

state to the individual. Finally, the upgrading programmes and RSC fiscal policy have an ultimate aim of setting black local authorities back on their feet.

5.3.6 Business and the JMC

Surrounding businesses have been incorporated into the JMC urban renewal and education programme. Besides financing housing construction, they provide equipment for cleanup campaigns, and sponsor skills training centres and youth programmes.

In November 1987, the administrator and businessmen launched Progress through Employment to combat unemployment in the township. The council estimated 48% of the township was unemployed which was equal to 38 000 people (136). The organisation is divided into five sub-committees dealing with employment placement, promotion of home industry, provision of venture capital to people wishing to open small businesses, training, and work creation.

The committees are funded by local businesses (137). Participants include companies such as Dions, financial institutions such as First National Bank, the Sandton Chamber of Commerce, black businessmen from the township, a councillor from the Sandton Council, and representatives from technikons and the Department of Manpower (138).

Warren Dale, now president of the Sandton Chamber of Commerce, explains the motivation behind such involvement:

'The Sandton Chamber of Commerce is interested in creating a capitalist attitude in Alexandra and spreading the entrepreneurial spirit which does not exist there... They must realise that personal advancement will come from hard work not slogans. ... Alex is closely related to Sandton so business development is to our advantage. We are interested in a stable condition in Alex: less unemployment, happier staff, more productive staff. Our interest is in the development and maintenance of a capitalist framework' (139).

He feels business involvement in government programmes is 'a risk business has to take. Government and business fall on the same side because blacks are suspicious of us both' (140).

Economic grievances can possibly be satisfied by upgrading, but the space will still remain for 'agitators and stirrers' until the issue of political rights has been dealt with, maintains Warren. Political and socio-economic reforms have to proceed together. However, he does not see the state of emergency signalling the end of reform:

'Government realises reform is the precondition for economic growth and stability. But you can't reform unless the atmosphere is right' (141).

5.3.7 Selling the new offensive

The overriding philosophy of mini-JMCs is to exercise good government which 'must see and be seen', according to a senior intelligence official (142). Said another:

'There is no substitute for good government, that is one which represents the people, is responsible to their feelings and provides the mechanisms whereby their basic aspirations can be realised. The people must know the Government is good and dedicated to their welfare. So the Government must explain to them what is going on' (143).

Upgrading is portrayed in physical and psychological terms:

'Through development and renewal both of our attitudes and our Town we will in fact achieve the aim of our Town's motto 'Through development we reach the sky!' (144).

The key behind the psychological battle has been an information dissemination programme which explains developments in Alexandra and asserts a new value system. The Alexandra JMC has established a newspaper, Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, and a comic strip, Alex and Friends to sell the new deal. These

are published by the Bureau of Information and distributed free (see appendix 2). The Bureau also produces the Metropolitan Digest which offers a similar ideological tack though on a broader scale. Its 'news' is drawn from all townships on the Rand.

The overriding philosophy behind the Newsletter is 'Help Us to Help You Build a Better and Happier Future for the Alexandra Residents' (145). For a start in October, this meant residents had to begin paying rent so breaking the five-month-old total township boycott.

In mid-September, the council issued rent arrear statements to all permit holders with letters urging residents to pay up or explain their problems to council officials (146). This coincided with an article in the September edition of Newsletter explaining why residents had to pay rent and service charges:

'Rent is what we pay to live in a town ... We [the council] must also pay for Electricity, for Sewerage purification and for the removal of refuse and even for the use of bulk refuse dumps ... Staff are paid; like you and I. We look for a job that will pay the wages - the council officials are here to serve you the residents. No service is free of charge. ... A town is like a big household - every month there are bills to be paid, things to be bought ... This is

why a 'rent' is charged. ...If you pay your rent you will also help to improve and speed-up projects and improve services in the interest of the Community' (147).

In a personal address, the administrator stressed that the council did not fund the police or army in any way - and definitely not through rent payments. If service charges increased through inflation, the only way to beat it was higher productivity (148).

Newsletter gave detailed accounts of the progress and problems of urban renewal, apologised for any inconvenience, offered frequent invitations to residents to make suggestions, criticisms and get involved.

Articles on upgrading coincided with comic strips handed out by security forces. The comic was about discussions between Alex, the young healthy, clean, happy resident and his friends a Busy Bee, a bird and a dog. They did verbal battle with Comrade Rat, a weedy scruffy creature who always pessimistically ran down new township development rather than accepting it enthusiastically as did Alex. A liaison officer at the Bureau for Information described Alex as

'the good person, the good things of life. He represents the council's activities' (149).

It ran a series of articles introducing the administrator and council staff and officials and putting a human face to government. The sports liason officer of the town council hoped to rekindle community spirit, and improve the individual through expanding sports activities, with the help of government and business funding (150). A member of the council technical staff took redevelopment into his own hands and of his own accord, built a public park near his flat and play parks for children. He had an 'insatiable desire to work for the community' (151). The chief of community services had 'strength of character coupled with a pleasant personality including a keen sense of humour' and promised 'giant steps' with 'new' city council powers (152).

Ex-councillors were surreptitiously drawn into new administration. For example, Darky Rametse helped organise a cleanup campaign in March 1987 (153) and is on the executive of an employment creation committee (154).

All articles about residential development stressed that homes were now for sale. Freehold and the issue of new ID documents were evidence of a brighter future. Rented flat accommodation would be allocated strictly according to the waiting list. The town council would give free advice on how to go about buying a home:

'Remember, all this advice and assistance is free-of-charge because the Town Council of Alexandra wishes you to improve and have a happy and secure future' (155).

Homeownership was represented as an investment for the future of an individual, his family and his community:

'Buying your own home has got to be one of the most sound investments you could ever make. Not only are you assuring the future of your family, but the money you pay is going towards YOUR home - a home that belongs to YOU and your Family! Think of the advantages. You can make any renovations you like. You can add on rooms. Paint it. Put on a new roof. Whatever you do will increase the value of your home so that should you one day decide to sell it you will make a profit - and that money will be YOURS. ...Buy your home NOW, and secure your family's stake in the future of your Community - for ever!' (156).

The newsletter also emphasised opportunities for small business development, advertised skills (especially building) training programmes for unemployed, such as the Murray and Roberts Earn While You Learn Homebuilding Course (157). Barlow Rand opened the Alexandra Enterprise Centre which was portrayed as a 'breeding ground for our future black manufacturers and industrialists' which would help solve today's vexing problems of 'unemployment and dependency' (158). The underlying current is an individualist ethic where self-upliftment and hard work guarantee success.

The paper tried to repair the image of the SADF. A report on a funeral for school children killed in a bus accident mentioned

'The friendship offered by the SADF did not go unnoticed ...I overheard one boxom (sic) auntie say, as she wiped tears off her eyes: "They are not as bad as we are led to believe they are"' (159).

A front page article apologised for the inconvenience of security force roadblocks and asked residents to fill out a questionnaire on their opinion of the road blocks. The article explained that roadblocks were 'to keep all troublemakers out'; 'to ensure the security and safety of all Alex residents'; and significant in terms of urbanisation strategy, to 'prevent Alex residents from being overcrowded by squatters' (160) - sentiments any reasonable citizen should support.

Finally, Newletter aimed at establishing a hold among disaffected youth. Several white trainers, possibly SADF personnel, and four black coaches were hired by the council to run sports clinics for school children and organise competitions with prizes. In June 1987, children partook in a fun run against the SADF in the 'Alexandra Schools Games 87'. 'Those guys really enjoyed themselves running with those kids', reported Newsletter (161).

Sport was seen as a healthy, non-political diversion for township youth. A South African Executive Cricket Club launched a R10 million project backed by businesses to develop cricket skills in Alexandra. At the launch an Alexandra educationist said

'We hope that with the advent of cricket we'll be able to make good bowlers out of so-called stonethrowers in the townships' (162).

This seems part of a national strategy. In June 1987, the President's Council Social Affairs Committee issued a report examining how to counter dissatisfaction among black youth. It recommended changes in school curricula to equip youth for more responsible citizenship by emphasising self-advancement, training and career-orientated education. It suggested rehabilitation for intimidators and politically-motivated delinquents and the establishment of a youth trust to train youth leaders and to which the government and private sector could contribute (163).

A month later the South African Association of Youth Clubs was founded and funded by Anglo-American and De Beers Chairman's Fund. The director of the Association said black youth leadership had been orientated towards protest, boycott and anarchic unrest, but now had to assume more positive and constructive direction so black youth could 'assume real responsibility in a more just and free South Africa' (164).

At the same time, the Detainees Parents Support Committee and the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) alleged that reabsorption camps had been set up in which young detainees were pressurised to become police informers. The PFP maintained the centres were organised by JMCs since curricula organisers had military links (165).

Several clean-up campaigns were conducted by the council, working with a white christian group, Friends of Alex, and using equipment loaned by private companies. These campaigns were directed particularly at the youth, said Burger. (166).

At a DET soil-turning ceremony attended by parents, children, school staff and ATC members, the Director General urged the children to

'make a commitment to study very hard and honour our parents
- we will love and protect our schools' (167).

'Alex and Friends' comic strips, coinciding with pupils' return to school in January 1987, ran along the themes of 'education is the salvation of the nation' and 'the future belongs to the educated'.

Metropolitan Digest offered more openly political comment than did Newsletter. It promised RSCs would help solve local government problems, advocated change through negotiation rather than violence, and portrayed councillors as sympathetic,

community conscious people, with a ready ear for their constituents. It even went into ideological battle with the Freedom Charter, arguing:

'On the surface the Freedom Charter is a democratic document. However, the constitution of the Soviet Union also appears to be democratic. In practice of course, the Soviet Union is a totalitarian dictatorship of the Communist Party' (168).

It maintained the Charter was 'outdated' since many of its demands had already been met by the current government, namely, abolition of pass laws, freedom to form trade unions and participation in local and provincial administration with national involvement being envisaged through the National Statutory Council. (The National Council was appointed to investigate a new constitutional dispensation allowing blacks to participate in national government).

5.4 Preparing for 1988 Local Government Elections

In July 1987 the administrator boasted that no unrest existed in Alexandra due to the upgrading programme, the state of emergency, which had 'definitely managed to create a climate of peace and security', and improvement in employment opportunities (169).

He maintained the mini-JMC was in constant contact with business, education, religious, and political groups and former community councillors. Mike Beea, Alexandra Civic Association president, corroborated this. He had met with Burger and had undertaken to help screen squatters for the transit camp. Linda Twala, a former AYCO benefactor, had with the help of youth clubs, set up food kitchens for the aged. This was applauded by Newsletter (170).

Burger explained:

'I'm not trying to influence the blacks to become government supporters. What we are trying to do is create a climate for evolution as opposed to revolution' (171).

The state of emergency appears to have created 'a climate of evolution' and restored the conditions for reform. Local political movements, such as the Alexandra Action Committee, the Alexandra Youth Congress and the Alexandra Residents' Association are inactive or have possibly gone underground. The Alexandra Civic Association has reconstituted itself, but in a potentially compromising framework.

The Urban Renewal Proposal embraces new urbanisation policy and security strategy which counteract the urban crisis in complementary ways. Urbanisation strategy is attempting to control and channel settlement and employment to rationalise

regional labour markets. It uses subtle fiscal controls and non-discriminatory legislation to direct workseekers and industry to the metropolitan peripheries.

The housing shortage is being dealt with by making homeownership more accessible, lowering housing standards and shifting the burden for provision and upgrading from the state to the individual property owner and the private sector.

Local government is being set on sounder financial foundations: homeownership and the expansion of small business in townships will offer a future tax base; RSCs provide infrastructure funded by business levies. RSCs allow black and white local authorities to co-operate in multi-racial metropolitan government. This was matched at the national level by the creation of the National Statutory Council. However, the Council was rejected by the United Democratic Front as yet another 'farce' 'designed to prolong white minority domination' (172)

JMCs have created an efficient bureaucracy, wholly within the reformist camp. It is extremely sensitive to the political mood of local communities, and able to respond immediately with upgrading and education programmes complementing urbanisation strategy.

The Alexandra JMC obviously feels sufficiently confident of its strategy's success to broach the possibility of local government elections. In December 1987, Newsletter introduced the issue of 1988 municipal elections:

'To make a community a happy one, individuals ought to vote so that the best leader can be elected. Through this leader you will gain a voice in the community. ...Every individual cannot speak for himself and air their views independently - chaos will result. Therefore, there is a town council and your councillor (sic) represents you on the town council and puts forward your point-of-view. ...The power of these councils are not of less importance or second best. No, these councils have equal rights and help develop your own community equally' (173).

Beeba, a former town council critic also seems lifted by a new optimism. He said:

'Municipal elections in 1988 will need people to represent the community. We need to govern ourselves else we will always be under the state of emergency. We can challenge the government from the local authorities and if they don't listen to us, we will resign. I won't stand, but maybe some civic members will' (174).

Activists do not seem particularly hopeful that widespread protests similar to 1984 would be possible. Heavy police presence and fear of informers prohibit attempts to organise politically. A former AYCO member said:

'If you want to organise you want to face the government alone. People are too scared and the police use unemployed people as informers' (175).

It is difficult to gauge how residents perceive the new developments. A long history of suspicion and distrust cannot be wiped out with a few months of development due decades ago. Urban renewal can be interpreted as a government 'gift' to townships, as easily as a 'peoples victory' wrested from the state after the battles of 1986. Local government may be put on a sounder fiscal and administrative footing, but when rates and levies increase or residents are told to 'buy or get out', then the sturdiness of the state's new strategy will become evident.

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6. Ibid, p 86
7. Ibid, p 90
8. Ibid, p 89
9. Urbanisation Strategy, para 5.20
10. Ibid, para 1.19
11. Ibid, para 9.152
12. Ibid, para 5.29-5.35
13. Ibid, para 9.2
14. Ibid, para 9.52
15. Ibid, para 9.140.3-9.140.5
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17. Hindson, D: op cit, p 92

18. Urbanisation Strategy, para 5.52
19. Ibid, para 8.1
20. Ibid, para 8.3
21. Ibid, para 8.2
22. Report of the Committee to Investigate Private Sector Involvement in resolving the Housing Backlog in Soweto, (Chairman: AFV Viljoen), RP 14/1982 (hereafter referred to as the Viljoen Commission)
23. Urbanisation Strategy, para 8.13.1
24. Ibid, para 8.36.4
25. Ibid, para 8.36.7
26. Ibid, para 8.13.2
27. Ibid, para 8.22
28. Ibid, para 8.37.3
29. Ibid, para 8.24.5
30. Ibid, para 8.6
31. Ibid, para 8.37.5; 8.61.2; 8.61.5
32. Ibid, para 8.61.1
33. Ibid, para 8.16
34. Ibid, para 10.44; 10.47
35. Ibid, para 10.53-4
36. Ibid, para 10.57
37. Ibid, para 10.13
38. Ibid, para 10.14; 10.28
39. Ibid, para 10.15
40. Ibid, para 10.24; 10.25
41. Ibid, para 10.75

42. section 12 (5) of RSC Act, 109 of 1985
43. RSCs may undertake the following functions according to schedule 2 of the RSC Act: bulk water, bulk electricity, sewerage, land usage, drainage, passenger transport, traffic, abattoirs, produce markets, refuse dumps, cemeteries, ambulance, fire brigade, health services, airports, civil defence, libraries, museums, recreation, conservation, tourism, maintenance, other regional functions
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46. Hindson, D: op cit, p 90
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49. Star, 1987.04.03
50. Star, 1987.07.21; 1987.07.30; 1987.11.24
51. Weekly Mail, 1987.07.10; Star, 1987.10.30
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53. Star, 1987.08.05
54. Star, 1987.11.05; City Press, 1987.11.08

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56. Star, 1987.05.04
57. City Press, 1987.04.19
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60. Ibid, p 3
61. Star, 1987.09.16
62. Interview with Dr Mortimer, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Central Witwatersrand RSC, 1987.12.15
63. Interview with Dr Mortimer, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Central Witwatersrand RSC, 1987.12.15
64. --- 'Interview: Jannie Geldenhuys', Leadership SA, vol 5 no 1, 1986, p 28
65. Star, 1986.11.01
66. Star, 1987.03.17
67. Star, 1987.03.16
68. Citizen, 1986.09.19
69. Star, 1986.08.07
70. City Press, 1986.11.23
71. Citizen, 1987.02.15; Sowetan, 1987.02.17; Sowetan, 1987.03.13
72. Citizen, 1986.12.17
73. Star, 1987.02.12
74. Citizen, 1987.03.17
75. The following treason, public violence and criminal trials of Alexandra residents were reported in 1987. The charges

arose from acts allegedly committed during early 1986.

Moses Mayekiso (38), Paul Tshabala (38), Richard Mdakane (29), Obed Bapela (28), Mzwanele Mayekiso (22) pleaded not guilty to treason, alternatively subversion and alternatively sedition. The accused, arrested in June 1986, were allegedly executive members of the Alexandra Action Committee which allegedly encouraged residents to establish yard, street and block committees and ran people's courts. The Attorney-General prohibited bail in terms of the Internal Security Act. A similar appeal to the Natal Full Bench met with favourable response but was overturned by the Transvaal bench (Star, 1987.05.07). The trial began in September 1987 and court will reconvene in February 1988.

Ashwell Mxolisa Zwane (20), Piet Mongano (28), Albert Ali Sebola (21), Vusi Ngwenya (20), Andrew Mafutha (22), David Mafutha (19), Arthur Selby Vilikazi (24) and a minor (17) were accused of sedition, alternatively subversion related to running people's courts, passing judgement and sentence. The state alleged that the accused conspired with the ANC, UDF, AYCO, and COSATU to render Alexandra ungovernable, and to govern areas themselves or in association with others, to establish organs of peoples power and exercise control of structures of authority on a

national or local basis, and to mobilise Alexandra residents to achieve the same. The trial began in May 1987 (Star, 1987.05.19).

Mike Beea, chairman of the Alexandra Civic Association, was charged with sedition but allowed out on bail of R2 000 (Star, 1987.03.24). The charges were dropped in mid-1987.

Ephraim Papi Matsunyane (18) was arrested on 14 July 1986 while allegedly intimidating residents on their way to work during a stayaway. He was charged with intimidation and making subversive statements by inciting a constable to boycott (Star, 1987.06.16).

John Sipho Zwane (18), Abednigo Twala (19) and three teenage boys were convicted of arson and burning a woman to death. They thought she was a witch (Star, 1987.10.29).

A 15-year-old boy was acquitted in March 1987 of being one of a crowd which stoned and burnt a policeman on 15 February 1986 (Citizen, 1987.03.05). The Judge found him not guilty because contradictions between the accused's statement and evidence by witnesses could not prove his guilt beyond all reasonable doubt (Star, 1987.03.05).

Paulina Joyce Monare (24) pleaded not guilty to intimidation, alternatively making a subversive statement. She testified she had stones in her hands when she told a policeman to stay away from work on 14 July 1986. She said she had attended a meeting the night before where comrades pressured her to publicise the boycott because she was the sister-in-law of a policeman (Star, 1987.08.19).

A youth (16) was sentenced in August in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court to six strokes with a light cane for threatening a man with a knife and robbing him of his vehicle. A three-year jail sentence was suspended for five years. Magistrate JS van Wyk said 80 similar incidents had occurred in a short period by boys of the same age. In evidence, Moses Hlabiso said three youths had stopped him and asked him to drive them to a funeral in Third Avenue, and asked him to drive them to a funeral in Third Avenue, Alexandra. He agreed if they promised not to damage the vehicle or injure him. In Second Avenue the youth pulled a knife, told him to get out the car and had driven off. (Star, 1986.08.07).

Solomon Ndlovu (20) was arrested on 7 August 1986 allegedly in possession of a petrol bomb. He pleaded not guilty to a charge of public violence (Star, 1986.08.28).

Mark Ndarana (40), Jacob Tladi (22), Beki Shezi (19), Audrey Skosana (18) and four minors aged between 15 and 16 pleaded not guilty in the Randburg magistrate's court to charges of public violence and murder of a policeman in January 1986. Jeanette Nkoane (32) failed to appear. A warrant had been issued for her arrest at a previous hearing (Star, 1986.08.28)

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80. Ibid, p 9; see also Grundy, KW: op cit, pp 49
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83. Star, 1987.03.17
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89. Hansard Questions and Answers, 1986.03.11, col 461
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96. Maj Gen AJ Wandrag: 'Political Unrest: A Police View',
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101. Star, 1987.03.16
102. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, 1986, p 11
103. Ibid, p 10
104. Ibid, p 29
105. Ibid, p 1
106. Ibid, p 5
107. Ibid, p 5
108. Ibid, p 6
109. Ibid, p 7
110. Ibid, p 7
111. Star, 1987.03.16
112. Star, 1987.05.14
113. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, p 25
114. Star, 1987.05.21
115. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, p 12
116. Ibid, p 29

117. Interview with Mr Halbig, Chief Engineer, Alexandra Town,
1988.01.18
118. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, p 1
119. Ibid, p 26
120. Ibid, p 8
121. Ibid, p 10
122. Interview with Mrs Genis, Alexandra Town Council,
1988.02.05
123. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, p 26
124. Weekly Mail, 1987.07.31
125. New Nation, 1987.10.01
126. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 10,
August/September 1987, p 1
127. Alexandra Urban Renewal Proposal, p 8
128. Ibid, p 19
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130. Ibid, p 8
131. Ibid, p 11
132. Ibid, pp 32-33
133. Ibid, Table 20 'Cost Analysis'
134. Citizen, 1987.03.09
135. Star, 1987.09.16
136. Interview with Mr Butler, Alexandra Town Council,
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137. Interview with Warren Dale, vice-president of Sandton
Chamber of Commerce 1987, president 1988, 1987.12.08
138. Interview with Mr Butler, Alexandra City Council official,

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139. Interview with Warren Dale, vice-president of Sandton Chamber of Commerce 1987, president 1988, 1987.12.08
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142. Star, 1987.03.17
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144. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 4, November 1986, p 1
145. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 3, October 1986, p 1
146. Sowetan, 1986.09.21
147. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 2, September 1986, p 2
148. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 4, November 1986, p 1
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153. Star, 1987.04.18

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156. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 4, November 1986, p 4
157. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 5, December 1986, p 2
158. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 8, April/May 1987, p 2
159. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 9, June/July 1987, p 2
160. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 3, October 1986, p 1
161. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 9, June/July 1987, p 4
162. Star, 1987.03.24
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154. Interview with Warren Dale, vice-president of Sandton Chamber of Commerce 1987, president 1988, 1987.12.08
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171. Weekly Mail, 1987.07.31
172. Star, 1987.09.18
173. Newsletter to the People of Alexandra, No 13, December 1987, p 2
174. Interview with Mike Beea, chairman of Alexandra Civic Association, 1988.01.27
175. Interview with AYCO member, 1987.11.15

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Alexandra's turbulent history between 1979 and 1987 has been shaped by the interaction between state reform policy and popular reaction. Those who dismiss reform as a sham which hides an unchanged monolithic apartheid state, fail to appreciate the very real shifts in state analysis and policy which have had material and tangible effects on moulding Alexandra and generating resistance.

In the 1960s the government decided to raze freehold Alexandra and build a hostel city. This decision epitomised territorial and political apartheid policy. Black workers were deemed temporary migrants to white areas. The hostel plan faltered during the 1970s. The financial and political problems that hindered its implementation were manifestations of a broader urban crisis.

This crisis was characterised by the inefficiency of influx control; an urban housing shortage; an administration board fiscal crisis and lack of political legitimacy for local government and administration. Moderate appeals to government ministers to grant the township a reprieve, were overshadowed by the more significant political protest of 1976. Grievances which emerged during the 1976 uprising focused on dimensions of the urban crisis.

Government reformers' solutions to the crisis were first shaped by recommendations arising from the Riekert Commission. Riekert recognised the existence of permanent urban dwellers. But his proposals were still framed by the logic of territorial and political apartheid: the separation and independent viability of white South Africa and the bantustans; and a proletarianised, but commuter workforce.

Riekert suggested rationalising labour supply by creating distinctions between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Insiders' privileges would consist of relaxed influx controls, access to urban homeownership, and participation in local government.

Riekert proposed shifting responsibility for housing from the state to employers and individuals in line with free enterprise philosophy. He also stressed the necessity for creating a middle-class elite which he hoped would act as a political stabiliser.

Local government was endowed with broader responsibilities by the Black Local Authorities Act of 1983, but also had to carry a greater financial burden. Local authorities' main source of revenue was residents' rent and service tariffs. Councils' attempts to increase rent met with fierce rejection by largely working-class township populations reeling under the effects of a recession.

This period in Alexandra starts with the government's decision in 1979 to acquit the township of its hostel sentence. Alexandra was rezoned for family residence and 99-year leasehold was extended across the township. The Alexandra Liason Committee was officially recognised and in 1983 became one of the first black local authorities. Government planners devised an upgrading plan to demolish and rebuild the township as a model insiders' residential town. However, this dream was never realised.

The Alexandra Liason Committee, and later the Town Council, gradually lost credibility among township residents. The council was forced to increase rents dramatically in 1984.

An explicitly working-class orientated civic organisation, the Alexandra Residents Association (ARA), contested the increases and criticised the redevelopment of Alexandra. 'Alexandra is meant for the rich', it argued, and workers who could not afford to buy their houses or to pay exorbitant rents would be excluded from the township. ARA was willing to negotiate with the council though it felt the council did not represent the community. ARA's protests were ignored by the council. Though the council did eventually reduce rent, the tariffs remained beyond the means of most residents.

Signs of more radical organisation in Alexandra began to appear in 1985, corresponding to national political developments. By 1986, despite a state of emergency, the face of popular politics

in Alexandra had been transformed. The prominent political actors were the Alexandra Youth Congress (AYCO) and the Alexandra Action Committee (AAC). Political organisation was spearheaded by youth who tried to link local grievances to national political programmes and demands. They totally rejected the council system and pressured councillors to resign. Councillors, administration board employees and municipal police fled the township. A rent boycott deprived the council of its only source of revenue. Councillors resigned in early 1986.

AAC espoused radical self-government. To this end, it set up street committees and people's courts. These 'organs of people's power' were based on the precepts of mass radical democracy and participation as a form of political education. Declaration of another state of emergency in June 1986 prevented people's power from consolidating its organisational base.

People's power was derived from a notion of dual power. But while local government appeared to have collapsed, the central state was still intact. Once the SADF and SAP had suppressed open resistance, the state could begin to implement a new reform initiative. This has embraced a new urbanisation policy which complements security strategy. It is implemented by a military and security administrative structure, the National Security Management System (NSMS) which links into national, regional and local administration. The local units of the NSMS are Joint Management Centres.

New urbanisation strategy has relinquished the principle of territorial segregation. It recognises that bantustans and white South Africa are functionally-integrated regional units. It wants to rationalise regional labour markets and has thus abolished influx control and the coercive, politically-unpalatable pass system. Fiscal incentives and racially non-discriminatory legislation are being used to direct population settlement and employment. Different housing and infrastructure standards within metropolitan townships and between metropolitan and periphery townships is allowing for a more subtly differentiated urban population, than Riekert had envisaged. The new strategy also makes homeownership more broadly accessible, than Riekert allowed. Both Riekert and the new urbanisation strategy stress that the responsibility for housing now lies primarily with the individual and then the private sector, and no longer with the state.

To solve black local government's political and fiscal crisis, local authorities have been drawn into multi-racial metropolitan government, the Regional Services Councils (RSCs). RSCs draw on a new source of revenue: taxes on businesses' turnover and wages and salaries. This is being used primarily to install and improve infrastructure in black urban areas. RSCs are highly centralised to insulate the state from the effects of popular protest.

JMCs are able to mesh urbanisation and security strategy. In Alexandra, an administrator was appointed following the collapse of the council in 1986 and a mini-JMC was established. JMCs are a new, efficient, streamlined bureaucracy which links into state administrative structures at local, regional and national levels. It is able to co-ordinate and focus activities of different government departments on priority projects and is extremely sensitive to detecting and resolving township grievances and preempting political organisation.

Once open resistance had been crushed, the JMC set about winning the trust of inhabitants, repairing the image of the council and the police and satisfying residents' material grievances. A new upgrading plan was presented. It follows the guidelines of the new urbanisation strategy. Alexandra, as a metropolitan township, will require comprehensive infrastructure, wide homeownership possibilities, a range of housing units to satisfy different income brackets and formal and informal employment opportunities.

The state hopes that taxes on property and township businesses will eventually provide a viable financial base for local authorities. The load of infrastructure and bulk service provision will be carried by RSCs. By December 1987, the JMC felt sufficiently confident of the success of its programme to begin to muster support for municipal elections in 1988.

Suppression of open resistance and the difficulties of organising in such an atmosphere pose new problems for township radical political actors. Firstly, tangible benefits arising from the upgrading programme may well win over more conservative residents and those who, while they may have sympathised with the demands of AYCO and AAC, were dismayed by the violence it provoked in the township and from the state.

Secondly, if a repressive political climate continues, activists may well have to reconsider their principled boycott of local government structures. It may be possible for an organisation to bargain from within the state, and create a legal space for political mobilisation. Union experience since 1979, when unions were faced with state registration, has shown that incorporation into state structures does not necessarily entail compromise, if the union structure remains democratic. Of course the state will also have to be prepared to compromise by meeting some popular demands, for example, releasing detainees and withdrawing troops from the township.

Speculation about these issues, however, lies beyond the realm of this study. How they are resolved will be determined in future political debate and activity.

APPENDIX 1: PAMPHLETS: FROM RENT BOYCOTT TO PEOPLE'S POWER

The Alexandra Residents' Association (ARA) and the Alexandra Action Committee (AAC) approached political questions from different perspectives. ARA argued that the redevelopment of Alexandra was in the interest of the middle-class and not the working class. AAC tried to link local grievances to national political demands.

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ALEXANDRA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN NO 2
February 1985

Alexandra Residents Association believes that everyone should have housing, at rents they can afford.

The Alexandra Council is building houses. We urge residents to move into these houses.

But the rent must be reasonable.

If a house is built and offered at R140 or R200, we say: NO. THIS IS NOT PROVIDING HOUSES, IT IS FORCING LOW PAID WORKERS OUT OF ALEX.

To charge high rent is to select the wealthy for these houses. How can that solve the housing problem of people who have low incomes?

HOUSING MUST BE PROVIDED. RENT SHOULD BE WHAT THE FAMILY CAN AFFORD.

It is not the fault of a worker if he is retrenched, or if he gets a low wage. That is the fault of apartheid and the capitalist system. Such a man still needs a house. Why cannot the Councillors see the point? Because they support apartheid and the capitalist system.

A R A insists that rent should be according to income. If a family gets R100 per month income, they should not pay more than R10 for rent. If a family gets eight hundred Rands per month, they should pay R80 rent.

If it were like this, the government would force bosses to pay higher wages. Why would they do so? Because the government is the landlord, they own these houses in worker locations, and they would want to get higher rents to pay for the building and servicing of these houses.

WORKERS, TAKE POSSESSION OF NEW HOUSES HOWEVER YOU CAN, AND PAY THE RENT YOU CAN AFFORD. DO NOT AGREE TO REMAIN IN SHACKS OR OLD ROOMS. AND DO NOT AGREE TO HIGH RENTS THAT FORCE YOU TO STARVE OR STEAL.

PHASE 2 HOUSES

88 houses have been built in Phase 2, more or less between Joe's butcher shop and Buti's church.

Who will get into these houses?

Alex Council wants to charge rents of R124 and R139. They say these are low rents for the houses. But residents who earn very little, find the rents very high, and cannot afford them.

A long time ago, people who were moved into shacks and buses were promised houses. So these houses should be for them. But now that promise is only kept for those who can pay high rent. It seems the new houses are for the middle class, or for high paid workers. It is the same story as the flats. No room for people who have money problems; they will soon find that they cannot stay in the township.

A R A condemns this policy of the Alex Council. It is apartheid, not of colour but of class. The working class is denied housing, the middle class is provided. This forces low paid workers, or the unemployed, out of Alex. Separate development of the rich and the poor.

Working class residents of Lekoa have refused to pay rent until it is reduced, and until the authorities listen to the wishes of the elected residents Association.

Residents in Northern Transvaal refused to pay higher rents, and the local Court has ordered them to pay whatever they can afford. Many of them say they cannot afford rent at all, and so they do not pay.

When authorities push workers too far, workers simply make up their own mind about things. It is quite possible that in Alex, too, workers will no longer accept the way the Council arranges things. Instead of allowing the middle class residents to take flats and houses, workers will simply take them for themselves as soon as they are built.

After all, why should a family accept zink sheds, when houses are available?

WHY DO COUNCILS INCREASE RENT?

The authorities say that high rents are necessary because building costs are high, and because people must pay for services, like refuse removal, sewerage, roads, light and so on. Workers really could pay for all this, if wages were reasonable. But, wages in South Africa have always been low, because worker housing has always been cheap. So why is it no longer cheap?

It is still possible for the authorities to keep rents low, until bosses begin to pay higher wages. The Admin Boards have a lot of money saved; and there is still a lot coming in from liquor sales. And the government could help subsidise. Why don't they? - since the rent rises are causing so much trouble in every township in the country?

The government is using high rents as a method to get a different kind of worker population settled in the urban locations. They want active, employed and reasonably skilled workers, and not too many old people, sick people, cripples, or unemployed.

Also, they want houses full; as this helps solve the housing shortage.

The way to get this is to charge high rent. This forces each family to re-arrange itself. The house must now get paying lodgers; and so granny must go back to Winterveld, Booykie must go to school in Brits with his cousins; aunt Emmy who is a cripple must stay with family in Ramotse. The baby is put into a creche and Mama goes to look for a job, even though for a very small wage. Lodgers now occupy most of the space. The family is split, but at least the rent can be paid, and the house is not lost.

Thus the urban locations become full of active workers; and those people who were not productive are sent to some homeland, where the SA government doesn't have to spend money on looking after them, or even on their funeral!

This saves the state a lot of money. It also makes housing difficult for workers, so that they fear to lose it, even though it is expensive. Thus the government hopes to tame the working class, by making them insecure with their accommodation - either fearful of losing it, or desperate to get it. This is therefore a method of controlling the worker population.

On the other hand, it makes workers very angry, so that they become fed up with the rulers, and after a while refuse even to obey the law. That is when riots and revolution begin.

WHO WORKS IN THE DARK

Secret rule leads to corruption and oppression. The public should always know what rulers are doing, what they are planning and what they are thinking.

Therefore members of A.R.A. attended the December meeting of the Alexandra Council, to listen to their discussion: and what we heard was quite surprising:

- We heard that there was a plan to demolish imikhukhu
- And we heard that there was a plan to establish a riot squad in the township

When we began to inform people about these things, in the Bulletin and other places, the Council took fright. It seems they never expected that anyone would understand their plans until it was too late! They got in a panic and began harassing people, asking WHO SMUGGLED OUT THE COUNCIL MINUTES.

They forgot that the meeting was open to the public, and we could hear everything that was discussed.

Since then, it has become really hard to get information from Council meetings. The important discussions and decisions are now hidden from the public. The Council makes it hard for the public to discover anything except simple and useless matters - like the cost of printing Christmas cards.

To go to a Council meeting really would make you laugh. Most of the Councillors seem afraid to open their mouths, so much do they fear Buti and Makubiri, the indunas in the Council. Only Molepo sometimes says something interesting, mainly because he doesn't realise that it might get the Council into trouble; and then everybody looks embarrassed and they try to shut him up.

Discussions in the Council sound like this:

- Magerman - Your Honour, consider pages 56 to 73.
- Buti - Any comments? Then will Councillor Khoza recommend.
- Khoza - I move adoption of this recommendation.
- (Everyone then votes YES, and the matter is settled.)

What does it mean? Possibly pages 56 to 73 say that twenty thousand residents of Alexandra will have to be moved to Ekangala. And that is why the Council prefers to talk numbers and not sense.

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