central government. In addition, the restrictions on building programmes during and after the war had further exacerbated the situation: although the Council had, between August 1940 and March 1947, placed contracts for the construction of 10 730 houses and a hostel to accommodate 3 850 men, it had been possible during that time to complete and occupy only 1 848 houses and the hostel.[133] The major problem, however, remained - as it had done throughout the various attempts to achieve complete residential segregation of the city's African population during the previous forty - odd years - the reluctance of the Council to

incur any expenditure on African housing which might have to be passed onto its electorate, the (mostly) white ratepayers.

The task of systematically unravelling and critically analysing the complexities of Johannesburg's Native Revenue Account has not yet been undertaken. We must therefore accept the judgment of P.R.B. Lewis - a former Chairman of the Council's Non-European Affairs Committee - that, at least until 1965 when he was writing, the Account remained consistently in deficit and was balanced annually only by debiting the Rates Fund.[134] By 1947, the cumulative deficit on the Native Revenue Account had reached a total of roughly R1 250 000, of which some R610 000 had been incurred during 1946 and 1947 (1965 figures).[135] It is understandable, then, that those controlling the city's finances perceived their role to be primarily that of resisting, or at least limiting the Council's commitment to any undertaking which would introduce further deficits into the Account. Hence, even the "very favourable" National Housing formula for sub-economic housing loans, introduced after negotiations between the NHPC and the United Municipal Executive in 1944, had been accepted only with strong reservations [136] and no great effort had been made to take advantage of it prior to its abolition by the Nationalist government in 1949. In fact, as against the NEAD's estimate of an immediate backlog of 57 000 houses for Africans in mid-1949, the City Council - during the five years that the National Housing Scheme had been in operation - had applied for loans to finance the construction of some 13 100 houses.[137] Furthermore, much of the housing that had been approved had never been built, apparently because of the continuing shortages of building materials and skilled labour: between 1945 and 1953 a total of only 8 292 houses were actually constructed, all in Orlando and Jabavu.[138]

The installation of the Nationalist government in 1948 and the subsequent reorganization of the NHPC to bring it more closely in line with the new Cabinet's policies did little to improve communications between the United Party - controlled City Council and the central state apparatus. With the economy sliding into the recession of the late 40s and capital becoming increasingly scarce, the announcement by the Minister of Native Affairs that "future Native housing schemes should be shorn of non-essentials in design and amenities and should be as cheap as possible"[139] seems to have supplied the pretext which the dominant group within the Council needed to suspend the provision of sub-economic housing altogether. The Chairman of the Council's Finance Committee, during his Budget speech in June 1949, claimed that the Minister's directive was "a blessing in disguise" and, as a contemporary observer was to allege three years later: "Talk about building houses ceased thereafter."[140] Given the overt antipathy of this particular observer for the Chairman of the

Finance Committee, the statement cannot be taken at its face value, but it is correct that the Council had not in fact initiated any new housing schemes between 1947 and 1951 and that some £3m of the £8m allocated by the NHPC to the Council during the same period had not been taken up.[141]

However, while the Council had not managed to initiate any new construction, it had put forward at least one major proposal in addition to the Dube Native village scheme, which had been first mooted in 1946 as a complement to the ill-fated, earlier proposal for a freehold village in the Zuurbekom area. The Dube scheme was intended "for those more affluent urbanized Natives who desire and can afford to build their own homes to the European standard" but it soon encountered some resistance on the part of prospective home-owners who did not believe that they were "offered full security of tenure" in the proposed 99-year leasehold arrangement.[142] The Vukuzenzele ('self-help') scheme, on the other hand, had been evolved "in view of the lack of capital monies to finance conventional building schemes and in the light of the success of Natives building their own homes at Moroka (Emergency Camp)" and was essentially a modified version of the 'Bloemfontein system'. "Approved Natives" were to be leased plots on which they were to be encouraged to build their own houses under supervision; concrete foundations and "essential services" including a water supply, sanitation and roads were to be provided before building operations started. Of the 4 640 stands in the area surveyed, 1 348 were to be developed in this way under the supervision of the City Council, 1 787 were to be used for an "austerity building scheme" consisting of three-roomed houses, and the remaining 1 505 were to be set aside for development by the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce.[143]

The Chamber, in March 1950, had formulated "a short term plan to provide economic housing for the 15 000 African families who were registered applicants for houses" also essentially along the lines of the 'Bloemfontein system', but with building materials financed by "a specially-raised economic loan". A "representative" Citizen's Native Housing Committee (CNHC) had been constituted "to further the acceptance of the scheme" [144] and the City Council's proposal, which emerged some four months later, was clearly a response to the pressure which had been exerted on it. The CNHC, however, rejected the Council's scheme, chiefly on the grounds that the monthly site rental and service charge proposed by the Council was excessive "in relation to the services offered and the inadequacy of the size of the proposed stands" (33 x 37½ feet). It then escalated its demands, pressing for an "economic home-ownership scheme" on larger stands (40 x 60 feet), for which the Council would advance building loans.[145]

For its part, the Council decided to continue with the scheme it had prepared since the latter had been "fully investigated" by officials of the Department of Native Affairs who, it was believed, "had submitted a favourable recommendation to the Cabinet". Commenting on the activities of the CNHC, the Chairman of the Council's Special Housing Committee noted that it had only been when the government announced its intention of imposing a housing levy on the employers of African labour that the Chamber of Commerce had formed the Native Housing Committee:

> In the initial stages of discussion with the Council, the Chamber repeatedly undertook to find the funds to enable Natives to build their own homes, thus making it more profitable for the employers to lend money at an economic interest rather than to pay a monthly levy. This .... was the motive behind the Chamber's sudden interest in Native housing.[146]

With discussions apparently deadlocked, the CNHC switched tactics, supplementing its role as an 'independent' pressure group *outside* the Council by establishing a substantial presence *within* it. By 1952, three members of its executive had been elected to the Council and were mounting a sustained and skilfully directed attack on the group clustered around G.B. Gordon, leader of the United Party in the Council, Chairman of the Finance Committee, former Mayor and the "strong man of the Council" according to a contemporary commentator.[147] The conflict between the two groups became extremely bitter, often degenerating to what the same commentator described as "undignified bickering".[148] Its significance here, however, lies in what it reveals of the matrix of class forces represented within this local apparatus of the state.

The association of the group of "so-called 'rebel' councillors" with the local representatives of commercial and industrial capital is clearly evident in both the origins and the composition of the Citizen's Native Housing Committee. By contrast, in the material so far examined, there is no direct indication of the specific class or fractional interests with which the group led by Gordon might be identified.[149] Nevertheless, in its constant and spirited championing of the cause of the 'ratepayers', [150] we may hypothesize the presence of at least part of what has elsewhere been called the 'urban bourgeoisie' - that group of agents with interests clearly linked to the processes of urban 'development': landlords, property speculators, estate agents, building societies, construction firms, etc.[151] It will not be possible here to do more than merely sketch the outlines of the still undeveloped theoretical analysis on which this idea is based, but it is perhaps necessary to do at least that.

Briefly, the development of urban segregation in South Africa can be seen to have produced a highly specific form of the 'urban land market' and the associated 'housing market', from which certain large residential areas - the municipal 'locations' or townships - have been entirely separated. Within these areas, the commodities land and housing do not circulate - in the sense of 'free' exchange - at all, or only circulate subject to severe constraints which do not operate elsewhere. Such areas therefore present few or no opportunities for accumulation by the agents of circulation capital - property speculators, estate agents and building societies - who in any case, along with white landlords, have until now been excluded from them on the basis of racially-defined identity. For these agents, because the increased rate levied on property which would result from the Rates Fund being used to 'subsidise' the Native Revenue Account could not be matched by increased opportunities for accumulation, the City Council's responsibility for the provision of African housing was inevitably a 'burden' which should be shed if possible, but which should certainly not be made any heavier. For the agents of productive capital in the shape of the construction firms, on the other hand, the massive building programmes which would be required to supply the housing stock of the new townships represented major possibilities for accumulation, particularly for the larger firms.[152]

Such an analysis offers us one possible explanation of the intense resistance maintained by the majority group within the Council during the late 40s and early 50s to the idea that the primary responsibility for tackling the crisis was its own.[153] It clearly suggests that certain material considerations underlay the response of the Chairman of the Finance Committee in late 1951 to the "continuous fire of criticism" directed at the Council. The "categorical assumption" that the "entire responsibility" in the matter "rested on local authorities" and that the "only State aid was to supply municipalities with cheap money" he was reported to have said, "had to be refuted". The report continued:

> If the provision of housing was not the responsibility of the State, it surely was much less that of the municipal or local authority. The State, which drew its income by direct and indirect taxes from all classes of the community, as against the local authority, which had to raise its income from a small section - the owners of fixed property in a municipal area - was surely the proper body to provide public help if such help was a necessity in special circumstances.[154]

In contrast the 'rebel' group in the Council while it remained within the ambit of the United Party at the more general 'political' level, was linked to a very different organizational base with possibly only a *contingent* interest in 'local', as opposed to 'national' questions - as had been suggested by the Chairman of the Council's Special Housing Committee.[155] The resistance of employer organizations to the imposition of a levy to meet part of the costs of accommodating its African work force - which, it should be remembered, was to be administered on a 'regional' basis [156] - was, however, tempered by recognition of the economic and political dangers consequent upon a failure to respond to the reproduction crisis in which the African working class was enmeshed. Thus, commenting on the assertion by the Chairman of the Council's Finance Committee that the housing of Johannesburg's "45 000 Native workers" represented an "insuperable task", an editorial in *The Manufacturer* (official journal of the FCI) suggested that:

> .... the civic authorities and organized industry can envisage a troubled future. Industry may have to deal with a discontented labour force brought about through insufficient housing, while the civic authorites will have to contend with more crime.

After noting that the FCI had "expressed itself strongly about such a form of discriminatory taxation" when the matter of a levy on employers of African labour was first raised, the editorial went on:

> We pointed out that wages were related to the nature of the work for which the Natives were paid. Since no wage discrimination based on race or colour was observed by industry it followed that no one racial group should be singled out for special treatment ... (However) wishing to see positive action against the evils of Native slum conditions, we accepted the levy and compromised our principles.[157]

But there was a further, ideological dimension to the question and the notions of both 'property' and 'the house for the wage' to be advanced. So, as the CNHC was to urge in a pamphlet published in 1953, there was:

> One solution - home ownership. Johannesburg has in the past always built Native houses on a sub-economic basis. The Johannesburg Citizens' Housing Committee is convinced

> that one major factor in the solution of the housing problem is to allow the Native to build or buy on an economic basis. The Ratepayer suffers no further financial loss, and the Native would acquire a stake in the township in which he lives ... There is no better remedy for discontent, unrest, rioting and crime than for the Native to have a personal interest in the place in which he lives.[158]

And, as a statement issued by ASSOCOM was to claim:

> To commerce the credit is due for the formation of the concept of the economic Native house, advanced many years ago in the face of considerable opposition of local authorities, which principle is now one of the cornerstones of accepted policy on Native housing.[159]

For industry and commerce, then, the solution appeared to be to both have the cake of a contented African labour force accommodated in their own 'economic' homes, and to eat it, by continuing to pay the 'economic' wage - if necessary at the expense of the entrenched privileges of the white working class. We have seen, however, that the Johannesburg City Council had already attempted to come to terms with the 'cornerstone' of the government's African housing policy in the Vukuzenzele scheme. The attempt was not to be successful: some two years after the proposal had been formulated in mid-1950, it was reported that, "through unforeseen circumstances, the finalisation of the Vukuzenzele Scheme has not been completed".[160] A month later, in July 1952, the Council adopted a resolution that, "subject to the National Housing and Planning Commission's providing the necessary funds", it would embark on a "large-scale Native housing programme" involving the construction "departmentally and/or under contract" of 2 500 houses a year for five years "on the Vukuzenzele layout and other areas, using Native labour wherever possible."[161]

The change of direction should be seen in the light of two, possibly not unconnected developments during the previous six months in the always problematic relationship between the Council and the agencies controlling the implementation of the central government's housing policy. The first had been the recognition that the Council and the government agencies were unlikely to reach agreement on what were to be considered to be 'essential' services in the 'economic' Vukuzenzele scheme. The Council was, of course, under pressure from the CNHC to improve the levels of service proposed for the scheme and, in any event, it made sound engineering

sense to install services of a standard consonant with the final development of a scheme in its initial phases (e.g. installing waterborne sewerage prior to the construction of any houses, rather than maintaining a bucket service). The government's primary concern, on the other hand, was to take control of the situation *throughout the country* as rapidly as possible and, given the financial limits imposed on it by the Treasury and the fact that the question of the levy on employers had not yet been resolved, at minimum cost. The negotiations broke down and towards the end of 1951, a spokesman for the City Council announced:

> At the moment it is the City Council's policy that no more money will be spent on sub-economic housing schemes while the question of what form economic housing schemes will take is still being discussed.[162]

(A threat which, in view of the government's clamp down on sub-economic schemes and the Council's reluctance to initiate them, rebounded really only to the detriment of the city's African population.)

The second development was the decision by the Secretary of Native Affairs in November 1951 that the substantial subsidy paid by the state against the losses incurred by the Council in maintaining the Moroka Emergency Camp - which had amounted to some £75 000 a year - would not be renewed when the five-year period agreed in the negotiations at the time of the camp's establishment came to an end in April 1952.[163] It is possible that the threat that the subsidy would be withdrawn was intended to introduce a sense of urgency into the Council's apparently reluctant efforts to comply with government policy in relation to the Vukuzenzele scheme.[164] Certainly, it seems to have influenced the Council's sudden decision to undertake the "large-scale Native housing programme" which was to rehouse, amongst others, the 11 500 families living in the Emergency Camp. But perhaps it did not do so quite in the direction that the government would have chosen, given that it was now becomingly increasingly sure that the 'site and service' approach represented the only feasible way of resolving the crisis.

In the event, however, amidst growing acrimony over its "dismal failure" to get on with the job of actually building houses, the Council had already decided to proceed with a proposal to build 1 000 houses in Orlando West and a further 500 "intended for resale under the home-ownership scheme" in Dube. By the end of June 1953, more than 700 of the Orlando West houses had been completed and occupied and a start had been made on the Dube scheme; in addition, plans for further schemes in Orlando West, Mofolo and Dube, involving a total of some 5 700 houses had been prepared.[165]

With a regular if still limited allocation from the National Housing Fund now apparently secured as the general financial situation improved, and under pressure from its 'rebel' members, the Council had decided in late 1952 to appoint a Director of Housing who was to be responsible for "the whole of the Council's housing activities (excluding the management of completed schemes)".[166] In May 1953, A.J. Archibald - the former Town Engineer of Springs and a leading figure in the successful Kwa-Thema experiment - took up the post and by December, apparently in the face of considerable opposition from within the Council apparatus a start had been made with the building of houses by a departmental direct labour team using African building artisans organized on a 'task' basis.[167] By the end of January, Archibald was able to announce that 'Native workers' were completing eight houses a day at Dube. He added:

> Public opinion is changing. It is no longer true that one half of the city does not know how the other half lives and does not care. The Press and those who have kept pegging away at the need for more Native houses have brought about the change. With financial assistance from the National Housing and Planning Commission and the Native services levy there is nothing to stop the City Council from building all the houses needed.[168]

But even with production figures rising to 16 or more houses a day and costs reduced to almost half their immediate post-war levels,[169] the crisis was still not being resolved "as economically and speedily as possible" and the policy-makers of the Department of Native Affairs were growing progressively less tolerant of the failure of the local authorities to provide the "adequate shelter in properly planned townships" which would enable "full control over urban Natives" to be regained.[170] As a senior official of the Department was to note in 1955, despite the fact that with the establishment of the Native Services Levy Fund, loans from the National Housing Fund could be "devoted exclusively to the provision of services and housing within the demarcated location areas",

> ... the rapid commercial and industrial expansion which took place during the last two decades and which resulted in the unprecedented influx of workers to urban and peri-urban areas, left local authorities still in the position that they were unable to keep pace with the provision of sufficient austere housing of approved standards for the ever-increasing urban Bantu population.[171]

In April 1954, Verwoerd moved decisively: in an interview with a deputation from the City Council "arranged to discuss the provision of housing loan funds for the Mofolo Scheme", as a letter from the Secretary of Native Affairs later confirmed, the Minister had indicated that:

> .... from now onwards housing funds should be primarily devoted to the acquisition of land for site and service schemes (which are home ownership schemes in embryo) and that money for actual houses should be granted only for dwellings within site and service schemes where such schemes are essential to solve the native accommodation problem with any degree of rapidity. If this principle were accepted and evidence of its implementation were forthcoming he would even be prepared to ask for special funds for the purchase of the land, leaving the normal housing funds for the building of the houses in the schemes.

Consequently, the letter added:

> .... further consideration of the Mofolo scheme must of necessity await your Council's reactions to the Minister's requirements.[172]

After consideration of the matter, the Council's Special Housing Committee suggested in June 1954 that "the Council should be prepared and indeed anxious to cooperate with the Minister subject to certain modifications, safeguards and assurances". It argued, however, that:

> In the highest form a site and service scheme can be compared with a complete development scheme of an approved estate or township layout. In such a scheme, all services usual in a fully built-up township are provided and completed before a single building is erected.

As against this, the "very austere type of project" proposed by the Minister had "certain important disadvantages", essentially that the provision and maintenance of temporary services - even on the extremely basic level indicated by Verwoerd - would in the long term prove to be a false economy in relation to the immediate provision of permanent services. As a compromise, the Committee suggested that "the Council should urge the Minister" to accept a scheme "which has a basis the provision of permanent services at least to the extent and on the scale of those provided at present to the housing projects". On this basis, it was proposed "to proceed with the installation of services for 30 000 sites

approximately over a period of 4½ years, funds to be supplied from the Native Services Levy and Housing Funds."[173]

The Minister, however, was not to be deflected from the approach to which he was committed, and the 'augmented' site and service scheme proposed by the Committee was rejected. "Stalemate", the Institute of Race Relations noted in its annual *Survey*, "was, therefore, reached."[174] It broke, finally, in December 1954 when the Council realised that, on this point, the Ministerial mountain was not to be moved. As the report of the Non-European Affairs and Housing Committee tabled at the last Council meeting of the year noted:

> It has become apparent that until work is actually commenced on the site and services schemes, no further money for housing will be received from the Government. Because of this, it is considered that a start should be made as soon as possible with the provision of rudimentary services in the areas of Northern Moroko (424 stands) and Central Western Jabavu (855 stands) on a site and service basis, the money for these services to be applied for as a grant from Native Services Levy Funds.[175]

It was, in the words of Patrick Lewis, "the breakthrough".[176] By the end of June 1956, 5 481 families comprising some 28 800 people had been settled in the new schemes and roughly 1 500 houses had been provided for them by Archibald's Housing Division. The provision of the serviced site had made it possible to start with the clearance of the squatter camps at Albertynsville and the Nancefield Brickyards,[177] and over the next five years the Council was to systematically lay out and service the remainder of the 35 000 sites it required to rehouse its squatters, its sub-tenants, and its 'slum dwellers'. During the first weeks of 1962, the Manager of the NEAD noted in his report for the period 1960-1963, "the few remaining shacks which had for so long been a feature of the Council's housing projects disappeared".[178] For Johannesburg - at least for the moment - the African housing crisis had been resolved.

CONCLUSION

Despite its length, the account which has been presented here remains, at best, schematic. It is clear that the real complexity of the origins and development of African housing policy and of its implementation in Johannesburg between 1944 and 1954 cannot be grasped quite as simply as the structure of the paper may have suggested. It is furthermore, evident that to endeavour to draw detailed and systematic theoretical conclusions from a paper of this nature would be

an inappropriate, and probably premature exercise. However, beyond the omissions and over-simplifications which any attempt at more rigorous analysis will have to confront, it may be useful to briefly point to certain more general theoretical implications of the short but undoubtedly significant historical episode which we have examined.

Perhaps what emerges most forcibly from the account is support for the problematic concept of the 'relative autonomy' of the state apparatus in capitalist social formations, an autonomy which nevertheless remains determined 'in the last instance' by the 'economic'. In the Nationalist government's refusal to accept the 'inevitability' of the 'natural' economic processes which had resulted in the massive influx of Africans to the major urban areas during the war, and in the *real* measures it took to halt and if possible reverse this flow, it is apparent that it was exercising a political (and ideological) power in opposition to the strategic intentions of at least that fraction of the dominant class under whose hegemony the Fagan Report had been produced and the ideas of the Social and Economic Planning Council had gained considerable currency. The *limits* of this autonomy, on the other hand, were equally clearly drawn in the Nationalists' 'pragmatic' acceptance of the fact that it would nevertheless continue to be necessary to accommodate an urban African labour force in the 'white' cities, "for many years".

At a less programmatic level, the same relationship between state and capital can be observed in the way in which the Nationalist government carried out the interventionist role imposed on it by the need to secure the reproduction of this labour force. The implicit political threat posed by the autonomous squatter movement was met, not by their expulsion using the brutally repressive means which were to be employed in other spheres, but with the realisation that it could, in fact, be brought under control by the provision of "adequate shelter in properly planned Native townships" - which, of course, amounted to a tacit recognition of the 'legitimacy' of the squatters' presence in the urban areas. But, within this acceptance of the 'economic realities', the question of how the social costs of the 'solution' to the reproduction crisis were to be distributed was resolved *politically*, and at the expense of the dominant social class. Given the history of the prolonged and intense three-cornered conflict between the central government, the local authorities and the representatives of organized commerce and industry that preceded the passage of the Native Services Levy Act, it may be argued that the initial selective application of the levy (only in the major urban areas) represented an attempt by the Nationalists to force the interventionist role imposed on them by their accession to state power at least partially into the mould of *apartheid* policy. For, in effect, the levy was intended to apply an 'economic' constraint to the substitution of white workers by less 'skilled' Africans which

those employers who had been the most vocal proponents of the need to 'stabilize' the African labour force were still struggling to achieve.

As against the 'relative autonomy' which the Nationalist government appears to have asserted in certain spheres, however, we must place the internal conflicts and contradictions of a state apparatus that in no way corresponds to the image of a monolithic unity and coherence with which it has sometimes been invested. This fragmentation is, of course, particularly obvious in the division between the local authorities and the central government, but what the analysis above suggests quite strongly is that the conflict is actually rooted in the different political and social matrices in which the two levels of the state apparatus are located. In this respect, I have hypothesized that the fierce resistance of the Johannesburg City Council to the idea that it was to be primarily responsible for accommodating its African population was due to its domination by the representatives of an 'urban bourgeoisie' with interests quite different from those of the strata or 'fractions' of the bourgeoisie dominant at the national level, which were not - at least for capital operating on a monopoly basis - as tightly tied to 'urban'processes in specific localities.

This, however, remains an area in which a great deal more work is required and one promising direction of enquiry might be to examine the rather different attitude towards the African housing problem adopted by local authorities in towns such as Witbank and Springs, where it seems possible that the location -bound nature of heavy industry had induced the representatives of 'big' capital to take rather more interest in local affairs. The other area of investigation which could well throw more light on this question is the matter of the Western Areas removals in Johannesburg, to which only passing reference was made in the paper to avoid extending it to an even more excessive length. An analysis of the configuration of interests which induced the City Council to initiate the removal proposal in 1944 and, for a period, to collaborate with the Nationalist government in setting up the 'Ad Hoc' Committee to oversee its implementation would, I think, tell us much about the nature of the dominant social class at the local level. Indeed, such an analysis could be usefully extended to examine the very different responses of the various local authorities to the implementation of the Group Areas legislation during the 50s, which in its 'dysfunctional' effects - massive social disruption, increased costs of reproduction and additional state expenditure to rehouse the affected people - remains difficult to explain in terms of a materialist theory of the state. A starting point for the analysis in relation to Johannesburg might be to investigate the possibility of an objective alliance of interest between the 'urban

bourgeoisie' and the local representatives of the white petty bourgeoisie and working class anxious to secure access to conveniently - located residential land and/or trading catchments.

Finally, beyond these questions of what has come to be known as 'urban politics' and present in this paper really only as a sort of background against which they are played out, lies the struggle of the African masses to survive in the hostile environment of the 'white' cities. In a sense, the next objective in the long-term project of which this paper represents only the first step is to reverse the order of its analysis and, with the evolution of 'township policy' pushed essentially into the background, to begin to unravel the tangled skein which is the history of popular struggle in this period and beyond. It is a major task but, hopefully without reverting to the spatial determinism which so befogs, for instance, the 'analysis' offered by bodies such as the Urban Foundation, it will eventually be possible to show how the 'resolution' of the African housing crisis of thirty years ago ultimately failed to resolve the real contradictions in South African society and succeeded only in establishing one of the arenas in which, today, they are once again being fought out.

NOTES

1. Thanks to Doug Hindson and Marni Andrews for comments on an earlier draft of this paper. The first part of its title is taken from a pamphlet published by the Johannesburg Citizens' Native Housing Committee in an attempt to generate public outrage at the City Council's "dismal failure" to respond to the continuing housing crisis in the African areas under its control.

2. *Bantu*, February 1955, p.20.

3. M. Castells, *The urban question: a Marxist approach*, Edward Arnold, London, 1977, p.432. The 'political', for Castells, "designates the instance by which a society deals with the contradictions and dislocations between the various instances that compose it, and reflects its structural laws, expanding them, thus assuring the realization of the interests of the dominant class". (Ibid., p. 260.) For reviews of Castells' contribution to 'urban' theory, see M. Harloe, 'Introduction' to M. Harloe (ed.), *Captive cities: studies in the political economy of cities and regions*, Wiley, London, 1977; K. Bassett and J. Short, *Housing and residential structure: alternative approaches*, RKP, London, 1980, part III; and P. Saunders, *Urban politics: a sociological interpretation*, Penguin, 1980, part I.

4. The only studies I am aware of which deal with the creation of Soweto are P.R.B. Lewis, 'A city "within a city" - the creation of Soweto', the text of a Senate lecture delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Sept. 1966 and subsequently published in the collection, *Witwatersrand: between past and future*, University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.; E. Hellman, *Soweto: Johannesburg's African city*, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1971 (revised edn.); and *Soweto: a review of existing condtions and some guidelines for change*, Urban Foundation, Johannesburg, 1980, Section 2.

5. City of Johannesburg, *Annual Report of the Manager, Non-European Affairs Department*, for the period December 1944 to 30th June, 1948, p.4. This series of reports will hereafter be cited as *NEAD Report* 1944-48, etc.

6. *Report of the Local Government Commission*, T.P. 1-1922: the Stallard Report, para. 263, p.46.

7. Figures cited by A. Stadler, 'Birds in the cornfield: squatter movements in Johannesburg, 1944-1947', in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, townships and protest*, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1979, p.28.

8. A. Proctor, 'Class struggle, segregation, and the city: a history of Sophiatown, 1905-1940', in B. Bozzoli (ed), *op. cit.*, p. 67.

9. D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic development, 1865-1965', in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.) *The Oxford History of South Africa* V. II, OUP, Oxford, 1975, p. 36.

10. *Report of the Native Laws Commission*, U.G. 28-1948: the Fagan Report, Annexure 6, p. 72.

11. *NEAD Report* 1944-48, p.4.

12. Ibid.

13. D. O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mineworkers' strike in the political economy of South Africa', in P. Bonner (ed.), *Working papers in Southern African Studies*, ASI Communication No. 5, African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1977, p.193.

14. Ibid, p. 192-193.

15. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic development', p. 36; Stadler, 'Birds in the cornfield', p. 21.

16. The proportion of (registered) African workseekers to the "employed population" declined from 5,4 per cent in 1936 to 1,8 per cent in 1942, rising to 2,7 per cent in 1944 (E. Hellmann, 'Urban areas', in Hellmann (ed.) *Handbook on race relations in South Africa*, OUP, London, 1949, p. 240)

17. *Report of the Inter-departmental Committee on the social, health and economic conditions of urban Natives*, 1942: the Smit Report, paras. 17, 22, p. 2.

18. Stadler, 'Birds in the cornfield', p. 29.

19. Ibid., p. 38. The account presented here draws heavily on Stadler's study. See also the brief review of events in *NEAD Report* 1944-48, pp. 6-8.

20. Quoted by Stadler, ibid, p. 31.

21. In fact, the 'shelters' were to still be in existence - if not accommodating the original occupants - in 1953.

22. *NEAD Report* 1944-48, p. 6.

23. Ibid., p. 7.

24. Union of South Africa, *Report of the Department of Native Affairs for the years 1945-47*, U.G. 14-1948, pp. 13 , 20. This series of reports will hereafter be cited as *DNA Report* 1945-47, etc.

25. Stadler, 'Birds in the cornfield', p. 35.

26. Fagan Report, para. 27, p. 18. This diverges from Stadler's contention that there was "widespread unemployment in Johannesburg" after the war and that "many unemployed people lived in the squatter camps". ('Birds in the cornfield', pp. 22-23)

27. Stadler, ibid., pp. 36-37.

28. Cf. D. Harris, 'Prices, homes and transport', paper presented at the History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, February 1981.

29. E. Roux, *Time longer than rope*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, Wisconsin, 1964 (2nd. edn.) p. 322. This section draws heavily on Roux's work.

30. Walshe identifies Dr. A.B. Xuma's failure to obtain re-election as President-General of the ANC at the Bloemfontein conference of 1949 and the adoption under pressure from the increasingly powerful Youth League, of the 'Programme of Action' as the point of no return in a process which had begun with the adjournment of the NRC. (P. Walshe, *Black nationalism in South Africa: a short history*, SPRO-CAS/Ravan, Johannesburg, 1973, pp. 30-31.) O'Meara, from a rather different perspective, suggests that "the transformation of the ANC from the political organ of the petty bourgeoisie into the political movement of a class alliance" was catalysed by the state's response to the 1946 mineworkers' strike which had the effect of promoting "a broad set of leadership contacts" between prominent trade unionists (including members of the CPSA) and the ANC hierarchy. (O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mineworkers' strike', pp. 219-226.)

31. Hellmann, 'Urban areas', p. 241.

32. Summary derived from R.J. Randall, 'Economic growth and urban Native policy in South Africa', unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Natal, Durban, 1958, pp. 181-182.

33. Union of South Africa, *National housing: a review of policy and progress*, 1947 (?), pp. 7-8. The loss-sharing ratio of 2:1 only applied where the total amount to be recovered in rentals was more than 6 per cent of the capital cost of the scheme; where this amount

was greater than 5 per cent but less than 6 per cent, a ratio of 5:2 was to be applied and where it was less than 5 per cent, the ratio of 3:1 was to be applied. The expenditure on repairs and maintenance and the various services which could be charged against the scheme was to be limited to a maximum of 5,5 per cent of its capital cost, per annum.

34. Ibid., p. 10.

35. Union of South Africa, Department of Health, *Report of the National Housing and Planning Commission for the years 1947 and 1948*, U.G. 45-1949, pp. 3, 30. This series of reports will hereafter be cited as *NHPC Report* 1947 and 1948, etc.

36. Ibid., p. 28.

37. Cf. Union of South Africa, *House of Assembly Debates* V. 65, 1948, col. 508 ff.; V.76, 1951, col.9598 ff.

38. *A survey of race relations in South Africa*, 1948-49, SAIRR, Johannesburg, pp. 37-38. The annual Surveys of the Institute will hereafter be cited as *SRR* 1948-49, etc.

39. The *South African Builder* 26 (8), 1948, p. 15. The *Builder* (hereafter *SAB*) was the official organ of the National Federation of Building Trade Employers (now the Building Industries Federation of South Africa) and the 'Housing' column which appeared in each monthly issue from January 1945 throughout the period under review has proved to be an invaluable source of information.

40. Cf. T.R.H. Davenport, *The beginnings of urban segregation in South Africa: the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and its background*, Occasional Paper No. 15, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1971; P. Rich, 'Ministering to the white man's needs: the development of urban segregation in South Africa, 1913-1923', unpublished paper presented at the History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, February 1978.

41. Known as the Young Committee. The Committee's report was not published but a mimeo. copy is lodged in the Government Publications section, William Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

42. Young Report, para. 1, pp. 1-2.

43. Fagan Report, para. 3, pp. 4-5. Cf. P. Rich, 'Administrative ideology, urban social control and the origins of apartheid theory, 1930-1939', *Journal of African Studies* 7(2), 1980, pp. 76-77.

44. Young Report, para. 28, p.14.

45. Ibid., para. 17, p. 9.

46. Ibid., para. 27, p. 13.

47. Ibid., para. 26, p 13.

48. Ibid., para. 29, pp. 15-16.

49. Ibid., para. 37, p. 19.

50. Cf. O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mineworkers' strike', pp. 185-186.

51. *Report of the Inter-departmental Committee on the social, health and economic conditions of urban Natives*, 1942: the Smit Report, para. 3, p. 1.

52, Legassick, 'Legislation, ideology and economy', p.10.

53. Van Eck Report, U.G. 40-1941, pp. 6-7.

54. The Council (of which van Eck was the chairman) published 13 reports during its relatively brief existence, which together represent a remarkable attempt to systematically formulate a comprehensive and integrated programme of social and economic reconstruction for the post-war period. While the SEPC's commitment to large-scale reformist social engineering (heavily influenced by developments in Britain and elsewhere) appears to have been somewhat ahead of its time and to have had little immediate practical effect, it is probable that it did much to create the climate in which the need for 'scientific' planning of social and economic development won general acceptance.

55. Smit Report, para. 26, pp. 2-3.

56. Ibid., para. 27, p. 3.

57. The categories of state expenditure were originally proposed by J. O'Connor, *The fiscal crisis of the state*, St. James Press, New York, 1973. Cf. I. Gough, 'State expenditure in advanced capitalism', *New Left Review*, 92, 1975, pp. 53-92.

58. *Vide* Smit Report, para. 83, p.7; para. 116, p.10; para. 171, p.14; para. 177, p.15; para. 244, p.19; para. 293, p.23; para. 301, p.24 and *passim.*

59. Ibid., para 167, p.14.

60. Ibid., para 151, p.13.

61. Fagan Report, para. 65(19), p.50; see also Section III. O'Meara suggest that the ambivalence of the Report in this respect reflects "tensions in the ruling class" between the "manufacturing and commercial bourgeoisie (which) wanted a stabilized labour force" and the "mine owners (who), with the possible exception of Anglo-American, wanted the migrant system of cheap labour to continue". ('The 1946 African mineworkers' strike', p.214.)

62. Fagan Report, para. 3, pp. 4-5.

63. Ibid., para. 28, p.19; para. 65 (1), (2), (3), p.49.

64. Ibid., para. 62, p.47.

65. Union of South Africa, *Social and Economic Planning Council Report No. 10: Public works programme and policy*, U.G. 37-1946, p.32.

66. Fagan Report, para. 64, p.48; para. 34, p.22.

67. Ibid., para. 65(20), p.50 and para. 62, p.47. The proposed apparatus was to be set up as a "Government sub-department" - possibly by expanding the Urban Areas Section of the Department of Native Affairs - "properly equipped (with) the necessary statutory powers to exercise supervision over Native villages outside municipal areas, and also, where necessary, to acquire sites and to establish such villages". (Ibid., para. 65(8), p.49).

68. 'Verslag vir die Kleurvraagstuk Komitee van die Herenigde Nationale Party', mimeo., 1947: 'Report for the Colour Question Committee of the Re-united National Party' (known as the Sauer Report); quotations from this document are translations from the original Afrikaans, for which I am grateful for the assistance of Lynn Wilkinson.

69. Cf. Legassick, 'Legislation, ideology and economy', pp. 14-15.

70. Sauer Report, para. 31,32, p.10.

71. Ibid., para. 45,48, pp. 11-12; emphases added.

72. Ibid., para 33, p.10.

73. Legassick, 'Legislation, ideology and economy', p.18; original emphasis.

74. *SRR*, 1949-50, p.38.

75. *Commercial Opinion* (Journal of the Associated Chambers of Commerce), November 1948; cited by R. de Villiers, 'The state, capital and labour allocation: the Johannesburg Municipality 1948-62', *Africa Perspective* 12, September 1979, p.27; see also *SRR* 1948-49, p.32.

76. *SRR* 1949-50, pp.37-39.

77. Under Section 10, no Africans were permitted to remain in an urban area without permits for more than 72 hours unless they had been born there and had remained permanently in residence since birth, or had worked continuously for one employer for at least ten years, or had been legally resident within the area for at least fifteen years. The dependents (wives, unmarried daughters, and sons under the age of 18) of African men meeting these requirements were also to be exempted provided they were "ordinarily resident" with them. (Randall, 'Economic growth and urban Native policy', pp. 110-111).

78. Ibid., pp. 111-113.

79. *SRR* 1951-52, pp. 30-31.

80. *NEAD Report* 1948-49, p. 4 and *NEAD Report* 1952-53, p.2.

81. Reported in *SRR* 1952-53, p.81.

82. FCI, Memorandum addressed to all members of the non-European Affairs Committee and all constituent organisations, 19 April 1956. I am indebted to Doug Hindson for this reference and for pointing out the tendency of labour bureau statistics to inflate the effectiveness of influx control measures mentioned above.

83. Fagan Report, para. 30, p.20: see also para. 65, p.49.

84. Ibid., para. 32, p.21.

85. The Union's argument was that "native areas did not

include native townships where the funds required for building were raised from rates on Europeans" (*SAB* 24(8), 1946, p.11.) - an interesting twist to class consciousness within a racial division of labour?

86. *SAB* 25(3), 1947, pp. 11,13,19.

87. *SAB* 25(9), 1947, p. 9; *SAB* 25 (11), 1947, p.9.

88. *SAB* 26(8), 1948, p. 17.

89. *SRR* 1949-50, pp. 54-55.

90. *SRR* 1950-51, pp. 12-13.

91. Retrospective article in *SAB* 32(4), 1954, p.13.

92. The power to introduce 'job reservation' in any industry or trade was conferred on the Minister of Labour by the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act of 1956. On the implications of these developments at the political level, see Legassick, 'Legislation, ideology, and economy', pp. 11-13; cf. M. Legassick, 'South Africa: capital accumulation and violence', *Economy and Society* 3(3), 1974, pp. 278-279, and D. O'Meara, 'The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: class vanguard of Afrikaner nationalism', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 3(2), 1977, pp. 180-182.

93. Reported in *SAB* 26(10), 1948, p.15.

94. Reported in *SAB* 27(4), 1949, p.11.

95. Ibid. The S.A. Institute of Race Relations, which had not been invited to attend the conference, nevertheless added its 'liberal' voice to the debate by issuing a memorandum on the same day, in which it recommended that the financing of African housing should remain the responsibility of the State and that the necessary subsidies should be derived from general tax revenues rather than from a tax specifically on employers. (*SAB* 27(5), 1949, p.13). Given the continued insistence of the Institute on this point (cf. *SRR* 1951-52, p.38), it is difficult to accept Legassick's assertion that the Nationalist government "incorporated" the idea of " a levy on employers to provide some of the cost of such (African) housing" from the "earlier liberal programme" ('Legislation, ideology and economy',

p.19), without qualification. As we have seen, very different liberal ideologies were articulated at various times, by the various representatives of the 'liberal' establishment.

96. Reported in *SAB* 27(5), 1949, pp. 11, 13.

97. Ibid., p.11.

98. *NHPC Report* 1947 and 1948, U.G.45-1949, p.26; *SAB* 26(10), 1948, p.15.

99. *NHPC Report* 1949, U.G.12-1950, pp.1,4.

100. *SRR* 1948-49, p.38.

101. *NHPC Report* 1950, U.G.46-1951, p.8.

102. *NHPC Report* 1949, p.2.

103. Legassick, 'Legislation, ideology and economy', p.24.

104. *NHPC Report* 1950, p.10; cf. *DNA Report* 1950-51, U.G.30-1953, p.22: "Surveys indicated ... that many Natives, especially in the larger urban areas, were earning economic wages but occupying sub-economic houses".

105. *DNA Report* 1947-48, U.G.35-1949, p.16.

106. *SRR* 1950-51, p.34.

107. *DNA Report* 1944-45, U.G.44-1946, p.84.

108. *DNA Report* 1947-48, p.17.

109. *NHPC Report* 1950, pp.10,12.

110. Ibid., p.10; cf. *DNA Report* 1951-52, U.G.37-1955, p.26.

111. Covering minute to *DNA Report* 1949-50, U.G.61-1951, pp.I-II; emphasis added.

112. W.C. Mocké (Senior Urban Areas Commissioner), 'Bantu housing, with special reference to site-and-service schemes', *Bantu*, June 1956, pp.15,17. *Bantu*, published monthly by the Department of Native Affairs from 1954 onwards, was directed specifically at the African population and mounted a major propaganda effort during this period to persuade urban Africans of the state's honourable intentions in the resolution of the housing crisis, removals from the Western Areas, etc.

113. Reported in *Bantu*, August 1954, pp.22-23,

114. *SAB* 31(1), 1953, p.13.

115. *DNA Report* 1951-52, pp.23-24; *DNA Report* 1952-53, U.G. 48-1955, p.30.

116. *SAB* 31(1), 1953, p.15.

117. Two other legislative developments during 1952 also contributed in some measure to this framework and should be noted here. The first was a clause in the otherwise largely repressive Native Laws Amendment Act which enabled local authorities to divert 2/3 of any profits that might accrue from their monopoly on the production and sale of 'Kaffir beer' to their Native Revenue Accounts, where it could be used to offset losses incurred in the provision of 'approved' housing. The second was an amendment to the Precious and Base Metals Act which made it possible, for the first time, to establish townships within gold-bearing areas - which was of major importance to the local authorities located on the Reef, where 'suitable' sites in terms of the stringent racial zoning requirements were almost invariably located on mining land. (Cf. statement by Minister of Mines reported in *SRR* 1951-52, p.37; on racial zoning requirements, see ibid., p.35).

118. *SRR* 1951-52, p.41.

119. *Second Annual Report of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research*, 1946-47, p.16; this series of reports will hereafter be cited as CSIR Report 1946-47, etc. Prior to the rationalization of standards introduced by the Committee, space standards had varied widely between the different local and national authorities involved in the provision of housing, the statutory basis remaining the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1919 and the Slums Act of 1934. (P.H. Connell, *Sub-economic housing practice in South Africa*, NBRI Research Report Series DR1, CSIR, Pretoria, 1947, pp.18-19.)

120. J.E. Jennings, 'Housing for the urban Bantu - a problem in whole engineering', *Transactions of the S.A. Institution of Civil Engineers* 4 (6), 1954, p.3.

121. Ibid., p.2. The author also reveals the social analysis from which this premise has been derived:

> It is important, however, to understand certain

> other basic facts (beyond the "social revolution" consequent upon urbanization) which complicate the picture, amongst which is the genuine desire on the part of white South Africa to impart a decent Christian standard of living to the Bantu, as amply demonstrated by the policy of our pioneers which was to advance with a gun in one hand and the Bible in the other when opening up the hinterland. Further complications in our society are the fully justifiable aim of the industrialist to work for profit, the practice of paying labour the minimum wage consistent with the law of supply and demand rather than with the cost of living, and the general low productivity of a people without an industrial tradition of skills which, in itself, automatically keeps wages at a low level. These facts present a broad picture of the tremendous human problem which underlies the provision of housing for the urban Bantu population. It is to this problem that we must bring a *whole engineering* approach .... (ibid.; original emphasis).

122. Ibid., seriatim; see also *Research studies on the costs of urban Bantu housing*, NBRI Research Report Series DR10, CSIR, Pretoria, 1954 and *A guide to the planning of non-European townships*, NHPC, Pretoria, 1951.

123. See D.M. Calderwood, *Native housing in South Africa*, D. Arch. thesis submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1953 and subsequently published with the assistance of a grant made by the CSIR, pp.27-38.

124. *A survey of rent-paying capacity of urban Natives in South Africa* (Report of the Committee on Socio-Economic Surveys for Bantu Housing Research), CSIR, Preotira, 1960, pp.1-3.

125. Interview with Professor D.M. Calderwood, Johannesburg, 8 May 1981.

126. *A survey of rent-paying capacity*, pp.v, 3.

127. *SRR* 1950-51, p.34; see above.

128. *DNA Report* 1950-51, U.G. 30-1953, p.22.

129. *A survey of rent-paying capacity*, p.3.

130. Ibid., p.104.

131. *CSIR Report* 1955-56, p.13.

132. See footnote 39.

133. *NEAD Report* 1944-48, p.4.

134. Lewis, 'A city "within a city"', p.16

135. Ibid., extracted from table on p.33.

136. On the terms of the National Housing formula, see above, p.10 ; on the Council's attitude during the negotiations, see *Minutes of the 697th Meeting of the Johannesburg City Council*, 25 April 1944, pp.350-356. The *Minutes* will hereafter be cited as *JCC Minutes* 25/4/44, etc.

137. On the estimated backlog, see *NEAD Report* 1948-49, p.7; loan application statistics extracted from *NHPC Reports* 1945-49.

138. Lewis, 'A city "within a city"', p.6.

139, *NEAD Report* 1948-49, pp.6-7.

140. *SAB* 30 (6), 1952, p.13.

141. *SAB* 30 (11), 1952, p.31.

142. *NEAD Report* 1949-50, p.4; *NEAD Report* 1950-51, p.3. Their fears were to be justified: by 1952, it became clear that the government's policy was "to allow local authorities to grant land for home-ownership schemes on a leasehold basis up to thirty years, renewable for further periods should circumstances justify this" (*SRR* 1951-52, p.41); a year later it was reported that the Minister of Native Affairs "remains adamant ... that 30 years' leasehold tenure of plots *without* the option of extension is the maximum he will permit". (*SRR* 1952-53, p.46; emphasis added.)

143. *NEAD Report* 1949-50, p.4; *SRR* 1949-50, p.53.

144. *SRR* 1949-50, p.52.

145. Ibid., p.53; *SAB* 28(12), 1950, pp.11,13.

146. Reported in *SAB* 28(12), 1950, pp.11,13.

147. The 'Special Correspondent', whose 'Housing' column in the *South African Builder* provides a somewhat partisan view of the achievements of the "four so-called 'rebel' councillors" during this period; see particularly the columns in *SAB* 30(1),(6),(11), 1952; *SAB* 31(8), (9), 1953.

148. *SAB* 30(11), 1952, p.29.

149. In an interview, it has been suggested that Gordon himself was an important figure in a major building society, but this has not yet been verified. (Interview with J. Lewsen, Johannesburg, 16/5/1981.)

150. As for instance in the comments of K. Klipin - a member of the group - reported in *SAB* 30(11), 1952, p.31.

151. Cf. D. Byrne, 'The standard of Council housing in inter-war North Shields - a case study in the politics of reproduction', in J. Melling (ed.), *Housing, social policy and the state*, Croon Helm, London, 1980, pp. 172-174. It should be noted that the matrix of interests which Byrne analyses is quite different from that under consideration here.

152. I hope to develop this analysis more systematically in a forthcoming paper on the structural and historical determinants of state 'township policy' in the *apartheid* era.

153 It also indicates why the South African Builder, as the 'official organ' of organized building capital, should have adopted a distinctly partisan approach to the issue (see above, footnote 147).

154. *SAB* 30 (1), 1952, p.13

155. See above, p. 40.

156. See Verwoerd's statement to the FCI on the administration of the Native Services Levy Act quoted above, p. 32.

157 Quoted in *SAB* 31(8), 1953, p.15.

158 Johannesburg Citizens' Native Housing Committee, *A Place to live : some aspects of Native housing in Johannesburg*, Johannesburg, 1953, pp. 26-27; pamphlet kept in the Strange Collection, Johannesburg Public Library.

159. Quoted in *SAB* 31(8), 1953, p. 13

160. *NEAD Report* 1951-52, p. 11

161. *JCC Minutes* 22/7/52, pp. 596-597. The original number of houses to be constructed every year was 5 000, but this was reduced to 2 500 "in view of the scarcity of materials".

162. Reported in *SAB* 30(1), 1952, p. 13

163. *JCC Minutes* 29/1/52, p. 67

164. It may also have been intended to serve as a bargaining point in the negotiations over the Western Areas removal scheme which had then entered a delicate stage (cf. J. Lewsen, 'The relationship of the Johannesburg City Council to the Western Areas', in *The Western Areas removal scheme: facts and viewpoints*, SAIRR, Johannesburg, 1953, p. 5). The Council appointed a "special ad hoc committee" in June 1952 "to work out the full details (including financial) of a scheme to be submitted to the Council and the Minister (of Native Affairs) for approval". (*JCC Minutes* 9/12/52, p. 1052.)

165. *NEAD Report* 1952-53, p. 5; *JCC Minutes* 24/2/53, p. 234

166. *JCC Minutes* 9/12/52, p. 1050

167. Interview with Professor D.M. Calderwood, Johannesburg 8/5/81; cf. *SAB* 32 (10), 1954, p. 11. The 'rationalisation'of housing construction along mass production lines and the role played by bodies such as the NBRI in this process during the late 40s and early 50s will be examined by Marni Andrews in a thesis to be submitted to the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

168. Reported in *SAB* 32 (10), 1954, p. 13

169. The cost per square foot of a house built in Jabavu in 1947 was R1,02 (1965 figures); with the establishment of the Housing Division in 1954 and the introduction of the 'task' system using African artisans, the cost was reduced to as little as R0,61 per square foot, despite rising prices for building materials. (Lewis, 'A city "within a city"', p. 10.)

170 See above, pp. 30-31.

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