SQUATTERS - O.F.S.

1978 - 1990
Illegal squatters held in SA jail

BY PATRICK LAURENCE
Deputy Political Editor
BASOTHO prisoners ar-
rested by Tswana police
and sentenced by a Bophu-
thaTswana court are being
held in a South African
jail, it was learnt yester-
day.

The prisoners are among
the 300 people arrested
last week on charges of
illegal squatting in the
Tswana enclave of Thaba
Nchu in the Free State.

The BophuthaTswana
magistrate in Thaba Nchu,
Mr L M Molure, said yes-
terday they were charged
under Proclamation R188
of 1966, an anti-squatters
regulation.

They were fined R80, or
80 days, R40 or 40 days
of which was suspended.

Mr Molure said:

"Those who could\n't pay the fine are being held in
Bloemfontein prison be-
cause we have a problem
accommodating them,"

he said.

The independence agree-
ment between the prison
authorities of South Africa
and BophuthaTswana of
November 15, 1977, pro-
vides for the "admission
and detention in the Re-
public of South Africa of
any person sentenced by
a competent court of Bop-
huthaTswana."

In terms of another
agreement of the same
date, South Africa under-
took to assist the Bophu-
thaTswana Government in
the settlement of people
"squatting in the Winter-
veld and Thaba Nchu
areas."

The promised assistance
includes help in the "ex-
propriation" of landowners
who are not Tswana citi-
sens and who refused to
co-operate in resettlement
projects and who do not
wish to remain in Bophu-
thaTswana.

Mr Kenneth Mopeli,
Chief Minister of the, Ba-
sotho homeland of Qwaqwa,
said yesterday: "Our in-
formation from the South
Sotho Committee in Thaba
Nchu is that 500 school pup-
ils were arrested with
the 300 adults."

The police denied arrest-
ing any pupils, and none
were charged, Chief Mopeli
said.

Thaba Nchu, an isolated
piece of BophuthaTswana
in the Free State, has long
been a source of tension
between the closely related
Batsewan and Basotho peo-
ple.

Officially part of Bophu-
thaTswana, it is in a pre-
dominantly Basotho area.
The local Basotho commit-
tee has repeatedly claimed
Basotho outnumber the
Tswana.

"And the BophuthaTwa-
na Government has indi-
ated that Basotho numbers
have been augmented
over the years by the
illegal influx of squatters
into the area."

In another development
yesterday, Chief Mopeli
accused the Tswana au-
thorities of attempting to
force Basotho children to
learn through the medium
of Tswana and of violating
the spirit of an agreement
reached between the Qwa-
qwa and BophuthaTswana
Government.

The agreement was that
there would be mother-
tongue instruction in Tha-
ba Nchu until more land
was made available, adjus-
tant to Qwaqwa for the
settlement of Basotho from
Thaba Nchu and Mabolo-
ka, near Brits.
Paul Andrew is with the Urban Problems Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

Pen Kotze, the new Minister of Community Development, began his term of office with utterances which reflected a desire to investigate the possibility of utilising self-help building strategies in the "grey" areas of the country. This is an indication that a form of commonsense may be taking the place of a housing policy fraught with misconception.

Housing policy in SA, to meet development requirements which maximise and improve all individual and community resources (human and financial), need to meet a number of criteria. The main are affordability, user control, and efficient and effective supply. The most significant precondition is a secure form of tenure.

The housing manager of the administration board in Kroonstad is running a most important project demonstrating how it is possible to use commonsense to solve local low-income housing problems.

About 700 serviced plots were offered to people who wanted to build their own houses. Previously the Department of Community Development had built 200 standard houses costing R5 000 each, with the lowest repayment for leasing a house at R24 per month for a one-bedroomed house. Rents for two and three-bedroomed houses were over R30. People thought that this was too much to pay for a rented house and asked to be able to build their own houses. They paid R14 for water, sewage, unpaved roads, street lighting, refuse removal and other charges. Families moved on to sites, erected temporary shack themselves and started saving and stockpiling materials, making blocks, casting foundations and so on.

The combined family incomes of the first 10 participants were all below R150, except for one of R248. Apart from the insistence on standards of building materials (local bricks and concrete blocks), the housing manager's control function is minimal. Most of his function in relation to the scheme is an enabling one: raising bonds, standing surety for material loans, encouraging local brick and blockmaking, etc.

As a result of minimum authority interference, the actual individual and community "control" rub-off is maximised: individuals design their own houses, and have them drawn up for submission to the board. Local draughtsmen somehow emerge to fulfil the function. News gets around about the best local waste materials to use for brickmaking and these are stockpiled by individual families. Brickmaking is done by families, friends and relatives. Local brickmaking is permitted near the site. Savings are all put into house-making and a valuable saving habit is started.

The board supervises the building on the weekends when the activity is intense. Families are encouraged to move into the completed part of the house and demolish the shacks as soon as possible. There is a natural tendency to remove the shacks as soon as they can move out of them and identify with the new image.

The result of these simple permitting and enabling conditions is feverish house-building, with almost all the houses started two years previously now complete or nearing completion. And all this achieved by the black population of an average Free State plateland town.

Despite the evidence of Kroonstad, the secretary of Community Development, in his latest annual reports, says that site-and-service cannot work and he goes to some length to "prove" it. In doing so he confuses the issue of shelter and tenure.

"As it is expected of the site-and-service dweller to erect his own dwelling... some form of ownership of the property will have to be granted to him. Because it is the policy not to subsidise the purchaser of a property, but only a lease, the loan for the purchaser of the stand is granted at an economic rate of interest. This means that the purchaser of a stand at a price of R1 500 would have to pay R28.50 per month on interest and redemption, whereas the expenditure of a sub-econonic tenant on interest and redemption in respect of the stand, would only amount to R6.51 per month."

The obvious question is: why not change "the policy"? Then we could come closer to allowing "the individual a personal responsibility as regards his housing. The help provided by government and employers must be aimed at activating people and motivating them to do more for themselves" (Prime Minister, October 19 1979) — as in Kroonstad.

In applying some of these notions, in many instances also held by the PM, we could build a society based on the "self-determination" aspects of a private enterprise economy — giving the majority of citizens an actual role in determining their housing conditions. This is by nature incremental with people building on as they can afford it; and with State assistance in technical and financial matters.

More citizens would be reached more effectively this way than by building completed accommodation in a manner decided on by the bureaucracy.
‘Houghton’
facilities for
OFS squatters

Political Staff

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. — The Minister of Health, Dr Lapa Munnik, last night claimed health services provided in the Onverwag squatter camp in the Free State were “as good as anything in Houghton.”

Dr Munnik was involved in a row on squattings during the budget debate on the health vote in the Assembly yesterday.

Following interjections by the MP for Houghton, Mrs Helen Suzman, Dr Munnik said he had been to Onverwag — a squatter camp housing about 120,000 people in shanties and tents with pit latrines about 15km from Thaba Nchu on the border of Bophuthatswana.

Dr Munnik said every house at Onverwag had a tap and the camp had a clinic and a health service.

‘As good’

“Is it as good a health service as any you people have in Houghton,” he said.

While Mrs Suzman interjected while Dr Munnik was talking about the Crossroads squatter camp in Cape Town.

He said he had been there and seen the appalling conditions.

“Every time anyone mentions squatter camps the member for Houghton runs to the foreign press.”

Determination

“We will have to tackle squatter camps with determination. We cannot have squatter camps,” Dr Munnik said.

At this point Mr Graham McIntosh, MP for Maritzburg North, interjected: “Then you go and dump them in the homelands.”

Against the background of uproar from the government benches Dr Munnik said he had visited a number of the so-called dumping grounds.

One of these was Sada in the eastern Cape which was called a hell-hole but “now has a number of factories.”

Farm workers

Dr Munnik, who has a farm in the Dordrecht area in the “white” corridor between Ciskei and Transkei, said a number of his farm workers now felt they wanted to go back to the homeland.

Two of them, he said, had already gone back to Sada.

Commenting on Dr Munnik’s remarks outside the house Mrs Suzman said she doubted very much whether the health services at Onverwag would match up to those available in Houghton.

“The only difference is that people in Houghton are there of their own free will and have got jobs to go to so they can earn a livelihood close to where they live.”

“I also doubt whether the pit latrines provided at Onverwag would measure up to the flush toilets inside the Houghton homes,” Mrs Suzman said.
The Minister of Health and Welfare, Dr L. A. P. A. Munnik, left, takes a close look at one of the Silver Salus Awards which he yesterday presented to Mr I. S. W. van der Merwe, centre, and the Rev C. J. April, right, for meritorious service to the community. The awards are awarded to people or bodies in the private sector who have played an exceptional role in the promotion of health in the community. Mr Van der Merwe, a farmer in the Laingsburg district, with his son, played an active role in saving the lives of people who were trapped. He later became chairman of the Rebuilding Committee. Mr April, now a member of the President's Council, was awarded the medal for his work in the coloured community at George where he was instrumental in the erection of a library, two clinics and a civic hall and in various improvements to local living conditions.
Squatter services equal to Houghton's.

"He told me Senator. This town at Cowra was a perfect health service and camp had a double department."

The Minister said every member of the Cowra branch had a good health service. In the debate the Cowra branch had a perfect health service and camp had a double department. According to the Minister, the Cowra branch had a perfect health service and camp had a double department.
New row over Munnik

Political Staff

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. — The claim by the Minister of Health, Dr Lapa Munnik, that health services in the Onverwacht resettlement camp in the Free State are "as good as anything in Houghton" has precipitated a major row.

An outraged Dr Marius Barnard (PPP Parttown) has tabled a series of questions seeking information on conditions at Onverwacht.

A community worker, who has asked not to be named, has painted a drastically different picture of the camp from that offered by Dr Munnik during the budget debate on health vote on Monday.

Dr Munnik claimed that every house at Onverwacht has a tap, and that the camp has a clinic and a health service which is "as good a health service as any of you people have in Houghton".

Dr Barnard said: "Dr Munnik has a very sad record of insensitive statements and this one — comparing health services in Onverwacht and Houghton — must rank as one of the worst."

Shanties

Onverwacht is a resettlement camp about 10km from Thaba Nchu on the South African side of the border with Bophuthatswana. It houses about 120,000 people mainly in tin shanties.

It was established in 1979 to house non-Tswana from neighboring Bophuthatswana. The population has been swollen by workers who have left white farms in the Free State.

A community worker, who has worked at Onverwacht, said the health services at the camp consist of a clinic staffed by 12 nursing sisters and a doctor.

The worker said that while the clinic gave a good service it was quite inadequate to serve 120,000 people.

Taps

He said that there was a tap "about every 100 metres or every ten houses".

Under normal conditions this did not lead to undue congestion but in November/December last year when there was a water shortage, there was serious congestion at the water points.

He said work had begun on a new section at Onverwacht where it appeared each unit would have running water and water-borne sewerage although as yet no units had been completed.

He said there were about 10,000 stands in the main section of which about 600 were brick-and-mortar dwellings, about 80 tents and the vast majority tin shanties.

There was no water-borne sewerage and there were bucket latrines which were supposed to be emptied twice a week. Often, however, the cart came round only once a week and "things got quite unpleasant."

CAPE TOWN 

V KAAPSTAD

Examiner's Initials: Voorletters van Eksexaminator:

CAPE TOWN 

N KAAPSTAD

In the heading on the Examination Paper:

lumber van hierdie boek

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Eksamenantwoorde mag net aan éen kant van papier geskryf word. Kindwerk mag op die agterkant van 'n bladsy gedaan word, maar die eksamantor vir eksamendoeleindes alleen in aanmerking neem op die voorkant geskryf is.

Kandidate word herinner om houle name op alle blaaie wat 'n antwoord op 'n eksamenvraag verl. te skryf.

Geen kandidaat mag boeke of aantekeninge van ter aard almal by hom in die eksamenruimte hê nie tenby die Registrar moet skriftelike kennisgewing las gegaan het om bepaalde boeke mee te bring.

4. 'n Kandidaat wat probeer om 'n ander kandidaat te help of om hulp van 'n ander kandidaat te verkry, of wat ongeeoorloofde boeke of aantekeninge in sy besit in die eksamenruimte het, sal byna onmiddellik aan diskwalifikasie en suike verdere stappe as wat die Senaat nodig mag ag.

5. Geen eksamenskrifte deur die Universiteit verskat, mag uit die eksamenruimte weggeneem word nie.

6. Geen bladsye mag uit hierdie eksamenskrif geskuro word nie.
Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG — Onverwacht is no Houghton, in spite of claims by the Minister of Health to the contrary.

Dr L A P A Munnik said in Parliament this week that the health service at the Onverwacht resettlement camp in the Free State was as good a health service as any in Houghton.

He further stated that every house at Onverwacht had a water tap.

Dr Marius Barnard, chief opposition spokesman on health, has tabled a series of questions in Parliament on the entire health situation on the area, a resettlement camp 10km from Thaba Nchu in the Free State.

It was established by the government with a massive land purchase in 1979 covering 20,000 ha to house Basotho people who had to be resettled urgently after nearby Raphuthatswana became independent.

200,000 people

Onverwacht housed an estimated 200,000 people, most of them young families with small children, local authorities said yesterday.

The Cape Times correspondent found on comparison between Onverwacht and Houghton, that Dr Munnik's comparison was highly inaccurate.

Onverwacht does not have one water tap for each house, as he stated. It was found that the resettlement area has one water tap for every 50 houses.

Medical services at Onverwacht consist of one clinic, recently completed, which houses one eight-bed maternity section and a facility for 12 emergency treatment beds. One doctor, aided by 11 nurses, sees about 300 patients each day. Four doctors alternate duty at the clinic during the week.

Serious and ill patients were always transferred — with two ambulances — to nearby Thaba Nchu, which had a total of 250 beds in its four hospitals for blacks, said Dr A. H. P. van Denderen, district surgeon of the area.

"We are always very busy here, and of course medical services here are never adequate. I see as many as 300 patients a day with the largest variety of complaints you can imagine," he said.

15 schools

The infrastructure of the town includes one general store, not yet completed, and four large water storage tanks, which serve water taps on an average of one tap per 50 houses, shanties or tents.

The government has built 15 schools. The area is about as large as Houghton, but Onverwacht is very different from Johannesburg's smartest suburb.

The area is to become part of the homeland QwaQwa. A large stadium and a R26-million hospital are planned for an area near the future about 5km down the road towards Blemsfontein. The plans have already been drawn up and the government has budgeted for it.

People in Onverwacht are allowed to build their own houses.

The government, under a pilot project with CSIR, provides a interest-free loan of up to R8,000 for people to do so.

The houses are a very basic design consisting of three room shells with a outside bucket toilet and outside taps. However, the present water taps facilities are inadequate. The taps for every 50 families are about 300 metres apart.

A small stream running through the settlement provides recreation for thousands of the residents when it rains.

The Cape Times correspondent found this week that rain had created puddles in huge potholes all over the township.

The only roads are dirt tracks. Water-filled potholes in the tracks provide mosquitos with breeding ground.

Mothers questioned said that when it rained, their children had to play in the mud which created a health hazard as they became very dirty.

Pneumonia

This problem also causes a high incidence of pneumonia and TB during the rainy season, according to clinic nurses.

However, the biggest headaches facing the 200,000 inhabitants is firewood, or anything else they could use to heat themselves with during the freezing cold of the Free State winters.

There are no trees anywhere within walking distance. The one local shop sells fire wood kindling for 20 cents per bundle of five pieces.

The Onverwachters try to grow vegetables in their front yards, because of the prices demanded at a local shop when they become available.

Five women sell apples and melicles for 20 cents each, in front of the clinic.

The government rents out 600 new brick houses they recently completed in the settlement.

Onverwachters usually build their own shanties. Thousands are scattered throughout the densely-populated valley. For each shanty, the government provides one outdoor toilet with a bucket which is emptied once per week.

"Shanty people" pay R1 per year to the government for this service. When the Cape Times correspondent visited the area, the odours from the toilets permeated the entire area.
MORE THAN 1 900 people have died so far at the squatters’ camp of Onverwacht, near Thaba-Nchu in the Orange Free State.

The camp, established in June 1979 to accommodate people who did not want to belong to Bophuthatswana after the homeland had opted for independence, returned to the public spotlight last week after a claim in Parliament by the Minister of Health, Dr. Lapa Munnik, that health service at Onverwacht was as good as in Houghton, the prestigious Johannesburg suburb.

"It has as good a health service as any of you people have in Houghton," the Minister told Mrs Helen Suzman, MP (PFP).

During a two-day visit, reporters found that 1 949 people had died at Onverwacht since the camp was established, 1 025 of them children. Most of the dead children were under the age of three.

By Thursday last week, 11 more people had died.

Some 527 people died of a typhoid epidemic in the camp’s first year of existence.

The greatest killer diseases at Onverwacht now are gastro-enteritis, kwashiorkor and pneumonia. Infectious diseases like measles are also prevalent.

A new clinic has been built, but a nursing sister said that the staff of 12 was not coping.

Onverwacht has an estimated population of 130 000 and more than 300 patients are treated at the clinic every day. It does not provide a 24-hour service and is closed over week-ends.
GOVERNMENT's policies of separate development and regional services councils (RSCs) could create a tangled web of overlapping authorities in the Greater Bloemfontein area.

Botshabelo/Overwacht, the vast squatter settlement situated 60km outside Bloemfontein, has been promised to the QwaQwa government, but it is also scheduled for inclusion in the RSC for Greater Bloemfontein.

It has a population of more than 250,000, which is expected to reach 450,000 in 20 years' time.

The Bloemfontein City Council, however, is willing to include the "city" under the ambit of the regional services council only if government continues financing infrastructural development.

Facilities in this vast settlement are rudimentary. Only the main road is tarred and the bucket system of sewerage is still used by most of the residents, the majority of whom live in shacks.

Bloemfontein municipality development manager Niels Booyse says: "We are prepared to include Botshabelo, but the government must continue with its investment in infrastructure because it is impossible for the city council to finance this as well as provide services for the other township, Mangaung."

The QwaQwa government does not want to take over Botshabelo unless government upgrades it.

President P W Botha gave a commitment to the QwaQwa government last year that Botshabelo would be incorporated into the homeland.

However, Chief Minister Kenneth Mopeli says the step has been delayed because his government will accept the city once only if its infrastructure has been developed.

He envisages that once part of the homeland, Botshabelo will be politically under the jurisdiction of the QwaQwa government and economically under the QwaQwa Development Corporation, with services being provided by the Greater Bloemfontein RSC.
Walkerville squatters: petition to go to P.W

By Shirley Woodgate, Municipal Reporter

The State President, Mr P.W. Botha, is to be petitioned by the Walkerville "town council" to stop the expansion of the Welkiers Farm squatter camp.

The petition is being circulated by the 10-man Walkerville Local Areas Committee — which is responsible to the Transvaal Board for the Development of Peripheral Areas — to about 3,000 property owners and residents of the greater Walkerville area.

It calls on the State President "in desperation" to arrange for his officials to take immediate action to stop the growth of the camp.

The petition states that it is believed the Regional Directorate of the Department of Community Services in the Transvaal Provincial Administration is already in the process of removing the squatters.

But residents claim the 5,000 squatter population is increasing almost daily, with 180 shacks a month going up. They are not convinced that the area will be cleared or properly developed.

A letter attached to the petition has informed residents that the LAC has attended numerous meetings with authorities about the squatters, including one chaired by the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, Mr Chris Heunis.

A second public meeting, to be addressed by the MP for Overvaal, Mr Chris Ballot, is scheduled for March 19 at 7.30 pm in the Walkerville Showgrounds Hall.
When the Sunday Express arrived at Onverwacht the medical staff was arm ing itself against the predictable outbreaks of pneumonia and bronchitis as the Free State winter approaches.

The nurse said that the health resistance of most Onverwacht children was "very low" — mostly due to malnutrition.

The day we arrived at Onverwacht six children were treated for malnutrition at the clinic.

One was 18-month-old Mavis Mfundo who was suffering from kwashiorkor. Lying limply on a bed in a one-roomed tin shack and in the care of her grandmother, Mavis has been crying for the protein her body craves.

She had all the symptoms of undernourishment: skin peeling around her mouth, swollen eyes, hands and ankles.

Mavis is one of hundreds of Onverwacht children who have to make do with the little food available in their homes. As most of their fathers are either working illegally in Bloemfontein and Welkom or are migrant labourers at the mines, their mothers are left to provide for them.

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"Smart Alec" Munnik

HELEN Simon, PNP spokesman on black affairs, said: "Dr Munnik is, I'm afraid, an inconsiderate smart alec."

"He cannot resist making insensitive remarks such as his favourable comparison of the primitive health conditions at Onverwacht where a sick, poverty-stricken community struggles to exist, with well-endowed Hoogland."

"The comparison is no absurd that it's hardly worth a comment. One can only hope that sooner or later Dr Munnik will realize that his offensive remarks reflect very badly, not only on himself but on his department which cannot dissociate itself from him."

The shortage of food is evident in the increasing number of children suffering from pellagra — vitamin B deficiency — who are fed by the clinic's feeding scheme.

The nurse commented: "We think the problem is far more widespread than we are aware of because most of the deaths are reported to the commissioner."

"We are not given the official infant mortality statistics at the clinic."

A community worker in Thaba 'Nchu said that about three out of five funerals arranged by the Roman Catholic Church are for children.

When the Sunday Express was at Onverwacht on Wednesday funeral arrangements were being made for a four-month-old baby and 17-month-old baby.

Sanitation and the inadequate water supply makes Onverwacht a health inspector's nightmare.

Most of the shack and mudhouses are interspersed with corrugated iron pit-toilets and although officially the toilet buckets should be emptied twice a week residents said that they were being emptied once a week.

A few white-washed matchbox houses lie scattered among the tin shacks.

No official figure on the number of new houses built could be obtained but according to the community worker the Economic Development Corporation had built about 600 homes.

"These are for those who have work seekers' permits and are bought for between R1 300 and R1 400."

"But most Onverwacht residents live in one-roomed tin shacks and there are quite a number of families still living in the tents issued by the Government when they were first moved to Onverwacht four years ago," said the community worker.

Most of the people at Onverwacht were moved from the Kromdraai squatter camp in Thaba 'Nchu after Bophuthatswana independence.

Before independence the "non-Tswana" lived in harmony with the Tswana. But after independence in December 1977 conflicts with the Bophuthatswana citizens became an everyday happening and those at Kromdraai — mostly South Africans — were harrowed by the police.

They were not allowed to work in Bophuthatswana and their children were prevented from attending Bophuthatswana schools.

To keep them out, they were moved to Onverwacht but had to take out Qwa-Qwa citizenship, although the area is not part of the homeland.

Mrs Alice Mashode's case is typical of the many families who have been relocated.

A mother of four, she was dressed in a short yellow dress, torn and stretched through years of trying to keep making it fit despite being made for a teenager.

She took me into her tiny 3m² corrugated iron shack, its sides peppered with newspapers to keep out the dust and draught.

Her husband is a migrant labourer who works in Ben- neman and only sees his family once a month when he brings home a family allowance of R50.

It is a hard life for Mrs Mashode and her family. To buy their meagre groceries she either goes to the supermarket where products are sold at three times the price they are sold at in Thaba 'Nchu or catches a bus to Thaba 'Nchu.

"But there's never enough. I have a baby who is starving. I don't know what to do," she said.
Hundreds of pupils are shut out

HUNDREDS of Free State children were turned away from their schools after an official announcement that their parents had to have lodgers' permits.

A community worker told the Sunday Express that last week — at the beginning of the second term — hundreds of Onverwacht residents queued outside the commissioner's office to obtain lodgers' permits.

"It was one of the most distressing scenes I had seen at Onverwacht," said the community worker. "People had queued for kilometres for about seven days."

School attendance figures dropped dramatically; children whose parents did not have lodgers' permits were not allowed to go to school.

"At the moment there are about 559 children from Std A to Std 5 and 250 pre-school children who are not allowed to attend the primary schools.

"Two Onverwacht women have now tried to start a sort of creche for these children, temporarily using the Catholic Church's hall at Onverwacht."

The dumping ground

The day after Minister of Health Dr. [Name] visited the slums of Munnik town in Limpopo, children were sent to school without shoes and clothes.

There is little else the children can do after they have been sent to school. The only opportunity they have is to return home and attend classes at home. The school is not well equipped, and there is no transport for the children to get to school.

There are no proper hospitals in the area, and children are sent to hospital only when they are critically ill. In many cases, children die on the way to hospital.

The lack of proper healthcare and education is a major problem in the area. The children are forced to drop out of school and work in the fields to support their families.

The situation is exacerbated by the lack of proper housing and sanitation. Many children live in cramped and unsanitary conditions, which increases the risk of diseases.

A report by LIZ VAN DEN NIEUWENDIJK pictures by DENIS FARRELL
The day after Minister of Health Dr Lapa Munnik compared health facilities at the Onverwacht resettlement camp in the Free State to Johannesburg's Houghton, two children died of starvation and nearly 300 people lined up at its clinic waiting for attention by one of its two doctors.

Onverwacht — a conglomeration of despair and squalor — nestles at the foot of a chain of kopjes 15km from Thaba 'Nchu and houses about 160 000 people.

Driving through the dust-bowl they call 'Botshabelo' — a place of refuge — the young and old sit outside their tin shacks and mud-

houses seeking warmth from the wintry Free State sun.

There is little the clinic can do to alleviate the many seasonal health problems encountered by the residents in this resettlement camp established in May 1979.

So far the work of the 12 nurses and the two South African Defence Force doctors has hardly made an impact on the daily lives of those living at Onverwacht.

Recently they had to stand helpless as up to 70 children a day were rushed to Pelonomi hospital in Bloemfontein — 60km from the camp — during a gastro-enteritis epidemic.

A nurse at the clinic said the medical staff could not cope with emergencies.

"If there are any emergencies after 4pm the patients are either taken by our ambulance to the Moroka hospital or they catch one of the buses to Thaba 'Nchu," said the nurse.

Another cause of discontent is the lack of preventive medical care at Onverwacht. Community health, said the nurse, was non-existent because of staff shortages.

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Dusty squalor is the lot of 160 000 people who live in the rural slum of Onverwacht.
(1) (a) What are the latest population figures for Onverwacht and (b) in respect of what date are such figures given?

(2) whether there are any (a) hospitals and (b) community health centres at Onverwacht at present; if so, (i) how many in each case and (ii) how many hospital beds are there; if not, (aa) why not and (bb) what is being done to rectify the situation;

(3) how many, (a) doctors, (b) dentists, (c) community health workers and (d) social welfare workers are there at Onverwacht at present;

(4) how many taps are there in this area;

(5) whether a water-borne sewerage system has been installed at Onverwacht; if not, (a) why not and (b) when will it be installed?

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

(1) (a) 200 000.

(b) 30 June 1983.

(2) (a) No.

(b) The first community health centre is now being planned.

There are three clinics in the area – one of which has 23 beds – as well as one mobile clinic. Tenders are awaited for the erection of the out-patients and casualty sections of the planned hospital.

(3) (a) Two Defence Force doctors, one district surgeon and five doctors in private practice.

(b) One dentist who practises there 3 times a week and one full time dental therapist.

(c) 32 community health workers.

(d) Nine social workers.

(4) 1 312.

(5) Area H has 811 residential sites serviced by a water-borne sewerage system. The other areas are serviced by a bucket system only. A sewerage service for these areas is being planned.
576. Dr. M. S. BARNARD asked the Minister of Co-operation and Development:

(1) (a) When was Onverwacht first set
tied and (b) what was its annual
population growth from the date of its
establishment to the latest specified
date for which figures are available.

(2) how many (a) doctors, (b) community
health workers and (c) social welfare
workers are there at Onverwacht.

(3) (a) how many houses were built in
Onverwacht by (i) his Department
and (ii) private individuals in each
specified year since its establishment
and (b) how many tents are there at
present.

(4) how many taps are there in this area.

(5) whether Onverwacht has a water-
borne sewerage system.

(6) how much was paid out in (a) pen-
sions and (b) disability grants in the
Onverwacht area in each of the latest
specified three financial years for
which figures are available.

The MINISTER OF CO-OPERATION
AND DEVELOPMENT:

(1) (a) June 1979.

(b) December 1979—17 000
December 1980—54 171.

The figures above are in re-
spect of persons settled by the
Department of Co-operation and
Development.

Estimated population 1981
120 000. The said figure includes
approximately 66 000 persons who joined relatives and friends
at Onverwacht.

(2) (a) Two doctors—part time basis.
Three District Surgeons
One Dentist—daily basis.
One Psychiatrist twice a week
basis.

The following persons are also
connected with the local clinic:

Curative Services
2 Senior Sisters
11 Sisters
7 Staff Nurses
2 SANTA Information Officers

Family Planning
1 Senior Sister
4 Sisters
2 Assistant Nurses
3 Female Information Officers
2 Male Information Officers

Health Services
2 Health inspectors

(b) 9

(c) There are four posts for social
workers of which three posts are
vacant.

(3) (a) (i) 53

(ii) 501 white R 800 wood and
iron structures have been
erected pending the provi-
sion of permanent structures.

(b) 61 Tents have been supplied by
the Department of Co-operation
and Development while 28 tents
have been pitched by individuals.

(4) Taps have been provided every 150
metres.

(5) No.

(6) (a) Old age pensions and disability
grants paid:
1979—R184 670
1980—R323 343
1981—R332 806

It is unfortunately not possible
to furnish separate figures in re-
spect of old age pensions and dis-
ability grants.
'New terms for forced removals'

Staff Reporter

THE government had not stopped forced removals but was using terminology like "development" and "upgrading" to justify them, the coordinator of the National Committee Against Removals (NCAR), Ms Laurine Platzy, said yesterday.

Speaking at a press briefing, Ms Platzy said there had been contradictions in government statements since 1982 when Dr Piet Koornhof declared that there would be no more forced removals.

In January this year, however, the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, Mr Chris Houts, had qualified this by saying that the government "has never said there would not be any more forced removals ... what the government said was that there would be no forced removals for political reasons".

Ms Platzy said the government now tried to use planning terminology to justify certain removals, by "blurring the distinction between removals for development and political purposes".

She cited the example of Kleinsooi near Port Elizabeth, where up to 15 000 coloured people and blacks had lived together for the past 60 years.

A Group Areas board hearing was held there last year and indications were that the government intended declaring the area coloured — which would lead to the removal of thousands of blacks who lived there.

"If that's not political, I don't know what it is," said Ms Platzy.

A Western Cape NCAR worker, Ms Julia Shapiro, said many informal "squatter" settlements in the Peninsula and Cape Flats were under threat. It appeared that the government wanted to "clear up" the peri-urban areas before the October municipal elections.

Western Cape squatter communities at Bloembos (Kransfontein), Red Hill (Simon's Town), Fish Hoek and Hout Bay also stood on the brink of removal, she said.

At least five communities in the Transvaal faced forced removals, while up to 290 000 people in Natal lived with the uncertainty of possibly being incorporated into KwaZulu.

A further 10 communities in the Eastern, Northern and Southern Cape were immediately threatened with removal.

Ms Debbie Newton, an NCAR member, said that Botashabelo in the Free State was last year incorporated into Qwa Qwa, more than 300km away, for political reasons.
Policeman badly injured by mob

PRETORIA — An off-duty policeman was attacked by a mob and seriously injured on Saturday in Botshabelo, Bloemfontein, police said yesterday.

The unidentified constable suffered three stab wounds and was admitted to hospital in a serious condition, the police unrest report said.

The attack follows the killing of three policemen in Attridgeville, near Pretoria, on Friday when gunmen opened fire on a group of people in the yard of a home.

There have been no arrests in connection with the attack, in which three people were also injured.

AK47 cartridge cases were found on the scene.

The unrest report also said three homes — two in Botshabelo and one in Kwa-Deni, Durban — were damaged in petrol bomb attacks.

No deaths or injuries were reported in the incidents.

A police spokesman said yesterday no further details on the policemen were available as their next-of-kin had not yet been informed.

He also said there were no further leads on Heinrich Grosskopf, the man who is wanted in connection with Thursday's car-bomb attack in Krugersdorp in which three people died and 20 were injured.
FAMILIES PAYING $300 FOR A SHACK

THE LEARN COUNCIL OF KAI

2017

BY DAWN DUNHAM

A poor, struggling for encouragement, council is that the future worse for our farm took fortune out making a they are.
**Admission fee’ nets Kwtlwanoghe R150 000**

The council also expects people visiting the township to pay a levy of R1 a day," he added.

A list of about 500 shoe-shine and duplicating service offering a total of R150 000 was shown to City Press by the Resident executive committee.

The committee's spokesman, Peter Naka, said they were encouraging the council to refund the money before the council disburses the next month.

"We have a legitimate case against the council. Nowhere is their by-law is the R30, R11, R1 and R2 levies explained, and if they fail to refund the money we will be forced to take the matter to court," he added.

"The government supposed the council and they are not following the council. We are only enforcing it for charging people excess fees," said Shadrack Mhahla, vice-chairman of the council.

Maria Nyelwane, one of the councillors who paid R150 for coming into Kwtlwanoghe, where she and her husband and seven children are living in a cupboard, said her husband was unemployed.

Kwtlwanoghe's former mayor, Obad Makankane, who was quoted in newspaper reports last week, confirmed that the council was paid R150. "I was only talking further on this subject because I am no longer mayor, although I am still a councillor and because I learnt that the matter was being handled by lawyers," he said.

The present mayor, whose term of office expires on August 15, L.P. Bentebe, a member of the new municipality in Wolwesi, also said he knew about the charges, but was going to stop the practice.

The two men's explanation differed, since the residents who were interviewed by City Press.

"This has been going on since April last year and no officials in the council have supported the payment of R30, he said. Now that the whole thing has been exposed, they want to wash their hands.

"They are equally guilty of not following the council's instructions," said pensioner Lebogang Makaha, a cupboard dweller paying an extra R40 per month for her four terms.

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**Principles for SWA peace may be applied soon – Pik**

The set of principles agreed upon for peace in Namibia by South Africa, Angola and Cuba were reviewed and discussed at a conference called by Foreign Affairs minister Pieter Botha at the Pretoria this week.

The conference, which was called to discuss the future of the country was attended by representatives of the GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA in Pretoria.

A memorandum released at the conference said the government welcomed the recognition of each of the principles was considered by the government as unacceptable to the Namibian people.

The principles were:

- The government of Angola and the South African government would cooperate with the independence process for Namibia through free and fair elections and assume responsibilities from the process that could prevent the execution of Resolution 353.
- Both sides acknowledged that the process would be successful if the country was united in a single government.
- The United States and the Soviet Union had set up September 29 as a target date for agreement on a settlement plan.

Both sides agreed to the definition of the principles and if Cuba and Angola did not agree on the withdrawal of Cuban troops, they would not enter into a settlement plan.

"We questioned them and the council is interested in such an agreement to be reached on an implementation date for Resolution 435," he added.

"This means that the council is interested in such an agreement to be reached on an implementation date for Resolution 435."

"The council is also interested in the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the country."

"The council is also interested in the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the country."

"The council is also interested in the withdrawal of Cuban troops from the country."

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**Swapo government up to Namibians**

The government of Swaziland was asked for a response to the South African government's recent statement that it would not support any changes to the constitution of Namibia.

Matsabula said: "Are you forecasting now that the future election will be won?"

"We believe that the future election will be won," he said.

"We believe that the future election will be won," he said.

"We believe that the future election will be won," he said.

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**They are making a fortune out of these farm folk. Even worse is that the council encourages squatting for a profit.**

The chairman of The Resident, Secha-Mhahla, said local residents were being squatted on by an organization or an individual known as The Resident, which was making a large profit.

"They are making a fortune out of these farm folk," he said.

"They are making a fortune out of these farm folk," he said.

"They are making a fortune out of these farm folk," he said.

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**A Londoner consoled by his family's visit to their home in Kwtlwanoghe.**

"When being entertained at restaurants, I never want to give my order direct to the waiter, or to tell the chef what dishes I like. But I'm never in doubt about the quantities to ask for to eat the meat," he said.

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**Mills Special**

Available in BOWLES of 20 and 30, and tins of 20.

**England's Luxury Cigarette**

Manufactured in South Africa.
No place of refuge in Botshabelo

86 percent of residents are jobless

EAR the entrance to the industrial park with its rows of bright, metal-roofed factories a Government billboard proclaims: "Together We'll Build a Brighter Future."

The British Union Jack flies alongside the flags of Taiwan, Israel and South Africa, signalling investment by these nations in the industrial area outside this township of about 500,000 people in the wind-blown, dusty flatlands of the Free State.

But the factories, the slogans and the investment have done little to alleviate the grinding poverty of the residents of Botshabelo, South Africa's second biggest and fastest-growing black township.

Botshabelo means "place of refuge."

Pretoria, implementing its apartheid policies, set up Botshabelo eight years ago when it bought the former farm of Osvorwacht (which means unexpected) to resettle "surplus" blacks not permitted to live in white-designated South Africa.

Barren

Many of the residents — victims of the Government's policy of forced removals — were moved from homes in the Free State, Southern Transvaal and the Western Cape, separated from their livestock and dumped on tiny plots of the barren land.

Since then, Pretoria has poured billions of rands into Botshabelo, mainly in generous allowances to foreign industrialists setting up business in the area.

About 50 companies, mostly from Taiwan, Israel and Hong Kong, have opened factories here. A few are South African, one Italian and two are British textile firms.

"There are some factories here that pay R60 a month," said Mr Isaac Koko (21), a high-school dropout who has been scrounging Botshabelo for 18 months looking for work.

I don't think they (the industrialists) are doing the right thing for the people," added Mr Macdonald Makoba, Mr Koko's daily companion in the search for work.

"If they don't pay enough, they should close their factories and go," he added. Unemployment in Botshabelo is unofficially estimated at 80 percent.

Officials urge residents to build shacks of corrugated iron but many still live in tents, refusing to accept their new domicile, and use toilets planted on top of holes in the ground.

Disowned

Last month the Government disowned Botshabelo and overrode residents' protests by declaring it part of QwaQwa, the poorest of South Africa's 10 homelands, which is about 200 km away.

There are few schools, no running water and a bucket system for sewerage. Some residents compete for jobs in the Free State gold mines 100 km away.

Church and community workers say the apartheid ideology has overwhelmed economic logic in Botshabelo.

"On a scale of human misery, these people are among the most vulnerable in the country," said Ms Laureen Platzky, a social worker from the National Committee Against Removals.

To try to solve the problems, Pretoria lures businessmen to Botshabelo with lucrative incentives.

The Government pays for construction of the factories, subsidies rentals for 10 years, grants low-interest loans and provides a 95 percent rebate on monthly wages to a maximum of R100 for seven years.

As a further sweetener, Pretoria also pays a 40 percent subsidy on rail transport, gives training grants of 125 percent and 40 percent housing subsidies for white managers living in Bloemfontein 55 km away.

Bucket

Labour researchers charge that some of the wage subsidies are skimmed by profiteering factory owners.

Factory workers say there are no trade unions to shield them from exploitation and a vast pool of unemployed in the shantytown eager to replace them if they are.

"You have to be a fool not to make money here," said one white shop owner, who refused to give his name.

Mrs Anna Matadi, a 41-year-old widow with six children, is one of 3000 women who dig holes for the latrines, and clean away plastic buckets of night soil three times a week.

She works for the town council and earns R200 rand a month.

"I have no choice," she said as she emptied a bucket of sewage onto a truck. "But I am better off in this job. If I worked in the factories I would earn R140."
New militancy as Botshabelo workers demand union rights

BOTSHABELO, the mass squatter settlement near Bloemfontein, was rocked by an unprecedented bout of industrial militancy this week as workers in the township's industrial estate demanded the recognition of their trade union.

About 450 workers were sacked after thousands of workers at two factories downed tools to back claims that a key supreme court decision, which last month blocked incorporation of the township into QwaQwa, has opened the way for employers in the area to deal with trade unions.

Botshabelo, incorporated by government edict into QwaQwa last year, attracts investors from Israel, Taiwan, England and South Africa because of decentralisation incentives which include some of the lowest wages in the country, state subsidies and an absence of militant unionism.

A strike by some 2300 workers at the Yichhoo shoe factory, a Taiwanese company, was sparked on Friday when a colleague was assaulted by the director's son, says a local official of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU).

South Africa's second biggest township, Botshabelo, is experiencing industrial action for the first time. By EDDIE KOCH

Thamsanqa Mfazwe, TGWU organiser for the Free State, said a brawl erupted at the factory after the worker had been beaten for refusing to name a colleague who crumpled up his payslip and threw it away to express disapproval at his low wages.

A group of labourers armed themselves with stones and bottles while the entire workforce downed tools in protest at the assault and added demands for the union to be recognised.

Police were called in to break up the strike and all the workers sacked. This week the company re-employed 2080 women but refused to accept some 220 men back, saying they were responsible for the violence.

A representative for the company, who identified herself as Mrs Miller, said: "We are not members of the union and nor are the workers, nor will we be if we can possibly help it."

She refused to comment on the union's allegations.

The second strike broke out at the Electronic Magnetic Association (EMA) plant in Botshabelo when more than 300 labourers protested at management's refusal to discuss union recognition with Mfazwe. This week 30 workers, including all the shop stewards, were dismissed.

TGWU, an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, has instructed its lawyers to investigate the legality of both sets of sackings.

Ofie Kok, manager of EMA's head office in Johannesburg, said the government had appealed against the supreme court bar on the township being ceded to the "homeland" and that the township would remain under the jurisdiction of QwaQwa, where there is no law providing for unionism, until the appeal is heard. For this reason the company could not recognise TGWU in Botshabelo.
Dobsonville families live in tents

By PHANGISILE MTSHALI

THIS week marks the third anniversary of living in tents for over 100 Dobsonville residents.

The tent community was started in October 1986 when over 147 families who were evicted from newly built houses were left to spend nights in the open.

Their plight touched the hearts of priests who had erected a makeshift church building.

"For three months we were shunted from one place to the next until we were housed in the Dobsonville Roman Catholic Church hall," said Mr. Vincent Dlise, who shares a tent with his family of three.

"The hall was overcrowded and there was no privacy. That led the Wandaweni Council of Churches to offer us these tents as a short term arrangement. We were promised self-contained houses by the council," Mr. Dlise said.

"The tent dwellers are not on their own fare well," said the mayor of Dobsonville Mr. Steve Nkomo when asked for comment.

"After being evicted from the houses they had allocated themselves, they were sold to go back to their former houses. They have to be on the waiting list like everybody else. Their being there does not give them priority above other people waiting to be allocated houses," he explained.

Life goes on as usual for the thirty families who are still living there although the area has no infrastructure.

The tents are small (8 by 5m), have no partitions and there is still no privacy. There are no toilets and the whole community uses a communal toilet from the church building. There is only one tap which also belongs to church. They do not have rubbish bins, therefore, they pile their rubbish at the corner of their camp settlement.

"We have learnt to live without the basic needs," said Mr. Dlise. "Our worry is the lack of safety. The tents are cold at night and hot when it's hot. They are easily blown away by wind. Sometimes they split into two when there is a strong wind. Our goods have been stolen while we are asleep at night."

BURNED

In three years two tents have been burned down, one was struck by lightning and the other was burned by a stormy wind in the middle of the night. Mr. Nkomo was injured in these incidents.

Mr. Nkomo agreed that the lack of infrastructure in the camp was a huge burden to the Dobsonville community.

LONDON — To talk or not to talk.

South Africa's neighbours are divided over whether peace can come to the region by talking to the white minority government or not.

The president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, met the South African leader on Saturday. The president of Malawi and Mozambique met him last month. President Kaunda of Zambia is reported to have let it be known he is willing to meet him.

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has ruled out such a meeting and has called for an end to the illegal, anti-African violence in South Africa.

President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique is being urged to open negotiations with the UDF, which is backed by South Africa and the United States.

The Americans have urged conservative African leaders to encourage the Angolan Government to do a deal with Unita. They point out that if the South Africans leave Namibia, and no longer threaten Angola, the 20,000 Cubans would be staying in Angola simply to fight Unita (United Front for the Liberation of Angola).

This would amount to intervention by non-African forces, which goes against the charter of the Organisation of African Unity and would be unacceptable to many African countries.

STALLED

The Unita question is
Millions can’t afford formal homes

BLOEMFONTEIN — There were about 7 million people in informal housing and shelter in South Africa’s urban areas, the Urban Foundation’s managing director, Mr Sam van Coller, said yesterday.

Addressing a Foundation conference on demography, economic opportunities and education, he warned that on the basis of affordability most South Africans would never become homeowners through the acquisition of formal house.

Mr Van Coller said the country did not need a Prevention of Illegal Squatting Bill.

He said an “Informal Housing Bill” would recognise informal housing as part of the national housing stock and promote upgrading and not demolition of informal housing.

The Bill envisioned by the Urban Foundation would further ensure access to serviced land for the very poor.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Mr Van Coller told the meeting that the state of emergency had an important bearing on the situation in which urban blacks found themselves.

Restrictions on important community organisations placed serious constraints on the work of organisations such as the Urban Foundation.

The Foundation believed that all South Africans had a common destiny and that there was an urgent need to move away from racial structuring.

Mr Van Coller said that South Africa had suffered by excluding millions of people from decisions that affected them.

“We need to adopt an approach that includes people in decision-making at all levels.

“And, finally, we believe there is a need to reverse the erosion of the principles of the rule of law so that South Africa can return to the road of expanding civil liberties.” — Sapa.

© See Page 4M.
COUNCIL DRIVES OUT SQUATTERS

TWENTY three families including small children, slept in the open after their shacks were demolished by the Daveyton Town Council this week.

The shacks were demolished at Daveyton's Etwatwa East on Monday. The families slept in the open at the premises of the Daveyton council offices.

They left the offices on Tuesday afternoon.

The raid on the squatters was conducted by the council police, code-named "Squad B".

All the property belonging to the squatters, including building materials and furniture were confiscated by the council.

Mr Edwin Motebang, deputy mayor of Daveyton, yesterday said he was not aware of the raid.

He said he would investigate the matter and try to provide the families with alternative accommodation.

A senior council policeman who asked not to be named said they received instructions from council officials, including councillors to demolish the shacks.
THE deputy Minister of Health, Dr Michael Veldman, this week paid a visit to Soweto to launch an anti-pollution campaign that would result in areas of the city being declared "smoke-free" in the near future.

The Minister was accompanied by the mayor of Soweto, Mr Nelson Botile, the council's town clerk Mr Nico Malan, Soweto's health officer Dr W Matsie and a group of councillors. Among a group of experts who were with Dr Veldman was Mr Martin Lloyd who had been monitoring the smoke pollution in Soweto for more than a year.

"Soweto is not yet a health hazard, but it could easily develop into one if the situation is not monitored. The conditions at the Mshengu squatter camp is totally unacceptable. The lack of accommodation in Baragwanath Hospital is totally unacceptable. The smoke pollution levels in Soweto during winter is also totally unacceptable," said Mr Veldman in response to Press questions after the tour.

Dr Veldman also visited clinics and schools in the township.
former policemen kill 4, wounds 17 in shopping spree

Etoria Carriagge: SAP to act

Police remove the body of one of the four people killed by a gunman in Pretoria. This was yesterday.
The 'town' ET built

THE plight of Soweto's homeless is highlighted by photographer MOFFAT ZUNGU's pictures of the Mshenguville squatter camp in Motloko. The hundreds of residents at the camp have endured the squalor for almost five years since Soweto's former mayor, Mr Ephraim "ET" Tshabalala, defied health and squatting regulations and started the "town". The pictures tell the story.
Some evict squatters ... Others seek solutions

Commissioneer of Police John van der Merwe has issued strict orders to the police to do everything in their power to stop illegal squattings. The Shack-dwellers of Dobsonville had little doubt that orders would be obeyed when they woke up on a sunny morning last week to find themselves surrounded, with a police helicopter hovering overhead. Dobsonville Residents were arrested and charged, among other things, with public violence. Almost simultaneously — just across the Vlei River — police descended on the Tshwane Civic Association (TCA) to evict residents. Residents were arrested and charged, among other things, with public violence.

Eradicate this evil ... Squatting has become a new method to violate people's rights to their own property.

The MCA's Muholo confirmed that a report has been submitted to the national government by the MCA for the removal of the existing squattings on the Tshwane Civic Area (TCA). The residents are now being evicted. The TCA is preparing to take legal action against the TCA and the residents. The TCA has instructed its lawyers to take legal action against the TCA and the residents. The TCA is preparing to take legal action against the TCA and the residents.
Some fight squatters. Others search for solutions

It’s nothing new for the homeless to ‘invade’ vacant land. But the state’s response varies. In the Free State land is set aside and water laid on — in the Transvaal shack are torn down to eradicate the ‘evil’ of squatting.

By JO-ANNE COLLINGE

Organised occupation of vacant land, often in defiance of the Group Areas Act, has been occurring since early this year. And far from breaking loose, orderly communities with a viable future have been created.

This living challenge to predictions that ‘ungovernability’ is the inevitable outcome of land invasions is to be found mainly in the Orange Free State.

Mangaug’s Freedom Square which consists of 2,500 shacks — just 10 minutes out of Bloemfontein — is an example.

Mangaug Civic Association secretary Sekhapi Malebo states unambiguously: “When we put up these informal areas we do it consciously as part of the repossessions of the land.”

But this hasn’t prevented the Orange Free State provincial authority from liaising with the MCA to improve the physical plan of Freedom Square and grade the roads. Nor has it deterred the province from facilitating a transfer of the land to the local authority so the settlement can become permanent.

This pattern is being repeated throughout the Orange Free State where official estimates of the number of shacks run to 27 000 units spread over 20 towns. It has not eliminated the contest over land but it has helped manage it.

Under the pylons ... A girl stands destitute after her family’s shack was razed in Potlala Park, Thohozane, in the Transvaal.
Squatters at the Lesilo Park camp in Thabong, Welkom, claim the local crisis committee demands that they pay R26.50 for ANC membership to qualify for stands on which they can build shacks.

The squatter camp, which started last month, was visited last week by the Lesilo Park Crisis Committee accompanied by about 1500 squatters.

"Mr Fannie Skwere, a voluntary," said Jabuza. He said the R80 fee was agreed upon by the residents for the hiring of portable toilets. The fee covers the first two months and is payable when a resident is given a stand for a shack.

The fee is later reduced to R40 which is for the maintenance of the toilets.

Claims

Jabuza however acknowledged claims of a man collecting money for ANC membership. He said the advice centre had delegated a commission of inquiry to investigate.

"Mrs Lydia Mafela, a camp resident, said she was forced to pay the money by a man only known as Kholoile. She said she was told that R2.50 was for a membership card, R2 for joining fee, R10 for a video film on the plight of the squatters at the camp and R10 for officials travelling between Welkom and Johannesburg.

Regarding the video fee, Jabuza said residents engaged the services of a private firm to film a video of the area."

"It was used to expose the 'bad conditions' under which people are living while the council is in charge of the area."

Mr Freddy Vanga, regional co-ordinator of the ANC in Thabong, dismissed the allegations as "petty issues which are only meant to discredit our movement."

He said: "It is quite obvious that Kenalamatla is a BCM initiative and we call upon the movement to distance such issues with us before running to the newspapers".

BCM regional co-ordinator in the area, Johnny Dlala, could not be reached for comment yesterday.
contaminating Freedom Square's water supply.

"The Freedom Square branch of the South African National Civic Organisation says the sewage problems started in about June. "Now the sewage system is blocking almost every day," says SANCO vice-chairman Boesel Metsing. He and others insist that the job was not done properly.

Says SANCO's Tello Lekana: "They say we are throwing newspaper, cloth and fumes down the toilets. But, the pipes are too small."

"I was born in Bloemfontein and have never been in such a mess. You never see such blockages in the white suburbs."

**Volume**

Thomas Stewart of the New Housing Company (NEWHO), which manages the project on behalf of the Upgrade Community Trust - set up in 1990 to improve the area - believes the project is sound.

"Most blockages are in the first phase and due mainly to a construction defect that has been rectified."

He points out that the volume of water running through the sewer lines exceeds the capacity of the pipes, which he believes is less than expected.

"But the most significant blockages might not be in the pipes."

Jan Palmer, manager of the Independent Development Trust capital subsidy scheme, which funded the project, says: "The technical things can usually be solved."

However, a Cape Town-based development firm has done a nationwide study of the urban sanitation. "Almost 90% of other areas have the same problems," says Palmer.

"The key problem is the lack of proper local authority support," says Palmer. While Bloemfontein's city council is mostly responsible for maintaining the Freedom Square sewage system, Stewart says "the situation reflects the transitional vacuum we are in. We don't have a legal agreement."

"That's the weak link. It's a problem larger than the project."

Initiatives are under way to set up "maintenance teams" to work with the council, but relations are strained over payments to the city for water bills.

"The council says they pay, we'll deliver and the residents say you deliver, we'll pay."

Palmer believes "proper local authority arrangements" under the new constitution will help. But development will still have to involve communities at levels below the local authority.

Community involvement is the key word in development these days. And Freedom Square, de-

**SIMILAR problems are likely to crop up elsewhere as development work is done under political pressure for quick delivery.**

writes Chief Reporter.

**JOHN PERLMAN.**

A 1990 survey found that 83% of residents listed "no services" as their chief problem; 1% mentioned housing.

Complicating all this is the insistence of Freedom Square residents on the trust that they be paid for the work they have put into the project.

Metsing and others resent the fact that one trust member, Johannes Wessels, is NEWHO's chief executive officer.

"It's not an ideal way to structure it," concedes Stewart. "It doesn't create a good picture." But he believes that the Freedom Square trustees should be paid only with the consent of the community, as the remuneration would be from community funds.

Metsing's criticism that Stewart and Wessels "wear too many hats" is not without irony. At the start of the project, Freedom Square builders were subcontracted to do some of the work. Neither of the two residents appointed to manage this full-time - Metsing and the chairman of the civic association - was a builder.

"UNHEALTHY GAMES: Children in Freedom Square look on as leaking sewage flows over the backyards where they play. © Photograph: JOHN PERLMAN"
End of consumer boycott

THE six-week-old black consumer boycott in Bloemfontein ended yesterday morning after an agreement was signed and a forum established on Wednesday night to negotiate on further problems of mutual concern.

Terms of the agreement are that the Bloemfontein City Council will supply water at the squatter areas in Manguang and will test electricity meters that are said to be faulty.

**Problems**

A technical committee will be formed to investigate the problems with water and electricity and will advise on the fairness of the electricity tariff of R10 fixed charge and 8.3c a kilowatt hour - the standard charge for electricity supplied by the council.

Bloemfontein Mayor Mr Henri Lerm said yesterday what had been achieved was that through negotiations problems had been ironed out.

"If we want a better Bloemfontein we will have to work for it. The new South Africa will need a lot of goodwill and understanding."

"We have made friends. When you start talking and negotiating you come to the understanding and realisation of the needs of other peoples and sectors," he said. - Sapa.
Mogopa Land Dispute

THE POSTER I0 OF REQUEST

Nigeria, 1999 edition, that the post office did not accept the appeal.

November 20

in Blomfontein. For the appeal to be considered, the appellant must file an appeal within 30 days of the decision. The decision has been taken off roll.

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November 2 1999
SOWETAN Friday
Squatters deny they looted white farms

By Sharrin Singh and John Miller

Orange Farm squatters yesterday denied any involvement in a concerted looting campaign against white farmers.

Several squatters interviewed by The Star said white farms were far from their shacks.

White farmers this week alleged that their houses were being stripped by the Orange Farm squatters.

"How do they know that the squatters who are looting their farms are from here? There are other squatter settlements in the area," said Godfrey Vilakazi, who has been a squatter at

Orange Farm, near Vereeniging, for more than a year.

All the squatters interviewed had been unemployed for between six months and 2½ years.

A man was arrested yesterday and two firearms and ammunition recovered when police noticed three men sitting under a tree in the Orange Farm district.

A police spokesman said that at about 2 pm yesterday, the men were spotted under a tree next to the road.

When they were approached, two fled into the nearby bush and the third was arrested.

The arrest follows several alleged looting incidents in the area.
SQUATTERS - OFS
1991 - 1993
The Parents' Forum community hall was the venue for the launching of the School at Whiter's Farm camp school, which aims to provide education for children who are not able to attend the local public schools due to various reasons.

The forum was established in 1983 and has been working hard to ensure that children in the area have access to education. The school was launched after several years of planning and hard work, and it is the first of its kind in the area.

However, there have been some challenges along the way. The school has faced funding difficulties and has had to rely on donations to keep it running. Despite this, the forum is committed to providing a quality education for all children in the area.

The school has already enrolled 500 children, and the forum is hoping to expand its reach to even more children in the future. The forum is grateful to everyone who has supported the school and looks forward to a bright future for the children of Whiter's Farm.
THE Transvaal Provincial Administration has appealed to Orange Farm protesters to allow the reopening of administration offices and the resumption of vital day-to-day community services.

Mr Jeff Wilkins of the TPA Witwatersrand regional office said yesterday the complex's reopening had been made impossible by ongoing protests following a sit-in by the Palestine Civics Association from November 22 to 26.

Identity documents

Essential services — including the maintenance of water and sanitation, pensions payouts, registration of the unemployed and assistance with obtaining identity documents — could not be rendered to the 165,000 residents of Orange Farm, south of Johannesburg.

The TPA said it had made numerous attempts to solve the impasse but the civic leadership had avoided negotiations and resolved to continue with sit-in action. — Sapa.
BLOEMFONTEIN.—More than 1,200 squatters at Qibing, near Wepener in the Free State, have been resettled in a new residential area, Kanana, in the past three weeks.
squatting to move
Help for flooded squatters

NORTHERN Orange Free State civil defence units and the local Red Cross branch have stepped in to render aid to flood stricken squatters at Phomolong township near Hennenman.

About 160 families living in two squatter areas in Phomolong lost their possessions in the flood and a soup kitchen has been set up to provide basic food for the victims, Selhuva said.
Drought, then hell;
and high water.

Families by Elmer Sherman
(1919-2012)

The people of Okanogan County are the hardest hit. And this week the rain came and dried up the crops. The ground was cracked with dryness. The drought continued the entire season in the Okanogan region, and the harvest was very poor.
Pre-school squatter projects inject hope

By Paula Fray

The impish squeals of children playing in a community-created pre-school are a hopeful sound in the otherwise bleak, poverty-stricken Free State squat"et settlement of Tholanel.

Tholanel mushroomed alongside the farming town of Viljoenskroon during the country-wide exodus of labourers from drought-stricken farms last year.

"The drought has been devastating," says educationist Jane Evans. "A lot of people in the squatter camps are from the farms... unemployment is high."

Tholanel squatter community has virtually no money or facilities.

They are largely reliant on Operation Hunger, the local churches and the Government's drought relief programme.

According to Operation Hunger deputy director Mpho Mashinini, South Africa faces disaster unless something is done about starvation levels.

The group already feeds 2.2 million people, with a further 750 000 waiting for help. Field workers also report widespread crop failure caused by the drought, meaning more people will become dependent on food assistance to survive. Although some areas had early rains, the subsequent heat has withered many crops.

There are already 1 200 homes in Tholanel.

Nearby, is the Ntataise project; it has trained almost 2 000 rural women to run stimulating pre-schools on about 300 farms since 1981. Ntataise, meaning "to lead a young child by the hand", was the first project aimed at farm children.

Evans, Ntataise executive director, estimates about 20 000 rural children now receive early stimulation through the project.

This is reflected in the improved social and emotional skills displayed by the children.

"There are a lot of differences from the old days. They know their names, their homes... they are not shy," says trainer Rebecca Sothone.

The project has imprinted its influence on rural communities and even Tholanel has women who were trained at Ntataise.

"There are 500 children in this camp," explains trainer Lydia Motsoeneng who was employed by Ntataise to assist the three pre-schools set up after the community approached the project for help.

"It has been very much a project of the community," says Evans, adding that it was the first time Ntataise has moved into a squatter community.

According to trainee teacher Lydia Khiba there is only one major employer — at which there was a strike — and "people here have no money."

"But parents pay R5 a month. And they built the shelters and give food."

One of the shelters is a wood and canvas structure which is open around the sides; the second is an open zinc structure; the third a church's premises.

Old brightly painted tyres mark off the community-built creches to which parents bring their toddlers in the morning and their four- to six-year-olds in the afternoon. A new goal is to set up more permanent structures before winter.
Squatter houses

altogether 352 629 squatter houses were built over the past three years, the Minister of National Housing, Mr. Sam de Beer, said in Parliament yesterday.

More than two million people had moved into these houses from 1991 to 1992.
Better deal for Durban's 'Block AK' squatters

By FRED KHUMALO

FOR years they lived like hunted animals, attacked by white right-wingers and despised by some Durban city councillors for being "pests and parasites" who gave the city a dirty image.

But the trials and tribulations of hundreds of people squatting on a small patch of land called Block AK near Umgeni Road could soon be over following a decision by the council management committee (Manco) to build a complex for the squatters - at a cost of R3-million.

Justifying why it was important that the council spend this amount of money resettling the squatters, the committee said customers from rural areas spent R120-million in the city each year and it was only logical that the Block AK squatters - many of whom are traders - be provided with proper facilities and accommodation.

The setting up of this complex could give a boost to the earnings made by the city from rural people, said Manco.

The squatters, who come from as far afield as Transkei, sleep and ply their trade under unhygienic conditions in the overcrowded squatter settlement.

The new complex, to be completed in eight months, will provide them with accommodation and basic facilities they need for carrying on their business.

Said Manco chairman Peter Mansfield: "A study group looked at the situation and have come up with an innovative plan which will serve these customers, traders and all other people connected with them."

The squatters' shacks border on the pristine Greyville race course on the one side and modern office blocks on the other.

The squatters are to be resettled on a patch of land on Mansell Road, between the railway line and Umgeni Road, near Old Fort Road.

The decision was arrived at after months of debate, with conservative councillors calling for the complete removal of the squatters from the city.

But a strong liberal lobby within the city council succeeded in its campaign to have the squatters resettled elsewhere in the city where they could continue plying their different trades.

Many of the squatters peddle huge plastic barrels, cushions, second-hand clothes, cakes, juices, cosmetics, detergents and vegetables.

Meanwhile, the city council has come out strongly against the unhygienic conditions at yet another squatter settlement a stone's throw from the Durban CBD on Brook Street.

A recent municipal report said the approximately 70 families squatting would be removed with immediate effect if they didn't clean up.

The 70 families who live in shacks made of planks rely on one tap and use three portable toilets.

The area is constantly awash with dirty water mixed with litter from overflowing rubbish bins. The squatters blame the squatter on the shortage of rubbish bins.

Known as Ekuhulphekeni (Place of suffering), the squatter camp has been in existence for three years. Many of the inhabitants are refugees fleeing violence in such areas as Umbumbulu, Inanda and Umlazi.
Farmer fury at rural crimewave

The slaughter took place on the Grootstry farm of Willie Engelbrecht at Verkeerdevlei near Bloemfontein.

Free State police spokesman Captain Hannes Wentzel said Mr Engelbrecht (70) and his wife Bettie (59) had just returned from Boskopp with their daughter Lena Smit (46) and her children Lizelle and Michelle (11), whom they had fetched for Christmas when they found a man armed with a .22 pistol in the main bedroom.

He shot Mr Engelbrecht and forced the others into a wardrobe.

"The man then pulled Mrs Engelbrecht from the wardrobe and shot her dead. He did the same to Mrs Smit and Michelle," he said.

Lizelle was shot while she cowered in the wardrobe. Wounded in the head, she faked death. Once they had gone, Lizelle ran to a neighbour’s house.

Five hours later, police found the car in Bloemfontein and arrested a man. He appeared in court yesterday. Police are still searching for three men in connection with the attack.

On Saturday morning an armed robber assaulted and robbed an elderly couple on a farm in the Harrismith district.

Police said Samuel du Plessis (69) and his wife Susanna Magdaelen Marthe (85) were at home on their farm Marxeseluk when the robber broke in at about 10 am. He beat up Mr and Mrs du Plessis and took pistols, rifles and about R1 500 in cash.

On Sunday night robbers entered a bedroom on the farm Dpndeb, Bultfontein district.

Police said Willem Jacobus Britz (65) and his wife were assaulted and bound, while the robbers made off with bedspreads, furniture, a vehicle and about R5 000 in cash.
An Embattled Community

South 16th St. - 22nd St.

STANDING FIRM: Comanche Park residents who make up half of the Villardroop civic committee occupy the municipal offices monthly for four hours. They demand a community center and public library, what they are entitled to as citizens. This is a picture of the new municipal building.
Squatter Town Is Recognised
Nyakallong gets houses

About 250 new houses will be built in Nyakallong, Allanridge in the Free State to ease the housing backlog in the area.

This follows months of negotiations between the civic association and the local administration.

The civic’s spokesman, Mr Wilson Cole, said they had approached the local administration after receiving complaints about lack of shelter from the community.

Both parties agreed that a farm be bought in Allanridge, where four-roomed houses would be built for residents of Nyakallong.

Cole said surveyors began working on the land early this week and sewerage pipes had already been installed.

He pleaded with the community to pay their service charges so that the township could be developed. The charges would be increased from R20 to R30 with effect from February 1.
There is no place like Hell

The homeless from all over South Africa have come together for the first time to look for solutions to their common plight.

By WALLY MBHELE

JOSEPH THUNTSA lives in a section of Botshabelo called Die Hel — The Hell.

The name was given by police in 1985 trying to remove ad hoc squatters who had colonised an unused section of the huge township — which had been created anyway as a dumping ground for "surplus" farm workers and residents of "black spots".

When the squatters of Botshabelo resisted efforts to move them, annoyed policemen turned their backs and said: "Die plek is net 'n hel. (This place is just hell)." The residents took up the word as the name for their settlement.

For Thunta (69), hell is a sort of paradise. Although he is unemployed, his wife's health is poor and the family must live on his R300 bi-monthly pension, he has a two-room matchbox built with Catholic Church donations — and stacks in the yard for his nine children.

Thunta was one of the more than 150 delegates at a conference for the homeless organised by the Southern African Council for Catholic Social Service last week at the Alpha Training Centre in Broederstroom.

Delegates from homeless communities who came together for the first time shared tales of unemployment, disease, demolitions and violence, resistance to removals, court battles.

More than half the squatters in some communities are unemployed and prices for basic resources like food, paraffin, wood and candles are sky-rocketing. Resources are scarce. Delegates noted a lack of infrastructure, an absence of cemeteries, churches, sports and recreation facilities.

The authorities turn a deaf ear to these problems because "we have illegally occupied that land", said Tom Scholz, who delivered a paper on the struggle for resources.

Like all delegates at the conference, Thunta was clasping a blue file under his arm, with the logo "Land and affordable safe homes for all!"

"I left Koffiefontein in 1982 after a struggle of nearly 40 years without decent shelter," he said, "I used to stay in a mud hut, under a very strict farmer."

"When I arrived with my family in Botshabelo in 1982, I had hoped that things would change for the better, I would find employment, but things didn't go according to my dreams."

For three years he struggled to secure a stable home. He was forced to split up the family. He was often evicted when his rent was overdue.

Finally, in 1985, he and hundreds of other homeless people erected shacks on a piece of open land in Botshabelo.

The squatters have managed to negotiate for toilets and water taps to be installed in Die Hel which, he says, "will become one of the biggest and most places to live in this country if the resolutions of this conference become real", he said.

The conference has declared that land is a right, not a privilege: a resolution states that "if it needs be, we'll occupy whatever land is unoccupied."

Other resolutions call for stepped-up mass action to resist evictions and oppose the government's land reform strategy; to take to the community recommendations about ways of improving education and health.

There is plenty of room for improvement. In Kleinskool, there are only 10 water taps to supply more than 1500 families, the conference was told. In some places, people have to travel more than 10km to fetch wood.

Among the worst off appear to be villagers from Mhlabatana in Gwamkulu, who told the conference they are required to buy a permit from a local chief before being granted permission to chop wood for making fire.

"Life is very difficult there," said Charles Mahlulwa. "Even the educated struggle to make a living."
RELEASED: A well-wisher welcomes Mr David Moisi back to the mainland after he and two other long-serving prisoners, including Mr Mando-la Shabangu, right, were freed from Robben Island. They had been on a hunger strike for seven days.

Three Island prisoners take first steps to freedom

By LINDA GALLOWAY
Staff Reporter

THREE long-serving prisoners took their first steps to freedom down the gangway of the Robben Island ferry, leaving behind four hunger-striking comrades.

Johannes Mndia Shabangu, 31, David Motshwane Moisi, 35, and Rufas Nzo, 33, told well-wishers at the dockside that their fellow-prisoners on the island, although debilitated by the strike, were standing firm in their resolve to continue refusing food until their release.

They said two, Aron Thabo Memela and Christmas Mokokeng, had collapsed and had been transferred to hospital.

Mr Moisi said it had been "excruciatingly painful" to leave their comrades behind.

"Our release is a stick-and-carrot policy on the part of the government to put the ANC on the defensive before the kommatia deadline," he said.

Mr Shabangu read a statement from the hunger-strike committee on the island, reiterating their resolve to continue although "all of us are on the brink of collapse".

"It is the only weapon we have and we will remain on hunger strike until we get to Cowley House (the Dependants' Conference halfway-house for political prisoners in Woodstock)," he said.

Mr Shabangu, from Johannesburg and Mr Moisi, from Kroonstad, were sentenced to death for high treason in 1980 for attacks on the Booyens police station, a policeman's house and the West Rand Administration offices.

Mr Nzo, from Port Elizabeth, was serving a 28-year sentence for treason, terrorism, possession of arms, ammunition and explosives, attempting murder, fraud and exploding a bomb on the Swartkops railway line.

ANC spokesman in the Western Cape Mr Trevor Manuel drew attention to the inconsistencies of the government in releasing some prisoners and not others.

"There is no pattern. Some were released without applying for indemnity, others who applied have not been released. Some prisoners sentenced with others for the same offences have been released while their co-accused have not," he said.
THOUSANDS of black people who have lost their jobs on white farms in the Free State are living in abject poverty, while their children are being ravaged by malnutrition. Several children have died of starvation in Daleide, Hoopstad, Steynrus and Bothashale.

The families have moved from white farms to nearby towns and are living in squalor in the most unhygienic conditions.

Hoopstad community worker Matso Mathile went after visiting several poverty-stricken families and listening to their pitiful stories.

In several of these areas residents are also suffering from poverty related diseases, which include mental illnesses and blindness.

They are all unemployed and while some have to make the rest of their meagre monthly pensions, others have to scavenge to exist.

They have no proper furniture, clothes or blankets and sleep on the bare floor, even on icy cold nights.

Those who do have blankets have very few, but they are all worn and scanty.

An urgent appeal has been made to Operation Hunger to help them.

This week, City Press visited a shanty settlement in "Phumashane" (come out let us fight one another), near Hoopstad in the Free State.

Green Tsh Chips is the head of a family of 14 adults and children which includes his daughter-in-law, children, grandchildren and nephews.

The family's only breadwinner is his nephew, Petrus Ngubeni, who earns R80 a week as a mechanic's assistant.

Two of the children, Aletta, 10-months, and Johannes, 2, are showing clear signs of undernourishment - potbellies, puffed cheeks and swollen feet.

The family has very little clothing and almost no blankets.

Tsh Chips' daughter-in-law, Ellis Jackson said:

"The nights are very cold in the Free State, and we keep the children warm with our body heat."

Annie Josatsa is a 70-year-old pensioner who has to fend for six other people - her daughter and five grandchildren.

She says that from her meagre pension of R175 a month she can only afford a bag of maize-meal.

"I cannot afford meat, as the rest of the money goes on her grandchildren's books, clothes and school fees."

"I can hardly afford to buy a bar of soap. When the bag of maize-meal is finished we have nothing to live on."

"We sometimes go to bed with our stomachs empty."

"There are days when my daughter and her children have to dig into dirt-bins at local factories for food," she said.

Blind pensioner Sinah Nkomo and her husband, Office, sit disconsolately among the squalor of the Phumashane settlement near Hoopstad. They say their children take their pensions, leaving them destitute.

"We have already buried several children. A recent one is of one baby who was buried about two weeks ago."
No home for wandering Basotho

Camped out... the Basotho-Boer choral are desperate after seven years living in tents near the Free State.
Many families have been left without accommodation and shelter in the informal Freedom Square development in Mangaung, outside Bloemfontein, after a nearby dam broke at the weekend. Shacks were destroyed by the force of water from the dam and residents battled in water and mud to rescue possessions.
Pensioned former farm workers are having a tough time making ends meet at the Refengkgotso squatter camp. Staff reporter Joshua Rabaroko visited the camp and spoke to some residents.

"Most families are often forced to split because the head cannot find employment" Godfrey Kolokofo, said: "Most families are often forced to split because the head cannot find employment."

He added that those who work do so far away from their homes and normally come home over weekends.

Ngeosane said he was never so lucky after he became semi-blind while working on a farm near Vereeniging. "I struggled to get my pension money."

He was evicted from the farm after his boss fired him. He did not need his services any longer because he was handicapped. He worked for him for 30 years.

"I needed a shelter for my 10 children," he said, "I came to Tshepiso after I was advised by relatives."

He added: "I am forced to squat here because I cannot afford to buy a new house. I have no money and I am jobless. I survive on a monthly pension which I get from local authorities offices."

A father of six children, Mr Soldaat Mphuthi, said he worked on a farm in Frankfort for 26 years. He earned R20 a month and received a bag of mealie meal. His employer died last August.

He was evicted by the new employer, who was apparently scared that "I will demand smallholdings for having worked for my previous employer for generations."

The problems of this squatter camp and Refengkgotso are similar to those in other informal settlements, especially in the Pretoria Witwatersrand Vereeniging complexes.

The township attracted a lot of media coverage when residents marched from the local hall to the offices of the superintendent, where they presented a memorandum.

In the memorandum the residents demanded that electricity and sewerage be installed in their homes, the water supply increased and roads tarred.

However, there is a ray of light at the end of the tunnel after the Deneysville administrator Mrs Rosyi Jager announced that R3 million will be provided to upgrade the township.

"I am forced to squat here because I cannot afford to buy a new house. I have no money and I am jobless."
Squatters fume over sewerage

WHEN 150,000 poor people are jammed together in a shack settlement on the edge of a major city and somebody puts up R20 million to put in a water-borne sewerage system, that's got to be good news, right?

Well, that's the way the script goes. But in Freedom Square, just such an area on the south-east side of Bloemfontein, a million-rand sewerage system might be causing more problems than it has flushed away.

It blocks, belches and leaks, creating stinking green pools and rivulets, and fears that it might be contaminating Freedom Square's water supply.

"The Freedom Square branch of the South African National Civic Organisation says the sewerage problems started in about June. "Now the sewerage system is blocking almost every day," says SANCO vice-chairman Boheko Metsing. He and others insist that the job was not done properly.

Says SANCO's Tello Lebesa: "They say we are throwing newspaper, cloth and other rubbish in the toilets. But the pipes are too small."

"They didn't have a proper system in Bloemfontein," he and have never seen such a mess. You never see such blockages in the white suburbs."

Volume

Thomas Stewart of the New Housing Company (NHBICO), which manages the project on behalf of the Thabo/Thrafaco Community, says having plenty of this gives some idea of just how thorny this seemingly simple concept can be.

"For a start, both Stewart and the civic association agree that there was no information programme explaining how the sewerage system should be used. Metsing and others criticise the developers for this."

"Stewart says, "We are still awaiting a formal poster to be distributed in the area. Other than that we have been regular efforts to involve the civic in a process to convey the message to the individual owners. We rely fairly heavily on them."

The civic association seems reluctant to take responsibility for a system it says is not appropriate. SAYS Metsing: "If people here can't afford to buy a loaf of bread, can they afford a roll of toilet paper? The people were never asked before these toilets were built. We would have opted for houses."

Trust chairman James Moesi says that was not what they said at the time. "We accepted this sewerage system on their recommendation. It was healthier and the people wanted it. It is too late to go back to pit latrines."

Insistence

A 1999 survey found that 85 percent of residents listed "no services" as the chief problem; 1 percent listed housing.

Complicating all of this is the insistence of Freedom Square residents on the right to be paid for the work they have put into the project.

"The civic association is not interested in paying the developers. But it does not want compensation, which is not what we said at the time," says Moesi. "We are trying to get them to face up to what they said at the time. We are trying to get the money from them."

Similar problems are likely to crop up elsewhere as development work is done under political pressure for quick delivery, writes Chief Reporter.

JOHN PERLMAN
Squatters - N. Cape
1998