SQUATTERS — CAPE

1996 - 1997
Montague Gardens likely to get squatter leader as representative

PETER DENNENBY
MUNICIPAL REPORTER

AN ODD consequence of the scrapping of the “businesses vote” in local elections is that the industrial area of Montague Gardens is likely to have a squatter leader as its ward representative.

This point was made strongly by those who spoke up for industrialists at yesterday’s first public Demarcation Board hearing on ward boundaries in “the northern substructure” (Greater Milnerton).

Mr Geoffrey Ashmead, president of the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said:

“Industrial and commercial areas need to have adequate representation, whether or not the person is voted for directly by the business community itself.

“We need a representative with whom we can communicate. The city centre needs an elected representative who is able to act on behalf of this lifeblood of the community (commerce and industry).”

Business constituted the engine of the economy, he said.

Apart from the rates it contributed directly to local authorities, which Milnerton’s mayor Mr Rod Hulley estimated was 33% of Milnerton’s total rates income, it also provided employment opportunities.

Without these jobs, he said, nobody would pay rates.

In previous municipal elections, companies which owned property had the vote.

This provision was scrapped by agreement at Kempton Park over two years ago.

Individuals who are liable to pay rates on a particular property do still have the vote in that property’s municipality, even if they do not live there.

But most industrial and commercial properties are owned by companies, which can no longer vote.

Mr Hulley said after the hearing that he believed there were a total of 71 industrialists in Montague Gardens who were still able to vote — the rest had lost the franchise.

Montague Gardens will fall within the proposed Ward Five, the Marconi Beam ward, which has 3349 registered voters within its boundaries.

Ms Amanda Younge, who chaired the Demarcation Board hearing, told a complaining Montague Gardens industrialist that the suffrage issue was beyond the purview of the board.
Roadside squatters protest about land

Staff Reporter

MORE than 50 men, women and children, who are squatting on a road verge near Fisantekraal in Durbanville, are desperate for a solution to their housing problem.

They arrived at the Cape Metropolitan Council's (CMC) Wale Street offices yesterday afternoon and planned to stay the night if chief executive officer Daan van den Berg did not agree to meet them.

But, Mr Van den Berg said the people fell under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Administration and he could not help them.

Judith Masina, spokeswoman for the group, said they had been trying for months to find a solution to their problem after they were "kicked out" of the Fisantekraal, Fisantekop and Kilpewel areas.

"The people didn't want us on their land because we were not employed there. In some cases, our husbands worked on farms, but we were not allowed to stay there with our children.

"We heard that farmers told the Durbanville council not to accommodate us because they didn't want African people there."
**Devastated Marconi Beam**

**JOHN YELD**
Staff Reporter

"We have nothing left — what are we going to do?"

This was the heartrending refrain that echoed around the fire-devastated Marconi Beam squatter community yesterday as hundreds of residents tried to restore their shattered lives.

On a hot Sunday morning, as many Cape Town residents headed for the Peninsula’s beach playgrounds or sat in quiet worship in suburban churches and offered thanks for their blessings, the shocked Marconi Beam residents spoke about rebuilding their shack homes that had been razed to the ground in Saturday’s inferno — the third in a month.

High overhead, four pelicans glided serenely through a startlingly blue sky; on the ground in the squatter settlement, there was chaos.

The resident dragged blistered, twisted corrugated iron sheets and the charred remains of wooden poles to one side and used shovels to clear blackened piles — the remains of personal belongings and everyday household items — from what on Friday evening had been the neat interiors of their homes.

Broken chairs — plates, cups and saucers — lay scattered about, bottles fused together into misshapen brown and green lumps, and food tins soldered into a solid metal mass bore witness to the intensity of the blaze.

Most of the items making up the black debris were unrecognisable, but here and there were the identifiable remains of once-valetable household items — primus stoves, bicycles, beds, chairs, serving spoons, plastic buckets and basins, suitcases...

Some of the devastated shack sites were deserted, but at many of the others, friends and neighbours who could salvage enough material had started rebuilding their shacks, sharing saws, spades and hammers as they helped each other rebuild.

The camp rang with the staccato banging of saws as they put in new corner posts and nailed wooden cross-beams and strips to make up walls.

Buzzing flies irritated the sweating workers, and a woman selling frozen suckers did good business.

Music blared from scratchy speakers set up outside a shebeen, and while men laboured at the building, women gathered around the taps, waiting their turn to collect water, and others washed clothes.

But some of those who had lost everything appeared shell-shocked by the devastation and sat listlessly in the heat, staring ahead and doing nothing.

As the morning wore on, a light breeze started, whipping dust from the scorched earth.

Some women pushed supermarket trolleys loaded with blackened debris towards the already overloaded communal rubbish skips.

Two children sat with a bottle of blackened coins, carefully removing one at a time, wetting it and rubbing it on a rock in a painstaking exercise to reverse the monetary value.

Hans Butegile was standing on a tin, hammering planks on to a new shack for his neighbour, Wilson Makhonza.

"This is bad, really bad," he said.

He pointed over his shoulder to a black heap two metres away: "And that was mine. I tried to save what I could, but most of the furniture is gone."

Mr Makhonza was dressed in a scruffy brown overall — all he had managed to salvage from the blaze.

In the ruins of one shack, the girlfriend of Dan Madlanyane lay asleep on the sand while he worked. He was wearing a dirty t-shirt and jeans torn at the knees.

"I ran just as I was — I haven’t got any other clothes now."

He laughed ruefully, then shook his head and sighed. The spade he was using had a fire-twisted handle.

"My spade — finished. The TV — finished. And the hammer too," he said.

Notomadazo Mnogwabe was sitting on a mattress behind a sheet of corrugated iron struck into the sand for protection from the wind. She jiggled her nine-month-old baby on her lap while she packed clothes into a suitcase.

"This is the third time the house has been burnt, and there’s no money. What must we do?" she asked.

Livy Ntshingana’s shack was just a few metres from where the fire started shortly before I am on Saturday.

"I was asleep and heard people shouting. I didn’t have a chance because the fire was too near and it was too windy."

The wind was blowing and the heat was hitting us, so we decided to run. So we took the child (eight-year-old Anathi) out, and that’s all."

His wife Florence said she had been "very frightened."

"Everything’s burnt — all I don’t know what we’re going to do. We’re sleeping with other people now, and we need material (to rebuild)."

Mr Ntshingana said security was a problem for people who had managed to salvage some of their possessions.

"We’re unsafe, and you can’t trust people during the night when you’re asleep. We’ve no blankets, no food..."

"It’s hard for us. I’ve never had a fire like this."

William Bulani’s story was similar to that of scores of other Marconi Beam residents who lost their shacks and possessions.

"I was asleep when someone shouted. I took my children and my wife and the TV, and after that I’ve got nothing."

Pointing to blackened metal frames and charred timbers, he said: "I went shopping on Friday, and now here’s my house, my chair, my child’s bed. What can I do now?"

Across the road from Marconi Beam, Cynthia Dohlle was sitting on her bed on the pavement in the open, propped against a vibraccrete wall.

Her children — five-year-old Caroline and two-year-old Lucass — lay in the shade created by a mattress propped on top of another bed as she repaired a shirt with needle-and-thread.

"I haven’t got any materials (to rebuild) — I can get some in Philipippi but I haven’t got any money," she said.

She’d been asleep in her three-roomed shack when the fire started.

"People shouted, You must come — there’s a fire! so I jumped up and grabbed my children. I didn’t know what was happening."

"I was standing here crying — the tears were running down my face."

A man sifted through the rubble, picking out the remains of aluminium cooking pots and putting them into a plastic shopping bag. "It’s worth a lot of money," he confided.

An angry Pieter Petersen said it was the third time his shack has been burnt: "This happens on her... weekend and I’ve lost everything."

He blamed the government for his predicament.

"They don’t want to build houses for us. Mandela said he would build houses."

"I’ve bought some material now but it’s expensive — these poles cost R20 each!"

Lousia Arendse tried to dampen down her shack before the fire reached them, but it was too quick.

"My husband and I put water on the roof but it didn’t help. Everything happened in five minutes," she said.

"I heard the screaming — it’s burning, it’s burning. We didn’t know what was going on."

She opened her arms in a gesture of helplessness: "I didn’t get anything out. I’m a loser. Everything’s gone. There’s no food, no money. I don’t know what we’re going to do."

She’s convinced the fires have been started deliberately, and the arson is linked to feuding and revenge.

"There’s a history and a story," she said meaningfully.

Tinus van der Merwe, who heads the social upliftment programme of the developers who are building the new Marconi Beam township on the Milnerton side of the squatter camp, is a regular visitor to the shack settlement.

"This is a great disaster — I’ve never seen anything like this," he said yesterday.

He’s concerned about the psychological effects on the community of the repeated fires: "The spirit is bad," he said.
Residents rebuild — again

An old man cried like a baby among smoky ruins

Johan Schonen
Staff Reporter

The midnight sky glows like a ball of fire as it silhouettes deserted shacks.

In the road in front of me hundreds of men, women and children sit on heaps of belongings they saved as they fled the inferno that swept through Marconi Beam squatter camp on Saturday night.

In the background, flames are licking the sky, the heat from the fire feeling like a warm berg wind.

Water from the fire brigade’s hoses seems between my toes as firemen swim with their hoses between shacks to get closer to the blaze.

The chatter of desperate people is drowned momentarily by the loud sirens of an ambulance pulling off filled with seriously burnt people.

Behind me an old man dressed only in his underpants shakes uncontrollably. He cries like a baby; there is no skin left on his back and his hair is scorched.

A girl clutching her baby sister runs as fast as she can in the dark alley between the shacks. But a tidal wave of frantic people running for the safety of the road pushes her over.

Then a man, dressed only in shorts and a torn T-shirt, comes running by with a tiny old woman in his arms. Somehow he finds enough strength also to grab the struggling girl’s hand to help her along.

The crackling of ambulance and police radios begins to subside as tired firemen stumble out of the shackland, their faces blackened with soot and their eyes red.

Behind them the black sky is once again visible — just here and there some smoke and steam. Their job is done.

AFTERMATH: An anxious fireman dampens down the smouldering remains of shacks after a fire swept through the Site B squatter camp at Khayelitsha on Saturday. One man was injured and 150 shacks were razed.

Concerned couple: Volita and André de Wet of Table View hand groceries to some of the residents of the Marconi Beam squatter camp at Milnerton who lost all their possessions in a devastating fire on Saturday. Mr De Wet said some of his company’s employees lived at the camp, and he and his wife had wanted to help those who had suffered in the fire.
pot is left on hot stove

2,000 homeless after Rs. 200 relief promised

NEWS

JANUARY 22, 1986
Waiting among ashes for bricks and mortar
New row rages over Marconi fires

ADELE BALETA

CRACKS in the provincial government are widening over the infernos at Marconi Beam.

Health Minister Ebrahim Rasool has attacked Minister of Housing and acting-premier Gerald Moralee for saying that the Disaster Relief Fund, which falls within Mr Rasool’s portfolio, has dried up.

“This is not the case. And it is a confusing signal to send to a team from the Social Services Department who have to do a needs assessment with a view to further assistance from the Disaster Relief Fund,” said Mr Rasool.

Mr Moralee was “out of town”, but his administrative secretary said a “mistake” had been made and Mr Moralee meant that the Urbanisation Fund, not the Disaster Fund, had been depleted.

Mr Moralee was quoted as saying: “We have a disaster fund but its totally depleted. Thank God our financial year ends in March.”

Léonard Ramatlatlane, ANC provincial Minister of Transport, Road and Public Works — standing in for Chris Nissán as Economic Affairs and RDP Minister — slammed the acting-premier for calling in the National Intelligence Agency to investigate the fires.

Mr Ramatlatlane said explanations based on conspiracy theories would not assist the Marconi Beamy community. He said the real issues were access to land and resources and the delivery of houses and facilities.

The NP Minister of Housing had asked the NIA and the police to investigate whether the fires were coincidental or politically motivated.

Mr Rasool also hit out at Mr Moralee for attempting to deflect his responsibility — the delivery of houses — by calling on the NIA.

He said he hoped the acting-premier had not suggested the fund had dried up to “bolster his suggestion that the fires were deliberate”.

“This is both insensitive to the victims of the fire and causes unnecessary doubt in the minds of many Capetonians who responded with their hearts.

“The provincial minister would have to admit land and housing conditions are the prime causes of such disasters. The buck stops with him, not the NIA, the police or any national minister.”
Forum acts on homeless problem

Complaints of drinking, drug abuse, sex pests

HOMELESS people, who are flocking to Muizenberg in increasing numbers, are causing a disturbing rise in social problems such as alcohol and drug abuse and indecent exposure.

A working group has been formed by the Muizenberg police forum to study the situation and Muizenberg residents have been asked to help.

Community police officer Johan Viljoen said: “The community must be part of solving this increasing social problem.”

The group will carry out a survey and report back at the next forum meeting with details of the situation and possible solutions.

Sergeant Viljoen said there had been increasing complaints about anti-social behaviour.

“The main problems associated with the homeless and unemployed are drinking, aggressive behaviour and the use of foul or abusive language,” he said. “Numerous cases of indecent exposure have also been reported to the Muizenberg police.”

Among the areas to which homeless people appear to gravitate are the park above Main Road, opposite the pavilion and the public open space in Atlantic Road.

Chairman of the Muizenberg and Lakeside ratepayers and residents association Gerald Munsanth said: “Drinking in public affects the social ethos of the area. Drug and alcohol related problems are particularly prevalent when the law enforcement officers are off duty.”

He said street fights had also occurred.

“If we could root out the drug and alcohol problem we could focus our resources on uplifting the local homeless population, which gets drawn into these activities.”

Sergeant Viljoen said different organisations, councillors, community leaders and the SAP had held an urgent meeting with senior magistrate André du Rand.

Although possible solutions had been tabled these would be subject to the approval of the magistrate.

Residents are urged not to get involved in the domestic quarrels of the homeless, but rather to call police.
apiens

Pregnancy - and some possible answers

ARG 6/2/96
PUBLIC response to allegations last week that traffic officers regularly assault vagrants has ranged from outrage to calls that all indigents should be lined up against a wall and shot.
The city council immediately instituted an internal investigation, and the police opened an assault docket, but a stream of callers to The Argus have suggested that the traffic department deserves all the support it can get to eradicate the problem.

Some even suggested it was a "non-issue".

Head of the council's ad hoc vagrancy committee, Isobel Edelstein, however, hopes to persuade the city to pass a formal vagrancy policy this month, and in fine-tuning a set of proposals and recommendations as a starting point.

"They vagrants are certainly not going to go away," she argues.

Ordinary citizens may view vagrants as noisy, smelly, objectionable, anti-social, frequently drunk, often mentally ill and usually very difficult to handle.

But from a social worker's perspective, vagrants are "multi-problem personalities" requiring help.

Vagrants generally have little formal education and therefore few job opportunities, no extended family, few social or employment skills, and rapidly fall into destitution in periods of economic depression.

Some are born with frail or vulnerable mental conditions which through some trauma in their lives creates irreparable damage, marginalising them from conventional society and forcing them into destitution.

Gradually, they assume the role of societal outcasts.

They pick up habits such as alcohol abuse, drinking methylated spirits or taking drugs which add to their marginalisation.

Daily lifestyles reinforce these anti-social habits, which in time lead to further deterioration (both mental and physical), and eventually they become total outcasts.

These are the people allegedly being victimised, tortured, abused and harassed by city traffic officials.

These are the people some would have lined up and shot, and these are the people the council's ad hoc vagrancy committee would like protected by the adoption of a formal policy on vagrancy.

A discussion document compiled by Co-ordinated Action with Street People (Casp) following a recent conference attended by a number of role-players, outlines the areas the intended policy might cover.

Whatever form the policy takes, clearly, the attempted rehabilitation of such marginalised people is not a task any local authority can assume single-handed.

Education, skills training, job creation, family reintegration, improved relationships between vagrants and authority - each area will require a variety of government departments and non-governmental organisations to cooperate with the local authority.

Inter-sectoral approaches should be adopted with regard to health care, correctional services, nursing and detoxification programmes.

And programmes should be designed for criminal elements and ex-offenders, the elderly, alcoholics and psychiatric patients.

Legislation should be introduced and a public campaign launched to prohibit the sale of solvents to minors, while regular and accessible primary health care for all homeless people was a necessity.

Access for the homeless to legal aid should be considered a priority, while local by-laws should be amended to allow for the washing of cars in public places and to outlaw the arrest of indigents for loitering.

There must be provision by council for adequate toilet and lock-up facilities at all times, street workers should be employed, and the Parks and Forestry Department should beautify and upgrade existing shelters.

Finally, the conference concluded, street people's rights were "continually" violated by policing agencies including the South African Police Services, the traffic police and private security companies.

While welfare organisations accepted people involved in crime should be dealt with by the justice system, they also had a right to humane treatment.

Resources such as counselling services and legal advice should be made available to street people to assist in their possible rehabilitation.

The police and traffic department could play a meaningful role in the transformation of unacceptable behaviour by street persons through proper co-ordination with rehabilitative services.
R44 000 aid for Marconi Beam

JILYAN PITMAN (307)
Staff Reporter

PENINSULA and country Rotary Clubs collected R44 000 for the destitute of Marconi Beam and the money was used to buy foam mattresses and blankets. ARG 9/2/96

Next week cooking utensils will be distributed to all the squatter camp residents.

Paul Faure, PRO for the clubs, said: "Milnerton's assistant chief fire officer Steve Abrahams has done the distribution and will begin giving out the cooking utensils next week. The clubs are going raise more money to help those destitute in Khayelitsha."

"Each of the families in Marconi Beam got a starter home kit — comprising poles, plastic, a hammer and nails — and when the structures went up then the mattresses and blankets were distributed," Mr Faure said.
Controversial site to be fenced off to keep out ‘squatter aliens’

ANDREA WEISS, Municipal Reporter

THE Century City site near Ysterplaat airforce base is to be fenced off to prevent squatters from occupying the land and to stop illegal dumping of rubble.

That is the word from Martin Wragg, managing director of Monex, the company which applied to provincial government for the site to be rezoned from residential mixed use.

Mr Wragge was speaking at the first meeting to discuss an environmental impact assessment for the site which contains sensitive wetlands, including a large bird breeding area.

Although the 192-ha site is heavily infested with alien vegetation, two scientific studies have indicated there are environmentally important features. There are seasonal pans which are a threatened plant habitat and the permanent vlei known as Bloivlei is home to thousands of breeding birds.

In response to a question about the current management of the site, Mr Wragg said the company was in the process of erecting six kilometres of fence to stop “aliens of another kind with metal sheets on their heads” from coming on to the site.

The meeting at the Bothasig town hall was attended by representatives of a number of environmental organisations who had petitioned Environmental Minister Lampie Pick over the sensitivity of the site.

The Western Cape cabinet has approved the reasoning conditional upon an environmental impact assessment being done in line with the principles of integrated environmental management.

Monex has also been instructed to involve the public in the study which is being carried out by the CSIR.

Participants at this week’s meeting expressed concern about a wide variety of issues, including the impact of the proposed development on nearby Rietvlei, which is recognised as being of international importance, as well as Zoarvlei near Paarden Eiland and the Milnerton lagoon mouth.

They also expressed concern about the social impact of the development and said the environmental impact assessment brief was too narrow.

An ornithological study and botanical study have elaborated on the wetland features worth conserving.
KTC squatters give Marais an ultimatum

(307) AM 28/7/19

Staff Reporter

KTC residents near Nyanga are incensed by their "forced inclusion" into Guguletu Township when the Provincial Local Government Minister Peter Marais took a final decision on the demarcation of wards, to prepare for the forthcoming municipal elections.

The residents were backed by the area's ANC MP Sheperd Mdledana who appealed to Mr Marais to "reconsider" the decision or face the wrath of the people.

A spokesman for Mr Marais's office, Fritz Marx said Mr Marais "can't reconsider the decision because it will jeopardise the elections".

"The proclamation was signed yesterday and the minister took the decision on the recommendations of the Demarcation Board," Mr Marx said.

The residents said they received the final map on Friday showing that a part of the squatter camp would fall under Guguletu.

They said they approved a proposal map shown to them prior to the final one which showed the area as a ward on its own.

"The residents said the area had more than 14 000 eligible voters but so far the voters' roll showed that there were only 12 000.

The minimum number of voters in each ward is 7 900 and the maximum is 10 700.

In a heated meeting with residents Mr Mdledana said the community leadership was accused by the residents of "selling out for a long and hard years of struggle".

He said the residents said they did not understand how the leadership could allow KTC to be divided into two while they wanted the area to remain united.

The residents wanted a united KTC and accused Mr Marais of "not consulting" the residents before taking a decision on the demarcation of the area.

They threatened that if their call was not heeded they would "take the necessary action".

Mr Marais office said the Demarcation Board held public hearings in all communities before it made recommendations to the Minister on which he based his decision.

However Mr Mdledana warned that if Mr Marais did not rescind his decision he would face the resistance of the people.
Inner-city squatters fight eviction bid

Home is 'Bridge Hotel' underneath flyover

JOSEPH ARANIES, Municipal Staff
A GROUP of inner-city squatters are challenging a Cape Town City Council bid to remove them from their makeshift village under a freeway flyover they call "Bridge Hotel".

Their "hotel" is under Western Boulevard in Green Point, and the squatters are opposing the council's Supreme Court application to kick them out of it.

Some of the 34 squatters say they have lived in the parking area under the freeway near the traffic department for the past 14 years, and have no other place to call home.

The council has applied to the court for an urgent eviction order, but this was opposed by the squatters, who have enlisted the help of the Legal Resources Centre (LRC).

A spokesman for the LRC said they challenged the order on the grounds that the assistant town clerk, who applied for the order, did not have the authority to bring it on his own.

"He should have taken the matter to the council's housing committee and full council before going to court. The matter also lacked urgency."

The court agreed with the LRC's argument and has transferred the matter to the semi-urgent roll. The case will now be heard on June 19.

Fiona Ogle, the council's legal adviser, said the people were illegally occupying council land and that the council would continue to try and have them removed.

"We get ongoing complaints from people about their presence. The place is not hygienically suited for habitation and we have arranged alternative accommodation for them at The Ark, but they have refused to move."

The squatters, most of whom are male, are seasonally employed by a fleet of Portuguese fishing trawlers. They are scattered across the parking area, with each family using the support pillars of the bridge as a shield from the wind. Earlier, the council delivered a portable toilet to the site for their use.

Squatter spokesman Fud Ahmed said: "Our children all attend the Prestwich Street Primary School and, besides the normal problems we face of having to live like this, we often get accused of breaking into the cars using the parking area - but that is just part of life in a parking area."
DAILY ROUTINE:
Nataasha du Plessis washes her son Wayne, 2, in their makeshift squatter camp under Western Boulevard in Green Point.

BRIDGE HOTEL:
Hidden away under Western Boulevard, near the Green Point traffic department, this squatter community faces eviction as the Cape Town City Council tries to get an eviction order from the Supreme Court.
Evictions: ‘What else could we do?’

Municipal Staff

THE head of Cape Town City Council's housing committee, Charles Jacobs, came under fire from his committee members for not informing them of a decision to have a group of inner-city squatters evicted from their makeshift village under Western Boulevard in Green Point.

Committee member Isabel Edelstein told Mr Jacobs that as head of the committee he had no right to take such a decision on his own. Mr Jacobs said he was approached by the acting town clerk, who had been receiving numerous complaints from businesses in the area about the vagrants, and after consulting with his co-chair and the chairwoman of the executive committee, decided the squatters should be evicted.

"But, we offered them alternative accommodation at The Ark which they refused point blank. What else could we do?" Mrs Edelstein said she was not happy with the situation as the matter should have been referred to the full committee for a decision.

"As a committee we needed to weigh the pros and cons of the situation and hear both sides of the story before making a decision. We need to look at how we can reconstruct these people's lives and not send them to The Ark in Westlake against their will."

After the council's legal advisor Fiona Olga addressed the committee, it was agreed that a policy was needed on how to deal with evictions from council-owned land.

City to rule on illegal occupiers

Municipal Staff

ILLEGAL tenants occupying Cape Town City Council dwellings may soon know what the future holds for them.

At yesterday's housing committee meeting the issue came under the spotlight with an application by an illegal occupier to buy a rented house.

The council policy stated that an illegal tenant could become a legal occupier if it could be proved the person had stayed in the house for a period of two years or longer.

But in the case discussed, the occupier failed to prove occupancy despite apparently living there for 10 years - and demolishing the house to build a new one.

The original tenants had marital problems and the husband forced his wife out of the house before they divorced.

He sub-let to the illegal occupier, Edmund Herold. Mr Herold and his wife and four children then took occupancy, demolished the council house and built a new house valued at about R100 000. He applied to the council to buy the unit.

The committee decided to put the sale on hold until a new policy was formulated.
Police battle with 500 would-be invaders

Police yesterday fired rubber bullets and teargas to disperse about 500 pupils and teachers who tried to occupy the mainly white Laerskool Warrenton in the Northern Cape, said spokesman Supt Rita Craford.

"Nobody was seriously injured but a number of pupils were treated for bruising at Warrenton hospital," she said.

"Trouble erupted in the town north of Kimberley when pupils and teachers from Bkutseng township marched to the primary school. They stoned police and private vehicles when prevented from entering the schoolgrounds. Police fired rubber bullets and teargas to disperse them. Craford said the group had moved off to Bkutseng where they stoned the police station and two private cars.

They then returned to the primary school where negotiations were held with safety and security MEC Enice Komane and police officials." - Sapa.
Rightwingers' escape: warders investigated

Alleged AWB bombers are suspected to have had keys enabling them to unlock their cells, after which they managed to get past checkpoints and razor-wire fences.

By Arso Thom
Crime Reporter

Prison warders who were on duty when four rightwingers escaped from Diepkloof prison at the weekend have been questioned as part of the top-level investigation ordered by the Correctional Services commissioner.

Correctional services spokesman Brig Chris Ockers confirmed that chief deputy commissioners, functional services, Li-Gen Timothy Khoza, had visited the prison yesterday to question warders and investigate the "total spectrum".

Ockers could not yet say how the men had managed to get past the security checkpoints, including razor-wire fences, surrounding the Johannesburg prison.

Police spokesman Capt Eugene Opperman said police had received information from the public regarding the escapees. "We are following up all possible leads," he said. A reward of up to R250 000 would be considered as information came in.

Ockers said the men escaped from the single-cell, awaiting-trial section with Solomon Zabane (18), who was facing an unrelated murder charge.

Jan Bastiaan de Wet of Ottosdal, Abraham "Adam" Myburgh and Nicolaas Clifton Barnard of Ventersdorp, and Ettienne Jacobus le Roux of Heidelberg were awaiting judgment in their trial in connection with a series of bombings during the run-up to the 1994 election.

The escaped rightwingers, all members of the AWB, were due to reappear in court on March 29. Their cells were found unlocked early on Saturday indicating they had used keys. They had also sawn through two grille doors and smashed open a door reinforced with a steel plate.

Opperman said the men were dangerous and should not be confronted.

Storm over threatened land invasions spreads

By Norman Chandler
Pretoria Bureau

Anger among farming communities in Northern Province, Mpu- malanga and the Free State over threatened land invasions has spread to the Western Cape.

The National Land Committee as well as other organisations representing landless or dispossessed people have threatened to invade privately owned rural property if a property rights clause is included in the new constitution, due to be published soon.

A delegation of Western Cape Agricultural Union officials met Premier Henmus Kriel and Local Affairs MEC Piet Marais at the weekend to discuss the issue, in particular efforts by various organisations to render the Western Cape's proclamation 5004 unlawful.

W Cape farmers discuss issue

ful. This proclamation guarantees the rights of property owners, and this right was confirmed by Kriel and Marais.

"The delegates agreed that the Western Cape Agricultural Union should continue to work towards a practical solution to the problem," said the union's president, Chris du Toit, who is also president of the South African Agricultural Union (SAAU).

The meeting is the latest development in an ongoing battle by farmers to protect their property. The Transvaal Agricultural Union has called the Government's proposed land policy "socialist" and "communist", while the SAUU has warned against land invasion, saying farmers will use every form of resistance to oppose the practice.

Thousands of claims to rural land have been lodged by individuals and groups throughout the country in terms of the proposed three-pronged land policy, spelt out in a green paper published last month.

According to the paper, land redistribution is designed to provide the poor with land for residential and productive purposes, land restitution is to restore land and "provide other remedies" to people dispossessed by discriminatory legislation and practice, and the land tenure reform programme is planned to extend security of tenure of all South Africans.

The policy paper also makes it clear that priority to land will not be given to people or groups who take part in land invasions or threaten to do so.
HOME: Christopher Mahala lives in this little mobile shack he has made.

Even extra wheels to his precious trolley — his
Mr. Mahala has added money lenders and
It's somewhat crammed.

But now he accommodation problem is no

Tell people from here what to come in Cipher.
Home of his own. He has stayed with friends and
but one major problem has been now having a

He has been good friends lately.

He has done odd jobs in the building industry

and in gardens and anything else that earned

Depression in the early Cape to look for
desperation in the 1980s. Chicago's economic

Christopher came to Cape Town from

Some difficulty. It's nothing else. It does give him

market trouble. It is nothing else. He never call

his a mobile home that is a controlled space — he

never call Christopher Mahala locations, he

may be on the brink of dawn and all but

Home is where

its a trolley

even if

the heart is
home — that he pushes around during the day.

It would be difficult to describe him as a beggar, because he strives to maintain his dignity by denying he is homeless.

"I'm only staying in this thing for a short while. I don't really need a proper house because I'll be going back to Queenstown. Please don't worry about me. I'm okay, I don't have any problems with food," said Mr Mabala.

He sits next to his trolley for most of the time wondering where his next job will come from.

Thanks to taxi operator Saara Ali, who operates from Maitland station to Tableview and has become a kind of Good Samaritan, Mr Mabala is provided with at least one plate of food a day.

"I saw this man getting out of this trolley and that aroused my curiosity. Something was not quite right here. He is very conscious of what his situation is, even though he will not go out to beg," said Mr Ali, who feels he has an obligation as a Muslim to help where he can.

Receptionist Cornelia Esau, who works near Mr Mabala's "residence", said she had seen the trolley for about the past three weeks.

Only this week she noticed a man sitting next to the trolley but she did not know that Mr Mabala actually lived and slept in it.

Many others, including workers at a petrol station nearby, know very little about this mysterious man who doesn't care what people think about him because he believes he has a place in the sun.
Squatters face eviction

Council to act on 'bridge' people

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council’s housing committee has decided to continue legal action against the Green Point “bridge” squatters whose presence has been offending neighbouring businesses.

The group of inner-city squatters, who were defended by the Legal Resources Centre after the council applied for an urgent eviction order in February, claim that some of them have been living in the area for up to 14 years and that they are seasonally employed on fishing trawlers.

The housing committee has also given the council’s lawyers the go-ahead to negotiate an out-of-court settlement for the squatters to move before the next court date, which has been set for June 10.

According to a council report, the squatters were offered accommodation at the Ark in Westlake just before Christmas last year, but only six people indicated they were willing to go.

The report said the council first acted against squatters there in December 1992 when eight people were found on the property and evicted.

This pattern was repeated over the subsequent years until the council erected trespass signs in mid-1995.

During 1995, the council removed temporary structures several times but by December there were 49 people living under the bridge.

In January this year, several complaints were sent in from surrounding businesses - among them City Lodge Hotel and the Waterfront Theatre School, which offers tuition to primary school children.

The council took the matter to court in February and the housing commit-

tee subsequently visited the site in March.

In a report to the committee, the city planner said the central business district generated about 25 percent of the municipal rates base and played a critical role in maintaining the financial viability of the city.

“Together with the Waterfront and Atlantic coast it forms the core of the Western Cape’s tourism industry with some 54 percent of all hotel beds in the province being located in this area.”

The report said the negative impact of an influx of homeless people was evident in Johannesburg and Durban.

“The issue of homelessness and poverty is extremely sensitive and is not easily solved, but for the reasons stated earlier it cannot be ignored because it would not be in the long-term interest of all the people of Cape Town.”

“The problem is obviously not limited to the CBD or to these particular people and this issue is a microcosm of a greater malaise, which also includes street children.

However, the CBD is where the impact is potentially greatest and if not solved the problem could damage the prospects for the tourism industry which will, in turn, affect job creation and ultimately the financial viability of the whole city, and indeed the metropole.”

During a debate on the issue, Democratic Party councillor Isobel Edelstein pleaded for the city’s community liaison unit to undertake an accurate assessment of the situation.

She said she was not necessarily opposed to the removal of the squatters, but the city did not have any idea of what it was dealing with and therefore could not make an informed decision.
The undertook to find a new a week later Mr. Hoffman

393 Go to court

The undertook to find a new

402 CMIC about to

A week later Mr. Hoffman,

broaden the field of con

417 Squatters:
Homes at last for Marconci Beam

Squatter settlement is abuzz

JOSEPH ARIANES
Municipal Staff

AN ambitious new housing development is about to ease the lives of thousands of Marconci Beam squatter camp residents who have lived under some of the most squalid and dangerous conditions in the Western Cape.

The development at Slovo Park, as the new village will be called, is slowly starting to take shape at Marconci Beam in Milnerton, with 15 of 20 showhouses already built, and the remaining five due for completion by the end of the month.

Although some of the houses won’t be much bigger than the proverbial matchbox, they will be a far cry from the present shacks which the squatters occupy on serviced land behind the Milnerton racecourse stables.

For the past few years the 1,200 families have lived in constant fear of fires raging through the camp during the dry, windy summer season.

And in winter they fear the annual rains, which turn the site into a muddy morass.

Earlier this year, four fires in a month destroyed hundreds of shacks and left many people homeless.

The local authority installed some basic services like a few scattered taps and toilets, and electricity, but the squatter remained evident.

Mzimasi Mheki, development manager for the Marconci Beam Development Trust, said the trust was delighted at the recent progress that had been made to provide decent living conditions for the people.

“For too long the residents of Marconci Beam were forced to live under these appalling conditions, with little hope of any improvement to the quality of their lives. With this development taking shape we can now begin to visualise where we are going to.

“Hopefully by the end of the month the residents will be able to go to the show village and choose the type of house they would like to live in, and once that process is completed, the building of 250 units for the first phase can begin in all earnest.”

Mr Mheki said the project was divided into four phases, each consisting of about 250 different dwellings, depending on people’s choices.

“The show period will be for two weeks, and it will give residents an opportunity to make an input on the house designs and other changes they might feel is necessary. During that period we will also announce the price of the different units.”

He said while most people wanted to live in relative comfort, the area had a high level of unemployment which meant that many would have to be satisfied with smaller houses.

“The people need to see what they can afford before making any decisions.”

At the moment the settlement is abuzz with excitement and activity as hundreds of residents stream to the Trust’s offices to complete their housing subsidy application forms.

The provincial housing board has already approved the project and allocated R10 million for the development.

But Mr Mheki said the trust had encountered a serious problem which if not quickly resolved could jeopardise the housing prospects for many of the residents.

“During the recent fires many people lost all their possessions, including documents like their identity books, marriage certificates and other papers that need to be submitted with the subsidy application form to the housing board. If their applications are to be considered.

“We have been urging them to go the Home Affairs offices and get new documents, so hopefully when the second phase starts at the beginning of 1997, they could be in line to benefit.”

For Raymond Nana, 74, the process is still taking a bit too long.

The pensioner, who lives with his daughter and her family, has twice had to rebuild his house after it was destroyed in fires.

“We have lost everything, but have applied for the subsidy, so hopefully we will be able to move into a new house in the not too distant future.”

Mariam Ndaba said she could not wait to move into the new house.

“For the past four years, I have been living in this place, fighting the fires and the rains.

“I think it is time I settle into a decent house and raise my MAIN ROAD: A Marconci Beam resident goes about her daily business amid the squalor of the informal settlement.
GREEN PIECE: Desmond Nana spends a lot of his time tending his garden, and is very proud of the results.

COMMUNITY WORKER: Mzimasi Mbekl is the driving force behind getting proper housing for Marconi Beam.
CMC must try to settle dispute with Paarl squatters

DENNIS CAVERNELIS
Supreme Court Reporter

THE Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) has been ordered by the Cape Supreme Court to try to resolve its dispute with a group of squatters occupying a portion of farmland in Paarl.

The CMC brought an urgent application yesterday against Western Cape premier Herus Kriel, the Minister of Roads and Transport, Leonard Ramatlakane; the Minister of Housing, Cecil Herandien; and the squatters.

The CMC wanted the squatters removed from land on the farm Nieuwehoop in Paarl, to a serviced squatter settlement at Klapmuts, near Stellenbosch, and asked for previous decisions allowing the squatters to occupy their present site to be set aside.

Mr Kriel, Mr Ramatlakane and Mr Herandien did not oppose the application, and said in papers they would abide by the court’s decision.

Mr Acting Justice Burger made an order that the squatters be left undisturbed.

The CMC was ordered to pay the costs of the squatters’ legal representatives, and the application was postponed indefinitely.
The Khayelitsha emergency relief fund has been cleared out by squatter's demands for TV sets, hi-fi and other luxuries.

JEAN LE MAY
Staff Reporter

EMERGENCY relief money given to the Lingelthu West transitional council has been used to buy TV sets, hi-fi equipment, tapes, duvets and other luxury items for squatters whose homes were burnt down.

Provincial and state emergency funds are taxpayers' money and are supposed to be used only for "life-sustaining necessities for people in dire need."

Town clerk Wouter Loots told Saturday Argus that about R184 000 was given to the council by the province and other donors. Another R132 000 was given by the province through the SA Red Cross.

Last week about R105 000 was left in the emergency kitty. But Kenny Hart, official buyer for the council, was taken hostage by a squatters' forum and told he would not be released until he filled a shopping list which would wipe out the surplus.

The list included 67 black and white TV sets, 39 hi-fi sets, 25 tapes, liquor, cigarettes, duvets, fitted sheets, duvet covers, bedframes, batteries, pots and pans and groceries worth R7 000.

The squatters were from Site B, Khayelitsha, which was devastated by a fire which destroyed 620 shacks in January, leaving about 2 000 people homeless.

Mr Loots told Saturday Argus that the council authorised the expenditure on luxuries because it decided that relief money was intended to replace possessions lost in the fire as well as for emergency supplies.

"I am sorry that all the relief money has now been spent because it may have been needed if there is another fire," he said.

Early last week a squatters' forum said at a meeting with Air Loots and other officials that it wanted the rest of the money to be handed over.

The next day Mr Hart turned up for another meeting which had been arranged with the squatters' forum.

But he found himself the only official there.

He was given a list of demands, he told Saturday Argus, which included the luxury items on the shopping list as well as grocery staples and building materials. He explained that he could not buy anything without authorisation, but this fell on deaf ears.

"I was told I would not be allowed out of the building until I had obtained authorisation. I telephoned Mr Loots, who was at a council meeting in Kraaifontein. A little while later I was telephoned and told to have council cheques made out for not more than R100 000."

"I rushed to Kraaifontein to have the cheques signed and handed them over to the squatter leaders, who went shopping for everything on the list except the liquor and cigarettes, which the council refused to buy."

The fire left almost 2 000 people homeless. It was said to have been started by a pot of food left on an open-flame stove while the housewife went out to watch the televised soccer match in which Bafana Bafana beat Angola.

Nobody was injured in the fire, but SA Red Cross field worker Sindisiwe Ripsay said many people had been unable to save anything.

He said the homeless were being housed temporarily in the Lingelthu Resource Centre.

Relief flowed in after the fire. Mr Loots said R100 000 had been given by the "welfare department" and R84 000 by the provincial administration of the Western Cape, as well as a few small private donations.

"We had some of our own money as well," he said.

He said the council had spent about R80 000 on plastic sheeting, poles and foam mattresses, leaving a surplus of R105 000.

A spokesman for the provincial department of social services said it had channelled its grant of R182 000 through the SA Red Cross, with strict instructions that it was to be used only for "the provision of life-sustaining necessities."

SA Red Cross regional chairman Douglas Davidson said invoices showed it had spent mostly on blankets.

The Red Cross also appealed to the public for donations to its Khayelitsha Disaster Relief Fund, to be paid into a trust account at a bank.

A spokesman said at the time that the Red Cross was distributing food and blankets, but were terribly short of foodstuffs, especially non-perishables, baby bottles, baby food and napkins.

The Western Cape Rural Table gave R25 000 worth of blankets and plastic sheeting. Shoprite Checkers donated tinned food, bread and milk, and organised public donations of clothes, tinned food and blankets.

Meanwhile Lingelthu West council started upgrading the burnt-out area, putting in bucket lavatories and water connections and building roads through the shack sites to make it easier for the fire brigade to get in if there were another fire.

The homeless, who were by then living in Khayelitsha Community Hall or with relatives, said early in February that they were tired of living in the hall and wanted to start rebuilding.

They started asking questions about the remaining R105 000, William Damiso, a squatters' committee member, said that when residents heard about the relief money, they expected it to be given to them as individuals.

In mid-February they started putting pressure on the committee to allow them to rebuild their shacks on the burnt-out site, rejecting an offer by the council to give them a serviced site.

The committee members hastily demarcated sites to allow rebuilding to begin.

The squatters also rejected the bucket lavatories, saying they wanted ones that flushed.

The council said this was impracticable because the site was intended for a school and they would have to move eventually.
Court blocks move to evict squatters

ANDREA WEISS
Metro Reporter

LAWYERS acting for a group of 30 homeless people living under a bridge near Customs House have gone to the Supreme Court to stop the Cape Town City Council from evicting them under legislation used during the apartheid era.

The council served a notice at lunchtime on Friday telling the squatters that they had 48 hours to move or their shacks would be demolished in terms of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1983.

The Legal Resources Centre (LRC), acting for the squatters, who live in five shacks under a bridge, contends that the Act is inconsistent with the interim constitution and that it should be declared invalid.

The LRC intends approaching the Constitutional Court to have it struck down on the grounds that the Act is inconsistent with several fundamental rights, among them the right to life, human dignity, freedom and security of person, privacy, access to court, administrative justice and property.

Deputy Judge President Fagan granted an order, by agreement, that postponed the hearing to Friday this week and ruled that the city council would not be entitled to demolish the shacks beneath the elevated portion of the N1 highway at the foot of Lower Long Street.

The squatters are living in five shacks, one of which was burned down over the weekend, and range in age from six months to 45 years.

Andrew John said in an affidavit that their homes were made of wooden boards, plastic sheeting and mats, and that they used toilets in a nearby parking garage. They also had access to clean water for drinking, bathing and washing from a municipal tap.

Mr John said none of the squatters had permanent employment, but they survived on money earned from casual labour, collecting scrap material and from washing and parking cars.

“None of us receives any money from any government entity. Each home shares any money that is earned and uses it to buy food and other necessities for the residents of that home,” he said.

BRIDGE OF SIGHS: Foreshore squatters Boci April and Ralph Morgan sit sadly under the bridge on the Foreshore wondering what the future holds for them.
Major upgrade for Vygekraal

Metro Reporter

ABOUT 179 families living at the Vygekraal informal settlement in Athlone are in line for a major upgrade of their area now that the Cape Town City Council has given the go-ahead to start the necessary planning for the upliftment scheme.

The council also agreed "in principle" to put up R30 200 from its Social Development Capital Fund, made up of the proceeds of the sale of council land, including the Clifton bungalows, for the project.

Other money would come from the provincial housing board (R1.4 million) and R50 300 from the Consolidated Capital Development and Loans Fund, bringing the total for the project to just more than R2 million.

The money will be used to upgrade the living conditions of about 179 families living at Vygekraal and at Jane Avenue, Rylands, some of whom have been in the area for up to 30 years. Both communities will be accommodated at Vygekraal.

The council will fund the levelling of the land, construction of roads and stormwater drainage and sewers, and will have to rezone the site from public open-space to a subdivisinal area. Other services will include water supply, street lighting and electricity.

One of the conditions of the project will be that households earning more than R2 000 a month shall not benefit from the Social Development Capital Fund.

In addition, it will cost the council about R1 million to acquire alternative land to be used as attenuation ponds because part of the area had been earmarked to store stormwater. The council has given the city planner the authority to advertise the proposed rezoning for the development.
for squatter communities
Landmark court victorines

ANGEL WESS
New homes for squatters

CT 14/5/96

ALTOGETHER 179 homes are to be built near the Vygieskraal canal in Athlone — between Voel and Veld streets — to accommodate local squatter families.

An agreement was signed yesterday between the Cape Town City Council, the Athlone RDP forum and the community which will benefit from the development. Some of the shack-dwellers are from Vygieskraal and some from Jane Street further towards Rylands Estate.

The three parties will submit a joint application to the Regional Housing Board for R3 million. Mr Charles Jacobs, the co-chairman of the council's housing committee, said he had no doubt the application would be granted.

At a ceremony at Vygieskraal yesterday, Athlone RDP chairman Mr Nazeem Mahathey said the occasion was historic because it was the council's first project to build houses under the new national housing policy.

It has taken two years to reach the stage of formally applying for funds. There should be enough, under the government's once-off R15 000 plus 15% capital subsidy scheme, to service each plot and still have R8 000 per plot left for a home on each site.

While the RDP allows only for gravel roads in such a settlement, the council has decided to provide tarred roads and pay the difference in cost itself.

The council believes that while it is cheaper in the short term to lay on gravel roads, tarred roads will be cheaper in the long run because they require less maintenance.

Mayor Mr William Bantorn said this project was the first application by the council, an RDP forum and a community for upgrading a shack community in the city. He said he hoped it would succeed and set a precedent for similar projects.

Mrs Mauridah Koopman, a social worker and Vygieskraal community leader, said she and her committee had lobbied for houses for eight years.

"It is the beginning of a new life for us," she said.

"We have been living in very difficult circumstances, especially for the women and children."

Mr Hoosain Kagie, the chairman of the housing and land sub-committee of the RDP forum, said there had been times when he doubted the homes would ever be built. However, all the problems that had arisen had been overcome by discussions between the organisations.
Squatters take hostage – demand television sets

JEAN LE MAY (307)
Staff Reporter

BEING held hostage is becoming an occupational hazard for officials of the Lingelethu West transitional council, town clerk Kobus Coetzee told SATURDAY Argus.

Mr Coetzee was taken hostage in his office at 10am yesterday by members of the Site B, Khayelitsha, Squatters’ Forum, and was not released until 4pm after consultations with the management committee.

The squatters demanded that they should be given R10 400 remaining in the relief fund established in January by provincial and private donors when a fire destroyed 2 000 shacks.

About R165 000 from the relief fund was given to the same group last month after Kenny Hart, official buyer for the council, was held hostage.

SATURDAY Argus reported at the time that the squatters bought TV sets, hi-fi equipment, tapes, duvets and other luxury items with the money.

Mr Coetzee said that he had been approached earlier last week by the forum with a shopping list which consisted of the same luxury items, such as TV sets and video recorders.

“I had an answer ready for them. I said ‘no’, in no uncertain terms,” said Mr Coetzee.

He advised the forum to draw up a shopping list of genuine emergency items such as building materials, blankets or Primus stoves and promised to submit it to the council meeting which was to have been held on May 22.

“But the meeting was cancelled,” he said. “I was holding it over for the next meeting, which would have been after the local elections, but they were not prepared to wait.

“Seven of them invaded my office this morning and another crowd stood around outside, threatening to ‘call in the community’.

“I could have had them removed by force, but I did not want to risk a confrontation with probable violence.

“I got hold of the management committee and they agreed to allow emergency relief items to be bought with the money.

“The squatters did not leave until I gave an undertaking that they would get the money on Monday.

“They are spending the weekend getting quotes for non-luxury items, and I’m on my way home to have a double Scotch,” said Mr Coetzee.
'Red tape' blamed for Westlake's squatter problem

THE national Public Works Department must take the blame for the fact that there has been no decision regarding the Westlake squatters and the 95ha site they occupy, according to the chairman of the Kirstenhof Ratepayers Association Rod Knapp.

He said the issue was enmeshed in "bureaucratic red tape" and might only be resolved if the Minister of Public Works, Jeff Radebe, got involved in it.

Mr Knapp said he sent five letters to Mr Radebe asking about progress on transferring the land to the provincial government, but there had been no response to any of his enquiries.

The local Public Works Department representative said the land was in the central government's name. For it to be transferred to the provincial government an application to this effect would first have to go through the Minister of Land Affairs Derek Hanekom for a section-239 certificate which would in turn have to approved by Mr Radebe.

Only one-twentieth of the land is occupied by squatters. The remainder - possibly the last large remaining government-owned tract of land left in the southern suburbs - is for the most part an open space with the exception of a group of institutional buildings including the Westlake hospital and the DP Marais TB hospital, sports fields, the old post office, Westlake Technical College and homes let out by the national PWD. The Ark refuge for the homeless people also occupies a portion of the land.

"The big problem lies with the national PWD," said Mr Knapp.

"At a public meeting in June 1995 residents of Tokai and Kirstenhof adopted a motion accepting the presence of the Westlake community in a properly planned manner.

"Now, nearly a year later little progress seems to have been made to draw up the plan to show the usage of the existing buildings and a properly planned location for the squatters.

"Letters go unanswered and a three-month long attempt by the mayor of Constantia to obtain an interview with the Minister of Housing failed. What better RDP project can there be?"

Mr Knapp said "buck passing between departments" as to who is allowed to do what had resulted in totally uncontrolled growth in the number of people squatting. Attempts by health authorities to organise the community to control themselves had been frustrated by constantly changing provincial officials.

He added the Metropolitan Council declined to provide RDP funds, deciding "that squatters in Constantia" were not as important as "community centres in Bonteheuvel.

Election candidate Andre Pentz and chairman of Concerned Residents of Westlake (CROW) said there has been very little control and lots of confusion about the land. "The land should be transferred to a responsible authority or development trust which should take charge of upgrading and developing it according to an agreed plan worked out with residents and other stakeholders including existing institutions."

"We believe that the further influx of people to Westlake..."
SQUATTER SPREAD: An aerial view of the residential section of Kirstenhof near the Westlake golf course. The squatters occupy the large area arrowed near the centre of the picture. To the right of the settlement is the road leading to the Blue Route. Westlake golf course is at the bottom of the picture.
Agreement reached on Vrygrond’s future

MONTHS of hard negotiations finally paid off when an agreement was reached between the squatter community of Vrygrond and the Central substructure (Cape Town City Council).

Development in the area could start by early next year.

At a recent meeting between the Committee of Nine, representing the Vrygrond community, and a planning delegation of the city council, the parties agreed on a master plan for the 52ha of land near Steenberg, on which the community has been living for years.

The cost of the development has been estimated at about R12 million.

The plan provides for the land to be cut up into just more than 1 000 erven, a village square surrounded by land for commercial use, sites for a primary school, a full standard soccer field and a light industrial area.

The city council’s director of project management services, Hans Smit, said the agreement represented a major breakthrough as the council had been negotiating with the residents for many months.

“But often the community would change the representatives and the whole process would have to be started from scratch.

“At times, there were also more than one group claiming to represent the interests of the residents which made reaching an agreement very difficult.

“The Committee of Nine is, however, very representative of the community and we have been meeting with them to work out solutions that will take forward the planning process.”

Mr Smit said the plan that was accepted was a well worked out concept.

The fact that a fair amount of consensus was reached was a major step forward in the development of Vrygrond.

“All the erven are planned for full services like electricity, water and a water-borne sewerage system, while a stormwater system will be put in place to prevent flooding during winter.

“Most of the existing sand dunes will be retained and roads will be built, and the centre of Vrygrond will be connected via a new road to Prince George Drive.”

Mr Smit said it would be desirable to start construction of the services at the beginning of next year, but this depended on funding approvals and the formation of a development trust for Vrygrond.
NO CHOICE: Lack of housing has forced Yolanda Smith, her husband and her two sons to squat on city council property adjoining the Telkom building in Maitland.

Telkom upset over squatters

RIMA VESELY
Staff Reporter

THERE is only a fence separating the first world from the third world at the Telkom building in Maitland.

Rubbish surrounding a squatter's shack outside the fence of the Telkom building has driven employees to complain about the conditions of their workplace.

"The fence is literally separating first world from third world," said David Steenkamp, Telkom's technical officer, pointing to the rubbish and washing hanging on Telkom's fence.

"You can't even say that's third world. It's something else. The employees feel that they shouldn't see this in the morning. We have got no jurisdiction over the land, but people here feel it's unfair. It's the first thing everyone who comes here sees."

Yolanda Smith, who lives in the shack with her husband, two sons and a friend, said she was shocked at the complaints. They had been on the land, which belongs to the Cape Town city council, for nearly four years.

"We couldn't find a place. That's why we put the shack here," she said. "They know we've been here for more than three years. I don't know what they've got against us."

The family moved from a tucked-away corner of the land about five months ago, because wind was blowing refuse into their tent. Their new shack, which is near the entrance to the parking area, has added protection from a tree. The old area is used as a toilet.

Ms Smith said the family had been waiting for a flat but were not sure when they would get one.

Now that she was aware of the complaints, she said she would talk the matter over with her husband, Peter, who works in a leather factory.

She said the city council had been notified numerous times about the rubbish littering the area between Telkom's property and the freeway, but that there had been no response.

A city council official close to the issue of squattng, said, however, that the department was unaware of the situation. When they were notified of such a situation, investigators were sent to investigate. The council official said the council would suggest the family use facilities at The Ark, an institution that takes in homeless people and provides them with food and accommodation.

"We (the council) are going to have to negotiate with them," he said. "That is a place we can offer. If they don't accept, we will have to report to the politicians."

Giving the family proper housing and facilities was necessary, Telkom employees said.

"In this day and age, they shouldn't live like this, not here. Someone with authority must help them," Mr Steenkamp said.
Squatter shacks mushrooming
CT 16/7/96
MORE squatter houses were built in the predominantly African areas of Cape Town in the first five months of this year than in each of the previous two years.

Between January and May this year, 5 363 houses were erected by squatters in Guguletu, Crossroads, Khayelitsha and Nyanga, more than the 4 431 built in 1994 and the 4 676 in 1995.
Plan to find best city rating system

Metro Reporter

CAPE Town municipality has set up a working group to find the best rating system for properties in the municipality because of disparities which exist in the newly formed substructure.

This move has been welcomed by the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry which says it is time for the city to stop piling the rates burden on to its business community.

In its latest bulletin, the Chamber says that the council has always taken the easy route by taxing business rather than residential voters.

This situation impeded growth and job creation by driving businesses away, it argued.

The Chamber said while the council was highlighting inequities between advantaged and disadvantaged communities, it was necessary to highlight the negative impact the current rates structure had on business in the city.

Among the issues the council’s working group will look at are disparities between charges as well as the level of services provided in different areas of the new municipality, arising out of the amalgamation of five different local authorities.

The group will also look at the cumbersome and costly procedures for valuing property for rating purposes. It will be guided by four principles, namely achieving equity; promoting economic growth and development; keeping the rating system simple; and minimising administrative costs.

In a statement, the council said the four principles represented a significant departure from previous approaches to property rating. This was because they recognised rating not only as a means of collecting revenue, but as a broader urban management tool.

The group expects to complete its work within a six-month period, with the view to making a final recommendation to the full council early next year.

The Rating and Valuation Working Group’s members are Saleem Mowzer (deputy chairman of exco), Leon Markovitz (urban planning committee chairman), Hanief Tiseker (property and economic development chairman), Lens Renouf (property and economic development deputy chairman) and Daniel Silke (a member of the property and economic development committee).

Mr Mowzer, Mr Renouf and Mr Tiseker are African National Congress members, Mr Markovitz belongs to the National Party and Mr Silke to the Democratic Party.

Temporary relocation of squatters approved

Metro Reporter

The Cape Metropolitan Council has given its backing to a plan to establish a temporary informal settlement on rural land outside Durbanville.

The settlement will house a group of people presently squatting on the road reserve of the R312 near Fisantekraal.

The establishment of a settlement on a portion of the land known as the Lichtenburg Cutsrun site requires the land use designated in the structure plan to be changed from agricultural purposes to urban development.

The one-hectare site is being viewed as an area for “temporary relocation” of the squatters.

In the council agenda, the site is described as being 4km from the R312, sufficiently away from the bank of the Moselebank River.

It was also within walking distance of the Fisantekraal Primary School.

The second draft of a South-Peninsula sub-regional plan is to be released for public comment.

This is the decision of the CMC which has given permission for the plan, which includes important conservation guidelines for the southern Peninsula, to be made known to interested and affected parties.
Temporary relocation of squatters approved

Metro Reporter

THE Cape Metropolitan Council has given its backing to a plan to establish a temporary informal settlement on rural land outside Durbanville.

The settlement will house a group of people presently squatting on the road reserve of the R312 near Fisantekraal.

The establishment of a settlement on a portion of the land known as the Lichtenburg Outspan site requires the land use designated in the structure plan to be changed from agricultural purposes to urban development.

The one-hectare site is being viewed as an area for "temporary relocation" of the squatters.

In the council agenda, the site is described as being 40m from the R312, sufficiently away from the bank of the Mosselbank River.

It was also within walking distance of the Fisantekraal Primary School.

The second draft of a South-Peninsula sub-regional plan is to be released for public comment.

This is the decision of the CMC which has given permission for the plan, which includes important conservation guidelines for the southern Peninsula, to be made known to interested and affected parties.
The Minister of Housing and Urban Development

Date: 210 S. FIFTH STREET, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Squatters hang it all out on Sundays

CYNTHIA YONGAI

SUNDAY is wash day in downtown Cape Town, at least for the squatters living on the verandah of the Standard Bank building in Thibault Square.

Ms Margret Barands and her neighbour, Paula, said they waited until Sunday to do their weekly washing because during the week there were too many people milling about.

"We wash on Sunday because it is not so busy and we can easily carry the water from the fountain to where we do our washing," Barands said.

However, she was angered at the fact that some people were complaining about them hanging out their washing to dry on the railing outside the bank.

"I wash on Sunday so that during the week my washing is not disturbing anyone! I do not have a house, so where do these people expect me to hang my clothes?" she asked.

When the Cape Times arrived at the scene, Barands was busy washing her clothes in dirty water.

Her neighbour, Paula, has a three-year-old child and said people should be happy with the fact she was keeping herself and her child clean.

"People shun us because we are dirty, (but) when we try to be normal and wash our clothes and clean ourselves, they still complain.

"What do they want us to do when they don't help us?"
Specialists to study impact of cement factory

ANDREA WEISS
Staff Reporter

THIRTEEN specialist studies are to be commissioned before a decision is made on the development of a R743-million cement factory and four quarries close to the controversial Saldanha Steel mill.

The developers, Alpha Ltd, have not yet applied to the province for rezoning approval but are awaiting the outcome of an environmental impact assessment which will include the specialist studies.

Environmentalists have expressed concern that the cement factory will open the floodgates to heavy industrial development in the Saldanha area, which lies close to the internationally significant wetland system of the Langebaan lagoon.

Alpha Ltd proposes to manufacture cement at a plant west of the Saldanha-Stellenbosch railway line near the ore-loading terminal at Saldanha. It also wants to mine limestone and clay at quarries parallel to the coast between Saldanha and Vredenburg, using a conveyor belt linking them to the proposed plant.

The specialist studies are the result of a scoping exercise, one of the first steps in the EIA procedure which has been commissioned by the company.

Areas of study will include looking at alternatives to the project, flora, fauna, marine biology and nearshore coastal ecosystems, water quality and supply, air quality, aesthetics, noise, archaeology, palaeontology, economics, tourism and resort development, town planning and social infrastructure.

The study of project alternatives will review the financial viability of the project. Coastal strandveld, in particular its flora and fauna, will also be looked at in detail as well as the effect of a linear barrier to animal movement which would be created by the conveyor belt.

On the mineral front, a specialist will be asked to assess the potential effects of project spoilage and dust fallout caused by loading cement and bulk freight at the ore terminal.

The risk of a pollution of groundwater at the factory site will also be assessed, as will the cement plant's water demand on the Berg River system. The company will also investigate the feasibility of using saline groundwater as an alternative to the municipal supply.

A palaeontologist will be called in to assess the importance of fossil remains in the limestone and possible ways of recovering the palaeontological information as mining proceeds.

Agricultural costs and benefits of the study will investigate the direct and indirect economic effects of the project including salaries, contracts, foreign exchange earnings, as well as effects on land prices.

The study will also look at the potential positive and negative effects of increased competition in the Western Cape cement market.

A town planning study will identify direct housing and the training of professionals, the potential for the project on electricity supply, the possible influx of job seekers, and the effect of the project on telecommunication, civil aviation and public health and safety.

Squatters in Simondium get facilities, hope for a home

ESAVIN DE KOCH
Staff Reporter

SQUATTERS in Simondium are to receive water and toilets - thanks to farmers in the area who agreed, during a meeting of the Simondium Task Group, to provide the facilities.

The group was formed to find housing for the area's homeless.

The group's aim is to find suitable, permanent housing for the farmers who decide to provide housing for the squatters.

The group also decided to write to three different ministers calling for the relocation of land to develop housing for the farm workers and the homeless of Simondium.

The only objection to moves so far have come from some of the farmers, said Professor Turok, who felt the process was moving ahead too quickly.

They wanted a professionally conducted survey on housing needs and possibilities, and envisaged an "agri-village" for the retired people instead of a development for the use of all homeless people in the area.

"We can't agree with them. Our object is to provide housing for all the workers and homeless people who live in the area," said Professor Turok. He said the group registered their objection as well as the objections by landowners who felt a housing development would spoil the area.

"The meeting decided to carry on with the programme and we've asked minister Derek Hamedon - Minister of Land Affairs - to give us the Meerlust land for the development. The main thing here is the will of the government. If the government is determined, we'll find a way to provide for the housing needs in this area."
Homes for Kuils River squatters

ERICK NTABIZALILA

KUILS River squatter camp residents are to have the opportunity to own houses for the first time in their lives.

The Eastern substructure yesterday launched a low-cost housing project through which 25 000 houses will be built.

Mr Charles Harmanse, town secretary for Kuils River, said the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC), from its RDP project, had allocated R2 million for the houses to be built in the area.

The money was allocated to the area last year and R3m was needed to build houses in the area.

He said the houses would be constructed according to the subsidy scheme under which people would be allowed R15 000 as a subsidy.

After each resident in the area had paid for the site, the amount left would be used for the structure, Harmanse said.

Residents would not be given the money but would be supplied with building materials and the first people to be moved into the area would be those on waiting lists for houses in Kuils River.
Gauteng MEC blames the Sandton rates deadlock on DP

BY ABBIE COX
Sandton Bureau

The deadlock in the Sandton rates boycott was broken with the announcement yesterday that the area's council was now willing to talk to residents who are up in arms against a steep rise in the tax.

But the Gauteng MEC for local government, Sicelo Shiceka, a member of the ANC, blamed the crisis on the Democratic Party. He said DP councillors had failed their constituents in the Eastern Metro by not keeping them informed about the reasons for the rates increases.

ANC and NP leaders said they had decided to initiate the talks because they wanted to ensure development of local government structures, their concern about the negative impact on service provisions and also to prevent a financial crisis in the Eastern Metro.

The talks would start next week.

"We are confident talks will lead to a situation which suits both residents and the substructure," the parties said in a joint statement.

Shiceka would not comment on whether rates would be lowered, but he did say all options would be explored.

He slammed the DP and said he was concerned about the motives of the ward councillors who, despite having participated in the entire process of budgeting and defining increased rates, had failed to inform their voters.

Their negligence, he said, had led to conflict and they had to accept responsibility for the crisis which they had provoked.

"The DP must accept that it has either misinformed its constituents, or not informed them at all, in an attempt to precipitate a crisis," he said.

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers' spokesman Brian Stoelenberg said he was extremely pleased at the decision to hold discussions.

"This is all we ever wanted, to talk to someone who has a mandate to negotiate with us," he said.

DP spokesman Frances Kendall said the party welcomed the new initiative.

The claims that councillors had failed their constituents were "double-speak" by the ANC and the NP, she said.

"What they mean when they say this is that the DP failed to sell their single rate in the rand policy and consequent rates hikes to their residents," she said.

"This is true, because we told the truth and refused to whitewash the process."
Residents told nine families live on pavement

NEWS
Cape Argus, Tuesday, October 29, 1996

ALARM AT SQUATTER CAMP PLAN

Only a week or so ago, a local newspaper reported that the residents of a squatter camp had rioted in protest against the proposed move by the municipality to evict them. The newspaper's report stated that the residents were forced to live in shacks made of scrap materials and were subjected to constant harassment by the police. The residents, who were predominantly from the African community, claimed that they had no other option but to live in such conditions due to the lack of affordable housing in the area. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the residents had been living in the camp for many years and had established a community life. The newspaper's report highlighted the lack of government support for squatter camps and called for urgent action to address the housing crisis in the area.
It's a Dutch treat as squatters get homes

By CHARL DE VILLIERS

VILLIERSDORP is gripped by a development fever which will see "squatters" building proper homes for themselves after spending gruelling hours hacking out invasive plants in the mountains above the Boland town.

Backed by a R1.2-million grant from Culemborg in the Netherlands, Jan van Riebeeck's birthplace, and nearly R6.8-million in approved state subsidies, the housing programme's beneficiaries yesterday launched the first phase of the Villiersdorp Housing Project which aims to put up 51 homes by March next year.

Altogether 475 houses on serviced sites are expected to be built in the next two years.

"This project entails a unique partnership which outstrips anything else in the country," Development Action Group director Jacqui Boulle said this week.

And many of its beneficiaries — who will build their own 52 m² core houses free-of-charge — have already proved their commitment by trading pangas for spades and trowels after work as "hackers" in the RDP's Working for Water programme, the water project's Western Cape co-ordinator, Christo Marais, added this week.

"Contrary to a recent committee which gives equal representation to local civic representatives and the Villiersdorp municipality, the housing project has emerged as a major triumph after seven years of conflict over squatter housing rights."

The Development Action Group — a Cape Town-based development agency which has also spearheaded important housing initiatives in Marconi Beach — was asked to intervene and in mid-1995 the local authority agreed to hold off land sales until all homeless people had been allocated land, Boulle said.

"Since then, the community has placed all its energy into securing houses."

A "twinning" agreement with the Culemborg municipality in Holland helped the civic set up an advice office, and the Dutch town collected funds for a rotating loan housing fund which offers each beneficiary family a maximum loan of R4,000 to supplement the government's R15,000 housing subsidy.

Culemborg also contributed equipment for a brick-making co-operative employing seven local people. Training is provided by the Building Industries Federation and the community has persuaded suppliers to freeze prices for six months, Boulle said.

Marais said the RDP catchment clearance project had virtually wiped out unemployment in Villiersdorp by providing work for about 300 formerly jobless people who have already cleared about 600 ha of densely-infested mountain pine.
Deadlock on Grabouw squatters

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

The umpteenth meeting between the Grabouw town council and community leaders over homeless people squatting on vacant land has ended in deadlock.

Over the past 18 months the council has had a number of meetings with the Grabouw Community Organisation (Graco) and the town's Pan Africanist Congress branch about Snake Park squatters who settled on sites in Melrose Place.

The two organisations asked the council several times to allow Snake Park squatters to move to Melrose Place because poisonous snakes were attacking people regularly.

Mayor Stan Shuma said the vacant plots were earmarked for low-cost housing for homeless people of all the Overberg town's squatting camps who qualified.

The latest meeting this week with the council was attended by members of Graco and the PAC.

PAC spokesperson Anne Truter said the meeting developed into lengthy debates which achieved nothing.

In the past several violent clashes erupted between the police and Snake Park residents on Melrose Place sites.
The end of an era
Vrygrond’s 50-year wait almost over

But poverty, infighting cause delays

JILYAN PTITMAN AND TWEET GAINESBURGH-WARD
Sun Reporter

The plight of the long-suffering Westlake and Vrygrond squatters near Muizenberg is again under the spotlight – but hurdles like unemployment, low wages and infighting will have to be overcome before a permanent solution can be found.

The provision of water, sewerage and electricity to about 18 000 squatters in two settlements – and the payment for such services – is now high on the local council’s agenda.

Several meetings are scheduled with representatives of the squatters to try to resolve pressing issues.

- Payment for essential services is a nationwide dilemma facing thousands of squatters and officials.

ANC councillors Adelaide Buso and Hennie van Wyk from the Southern Substructure said there were fewer than 10 taps at Westlake for about 8 000 squatters and 21 taps for Vrygrond’s 10 000 residents and this was not adequate. Action, they say, should be taken now in consultation with squatters to provide basic services and the issue of payment for such services should then be addressed.

Westlake, a squatter camp on a tract of provincial land near Ou Kaapseweg, is being transferred to the jurisdiction of the Southern Substructure. Vrygrond, close to Lavender Hill, is the oldest squatter camp in the Peninsula and was first settled in 1945.

Mrs Buso, who lives in Westlake, and Mr Van Wyk, who is also a member of the Vrygrond Steering Committee, say the services in both areas are a matter of urgency.

"Accountability for payment has to be talked about before services go in at Westlake," said Mrs Buso.

"We would like the basic services to be in by February, but we have first to consult with people in the area for general agreement because they will have to pay.

"The problem here is that most of the people are unemployed and the remainder earn very low wages and there are different opinions on the payment for such services and where they should be installed."

She added: "The land is still in the process of being transferred to the substructure but consultation with our residents next month is the next step forward."

"We cannot have ad-hoc activities like a few taps suddenly being put in by the council. We must have a holistic approach to our problems."

Mrs Buso said they had been talking about plans for the area in the last five months. However, the demands of getting the new substructure up and running had meant that Westlake’s problems had not been a priority.

"It is also very difficult to communicate because there are no telephones in the settlement. "Telkoms must be on a go-slow," said Mrs Buso. "Two months ago we asked for some public phones but nothing has happened."

MLH Architects and Planners partner Nigel Bowles said his company would only be involved in drawing up the structural plan for the whole area.

"We are not at liberty to tell you how much money has been agreed for this planning exercise. The basic services requested is an issue for the local authority to handle. It will only be an interim solution because we have long-term plans," said Mr Bowles.

An urban planner said affordability would be the key to success in the upgrading of the Vrygrond settlement east of Prince George Drive in Muizenberg.

"When designing this type of project the needs of the people involved must be assessed and most importantly the community must be effectively consulted to evaluate how much they want to and can afford to spend on services and accommodation.

"The original plan put forward by Cape Town municipal officials was not accepted by the community on the grounds of it being too expensive to run," the planner said.

Mr Van Wyk said the community would have to be made aware of the costs involved in the provision of accommodation and services.

"In addition, it is essential the community suffers as little disruption as possible during the upgrade," he said.

Of major concern to those living in Vrygrond at present is the lack of services – until recently there was no access for trucks to remove refuse.

Danger Khumalo, chairman of the South African Civic Organisation (Sanco) which has been involved in negotiations for improvements, said: "We hope the new approach to the upgrade will work as over the past 20 years we have had many promises from local authorities, but nothing has happened."

Roleplayers: Danger Khumalo, Chairman of Sanco and ANC Councillor Hennie van Wyk

Working together: Adelaide Buso and Hennie van Wyk
Water is life: Portia Solomon at one of the Vrygrond taps. Vrygrond, the oldest squatter camp in the Peninsula, still lacks services.
Crackdown on squatters

ON humanitarian grounds this was not the correct decision, but politically it was right," said George town council executive committee chairperson Mr Patrick Nyuka yesterday, describing the forced eviction of 300 squatter families from council- and church-owned land.

Yesterday's tough action resulted in violent running battles between police and squatters trying to preserve the shanty homes they had illegally erected. The police report said one person was arrested and one SAPS member slightly injured.

The events come against the backdrop of efforts by local authorities to implement housing initiatives and to encourage people to "abide by the process".

The George town council has set targets for several housing projects this year. Mayor Mr Sidney Opperman said: "The project to build 932 houses in nearby Paaluitsdorp has been finalised, and in Thembalethu we are planning to build 4100 houses, in Lawaikamp 908 and in Balloview 390.

"This is not a situation where we are doing nothing. We are doing a little bit for every area."

But for many residents of impoverished areas, living in two-bedroomed houses into which "anything between 15 and 30 people" were squeezed, the situation had become too much.

Over the new year — perfectly timed to coincide with the council's festive season recess — squatters settled on a large open section of land next to the Parkdene community. Within three weeks more than 300 families had moved onto the land.

The land — which belonged to the town council and to the local NG Church — had already been earmarked for a sports stadium. The squatters, however, argued that this "community sports stadium" had been just talk and that the land had been standing empty for close on five years.

In addition, there had been no delivery of houses.

Squatter Mr Andries Botha said: "I have been on a housing waiting list since 1992, I have been shifted from one place to another. I can't wait any longer."

The decision to evict the squatters was taken at a specially convened council meeting on January 9. For many of the decision-makers it proved a painful but necessary step.

Nyuka, who lives in Thembalethu township, said it had been "a very difficult decision. "These people are homeless, but property rights must also be respected."

Nyuka said the council had taken all necessary precautions to ensure a non-violent eviction. These included instructing all police members to use minimum force and to time the eviction for 8.30 in the morning, when most children would be in school.

However, as council officials and workers moved in with bulldozers and pick-up trucks to raze the shacks, they were confronted by hundreds of squatters.

The council workers were backed up by heavily armed police and an army presence of more than 100, as well as many of the police's dog unit, who formed a defensive line against the emotionally charged crowd.

The tension rose visibly with each wooden and corrugated iron structure that was bulldozed. Old women went about slowly dismantling their homes and carrying off whatever they could salvage.

However, most of the crowd taunted and accused the police of "leaving them homeless" and "taking all they possessed."

Some council workers, who had been assigned to load the dismantled shacks onto the back of pick-up trucks, covered their faces with plastic bags and handkerchiefs as they came under a torrent of verbal threats from sections of the crowd.

A gathering outside a nearby white-owned supermarket, where an attempt was made to light a barricade, sparked off a violent reaction from Public Order Policing Unit members, who moved in firing birdshot and hurling teargas grenades into rapidly dispersing crowds.

The rest of the day was spent in a tense standoff between the community and the police. Violent skirmish:
Several council workers who were involved in the dismantling of squatter shacks yesterday covered their faces to avoid identification after squatters threatened them.

Incidents that have taken place in the past three months:

* There was violence at the Mbekweni settlement in Paarl last week after authorities began evicting about 400 squatters from land that had been earmarked for low-cost houses. Squatters burnt their shacks before the demolitions began and police armed with riot shields were called in.

* Earlier this month 41 people were arrested after illegally occupying land in the Cool Air district of Pietermaritzburg in Natal.

* Police evicted the illegal occupants of more than 40 houses in the East Rand township of Tokozane in December to make way for a housing redevelopment project.

* The Grabouw town council evicted people in November who were illegally occupying land set aside for low-cost housing. Squatters and police clashed after shacks were demolished, and squatters were forced to return to Snake Park, a settlement which squatters claim is infested with snakes.

* Squatter communities in Blue Downs, Eerste River and Klips River had their water supplies cut by the municipality in November because of unpaid accounts.

WHERE TO NOW?: This child faces an uncertain future after he and his family were evicted from their squatter home near Pinetown yesterday.
Waterfront squatters demand to stay.
Short reprieve for
Delft squatters

THE illegal occupants of 88 houses in Delft have been
given a few days' grace and will not be evicted yet—but
this reprieve will soon end.
The police, representatives of the Department of
Housing and the sheriff of the Supreme Court met in
Bellville yesterday to discuss what measures should be
taken against the illegal occupants, who had been told
to evacuate their houses by last Friday.

The police were prevented from evicting them after
violent clashes broke out. People being evicted
returned their furniture and belongings to the houses
after officials had removed them.

Sergeant Jan Solomons said yesterday that no date
had yet been decided upon for the evictions, but
another meeting had been scheduled for today to
finalise the matter.

"The court has made a ruling that the people have
to be evicted and we are just following that order," said
Solomons.

A housing department official in Delft said there
were legal owners of all 88 houses, but not all the own-
ers had collected their house keys yet.

"We expect the legal owners to move into their
houses once the illegal occupants have been evicted. It
is up to the sheriff and the police to decide when this
will be."
Fighting as new Delft ev

Teargas fired as families clash with

JERMAINE DURAG
SNN Reporter

Teargas and batons were used as pandemonium erupted in Delft today, when the illegal occupants of 88 houses clashed violently with police and sheriffs for the second time in less than a week.

Supreme Court eviction orders served last week on the families living illegally in houses in Eindhoven required them to move out by noon last Friday, but attempts to evict them turned violent.

A large contingent of police and sheriffs returned to the area about 8am today to carry out the evictions, but they again faced fierce resistance. They had been expected to return on Monday, and then again yesterday, but never arrived. They arrived this morning unexpectedly.

By 11am the belongings of about 20 families were on the streets outside the houses, but other residents forced many of the people back inside and returned their furniture.

There were violent clashes when police used teargas and batons to stop people intent on preventing the evictions.

Residents hurled abuse at police as tempers flared and the situation threatened to get out of control.

In one confrontation women and children were sprayed with teargas and hit with batons as a crowd formed a cordon around a house in an attempt to stop an eviction.

Police pointed guns at the protesters.

In the ensuing fracas, illegal occupant Sherree Adams and her daughters Warrani, 4, and Megan, 2, were sprayed in the face with teargas.

Another illegal occupant, Claire Solomons, was arrested during the same incident when she tried to stop police and sheriffs evicting her family.

In a house where Berenice Booyse is living illegally, residents came to blows with police and sheriffs as Mrs Booyse's Fury: a resident, left, tackles a sheriff of the court

13-year-old disabled son Neil lay on a mattress on the floor.

Mrs Booyse and her three children have been living in the house for nearly a month and she is adamant they will not move. "I am not moving. They can do what they like, I am staying in this house."

Grant Twigg, co-ordinator of the Delft Civic Association, exchanged blows with a sheriff of the court.

"When the police evict people, they must arrest them," he said. "At least then they will have a roof over their heads."

"The residents have been talking among themselves and something is going to happen. The people say they are fed up and are not going to accept what is happening. They say they are going to get more aggressive."

Police and sheriffs moved out of the area about 11.30am.

Sheriff of the Supreme Court Johan Stassen said it was unlikely the evictions would be completed today and they would have to return tomorrow.

Theillegal occupant say the Delft conflict has its roots in promises they were given before the local government elections last year. They claim National Party councillors promised them houses in return for votes.

Angry occupants: illegal occupants shout abuse at

Some of the illegal occupants claimed they were not there illegally at all but had been moved in by the NP councillors for the area.

Mr Twigg said the local NP councillor for the area, Gerhardus Venturin, had been asked by Premier Hernus Kriel not to get
Fiction bid fails to police, sheriffs

ARG 29/11/97

Despite the presence of police officers monitoring the evictions, the residents and other occupants have been actively resisting efforts to forcefully remove them from their homes. In the background, other residents are seen putting back furniture in their homes. One of the residents, Mr. Ventura, was not present at Eindhoven today.

Mr. Ventura was involved in the controversy because of "internal fighting between NP members." "We have requested a meeting with Housing Minister Cecil Herandien but he has not responded," Mr. Twigg said.

The illegal occupants have also claimed that they paid money to Integrated Service Land Project consultants for the houses. They had earlier vowed to "stand and fight" and have been fiercely resisting all attempts to evict them.
Heated confrontation: a policeman sprays teargas at illegal occupants fighting eviction from houses in Delft. Claire Solomon, right, was arrested.

More evictions of illegal Delft home occupants loom

NORMAN JOSEPH AND JENNAHIE CRAIG
Staff Reporter
ART 30/11/93

Evictions of families illegally occupying homes in the Eindhoven area of Delft are due to continue today.

Yesterday more than 50 people occupied the Delft Civic Centre in protest over the evictions of illegal occupants. The protesters vowed to remain in the centre until provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien promised to stop court officials evicting families.

They are demanding that "illegals" in houses be left alone and that Mr Herandien instruct local housing officials to allocate homes to people from the waiting list.

Chaos erupted in Eindhoven yesterday when residents, who prevented court officials from removing belongings from houses, clashed with police and the officials.

Scuffles broke out after police used teargas and batons to drive back a human chain formed around one house. Armed police, some with dogs, guarded the local housing department building in Eindhoven.

Mr Herandien said his department understood that families were desperate for homes but that he could not condone illegal occupations which jeopardised further housing developments in the area.

The Delft houses formed part of the Integrated Serviced Land Project, which aimed to tackle the housing needs of about 40,000 people living in informal settlements.

So far about 300 families had moved into homes in Southern Delft as part of the ISLP project.
Ousted Delft families claim housing 'racism'

Norman Joseph and Jermaine Craig

Allegations of corruption and racism have been levelled at housing department officials by illegal occupants of houses in Delft criticising their eviction.

Several people claimed they had given local housing officials R2 500 to secure homes in Southern Delft, a new housing project.

The Cape Argus has sent a list of names and erf numbers to the provincial Housing Department office.

The last of the 88 families living illegally in Delft were evicted without incident yesterday.

Earlier, illegal occupants were involved in tense clashes between and police and sheriffs of the court, who were forced to withdraw twice, last Friday and on Wednesday, because of opposition from residents.

Yesterday the illegal occupants, most of whom live in backyards, said they had been on the waiting list for houses for more than five years.

Bunice Swarts claimed she had given R2 500 to an official who gave her a key to a house on erf 8826.

At two meetings this week people repeatedly claimed that African people were being given preference to buy houses in Southern Delft.

Provincial housing department officials denied the corruption and racism allegations and outlined details of a housing project.

"The Integrated Serviced Land Project is a special integrated presidential project on urban renewal of the reconstruction and development programme," an official said.

"It aims to address the housing needs of about 40 000 people living in informal settlements and overcrowded backyards in Crossroads, Guguletu, Langa, Nyanga, KTC and Philipolis."

James Slabbert, housing director and project manager, said families did not handover money to secure sites or houses. Sites had been allocated according to strict principles.

Families who did not qualify for the full government housing subsidy paid the balance of the price of their homes to the provincial housing board through the board's agents, the marketing consultants.

No other money changed hands and beneficiaries had been advised constantly that there was no charge for being nominated a beneficiary.
Ousted Delft families claim housing 'racism'

Norman Joseph and Jermaine Craig
Staff Reporters

Allegations of corruption and racism have been levelled at housing department officials by illegal occupants of houses in Delft criticising their eviction.

Several people claimed they had given local housing officials R3 500 to secure homes in Southern Delft, a new housing project.

The Cape Argus has sent a list of names and erf numbers to the provincial Housing Department office.

The last of the 86 families living illegally in Delft were evicted without incident yesterday.

Earlier, illegal occupants were involved in fierce clashes between and police and sheriffs of the court, who were forced to withdraw twice, last Friday and on Wednesday, because of opposition from residents.

Yesterday the illegal occupants, most of whom live in backyards, said they had been on the waiting list for houses for more than five years.

Bunice Swarts claimed she had given R2 500 to an official who gave her a key to a house on erf 8824.

At two meetings this week people repeatedly claimed that African people were being given preference to buy houses in Southern Delft.

Provincial housing department officials denied the corruption and racism allegations and outlined details of a housing project.

"The Integrated Serviced Land Project is a special integrated presidential project on urban renewal of the reconstruction and development programme," an official said.

"It aims to address the housing needs of about 40 000 people living in informal settlements and overcrowded backyards in Crossroads, Guguletu, Langa, Nyanga, KTC and Philippi."

James Slabbert, housing director and project manager, said families did not hand over money to secure sites or houses. Sites had been allocated according to strict principles.

Families who did not qualify for the full government housing subsidy paid the balance of the price of their homes to the provincial housing board through the board's agents, the marketing consultants.

No other money changed hands and beneficiaries had been advised constantly that there was no charge for being nominated a beneficiary.
**Illegal occupants of Delft homes evicted ‘peacefully’**

Mrs Budrunisa Ferreira, a mother of five, said she was not confident of her children’s future as she was before the new government. “I have been on the waiting list for five years and what they did today is very bad. The people we elected left us in deep water with nowhere to go. We are not sure of our children’s future,” said Ferreira.

She was preparing a bed for her asthmatic six-month-old daughter Ayesha under a wooden frame tied to a cement pole inside the hall. Inscribed on the frame is a notice in Arabic “Allah the most beneficent”.

She said her husband did not go to work as she could not cope with her five children alone.

Ms Berenice Booyzen, a mother of three boys, said she was not evicted on Wednesday because of her disabled boy Neil, 12. She said the council had asked her to organise a place for her family to stay. This morning they came and gave me a letter saying they had given me a chance to organise myself a place to stay. I threw that letter in the rubbish bin because I have nowhere else to go.

“The other place for us would be the bush,” Booyzen said.

Mr George van Niekerk, chairman of the Delft Community Organisation, appealed to the Red Cross and other community organisations to help the people who were evicted with food and clothes.
Desperate Delft families quit civic centre for field

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

"Where must we go to now with our children?"

These words, from a desperate mother who had taken refuge with her family in the Delft Civic Centre, captured the mood of those forced to leave the centre and move to a field yesterday.

There was an air of despondency in Delft as about 25 homeless families, many with infants only a couple of weeks old, realised the harsh reality of their situation.

The families were evicted from houses in Eindhoven they were occupying illegally.

They were met by the chairman of the Tygerberg Council housing committee, Claude Ipser, who said the council could not allow a "state of anarchy" to develop and that they would have to move.

"The council is sympathetic towards the people – they are in a dire predicament, but we have no moral or legal obligation to do anything for people who invaded homes or civic centres illegally. We are in local government – this is not local government, it is anarchy and it must end," said Mr Ipser.

Various community leaders had asked Mr Ipser to give the families a seven-day extension or house them temporarily at a nearby shooting range. But after consulting the executive committee of the Tygerberg council, Mr Ipser returned to say this was not possible and they would have to move. The families then decided to erect shacks in the adjacent field.

There was growing disillusionment with the National Party, accused of moving people into homes in Eindhoven illegally after the local government elections.

Meanwhile, the Swart Commission, which is investigating allegations that officials and councillors received bribes in exchange for keys to dwellings, met for the first time in Eindhoven yesterday.
Squatters move out of city hall

EIGHTEEN households of people who had been evicted last week from homes they had illegally occupied in Southern Delft left the suburb's civic hall at noon yesterday in accordance with an undertaking they had given.

They had been there less than a week since they had been evicted by court order from houses they had occupied for a month.

Yet it was an emotional leaving. They knew that the sheriff's assistants would throw them out of the hall, too, if they did not leave of their own accord. And 25 of the families, most of whom include children, had nowhere to go. They prepared to sleep outside the hall.

Mrs Tina Swarts threw two loads of her personal possessions into the road before lying down there herself. Her voice shaking with emotion, she said she was "gutted" (fed up), and that she had had to give her children away.

Ms Amanda Cloete, who has three children, said the new Southern Delft houses were being allocated in a ratio of 75 to 25 between black township residents and coloured waiting list applicants, instead of the 50-50 arrangement it was supposed to be.

It was not possible for the "illegals" to return to the backyard shacks where they had lived before as other people had taken them over in the meanwhile.

Mrs Clare Solomons, who has been charged with trespassing, said she had been given a key to the place she occupied from the marketing manager of her section of Southern Delft, whom she named.

She had not paid him anything, but had merely pleaded with him, and shown him her council card which proved she had been on the housing waiting list for 14 years.

NO REFUGE: Being homeless is no adventure for 10-year-old Gloria Jaya, one of the many children affected by the evictions from the community hall in Delft yesterday.

PICTURE: THEMBINKOSI DWAYISA
O
t the night of Saturday, May 17, 1988, conservative and progressive squatter factions in Crossroads finally entered into a full-blown battle. It raged for a week and left at least 20 people dead and thousands homeless as women loyal to the conservative faction — supported by state security forces — swept through the area, torching their opponents' shacks as they went.

Reports were numerous of "white men wearing balaclavas" helping in the attack, and journalists saw plainly how police in Camperdown and soldiers in Buffels river — local conservative squatter leaders and their supporters.

People who found themselves suddenly caught up in the fighting fled the area and set up satellite camps elsewhere.

The powerful managed to salvage some possessions, but most thought themselves lucky to escape with their lives. Some of the fiercest events occurred on the public a Shanitzi element in the 1aing settlements — the wilfords — who were not happy with the fighting that continued to be exploited by govern-"..."m en agents keen to sow dissension among a once united people.

It was this same element that recently surfaced and came within a hair's breadth of dethroning an important component of the government's RDP squatter housing programme.

And the land-grabbing warlords, who assumed they could resort to the under- hand tactics employed during the apartheid years, found they were sorely mistaken this time round.

They could no longer rely on the tact support of police for their unscrupulous schemes. Instead they were met with a firm message from the provincial govern-...emcey ministry, the Cape Metropolitan Council and the city council housing committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Sydney Ncute.

"We made our position clear from the start of this land inva-..." Ncute. "We are not going to tolerate people going on land in this manner without per-...mision. We will call in the police and they will be removed."

He notes that when land inva-...sions took place in the past "we were then fighting the government of the day, we were fighting for the government to change and listen to our voice..."

Today, though, "we have a government which speaks with one voice, we now have the legal path of government — local government — which is made up of the local councils representing the people on the ground.

For their part, the police ensured an atmosphere conducive to negotiations by not adopting an aggressive approach (see story below).

While tensions were eased and some already flaring, there was, mercifully, no violence that day.

The next day, however, the invaders had still not moved and police were back at the scene.

"Largely, they didn't shoot any arrows," says Nombembe.

"Just as they were reaching the riot act and people were asking how long they were expected to wait, I decided that was the perfect opportunity to at least talk to them. I asked them why they were doing it and it turned out that the majority were acting out of ignorance.

Most had come from the near-..."

The action was in defiance of agreements signed and accepted by the majority of repre-...esident of squatters due to be housed.

With the project having proceeded rel-...tively smoothly until then, "I was suddenly faced by this crisis," says Nombembe.

The situation was very volatile —..." you could have gotten into trouble just by standing up and trying to reason with the people."

A flurry of consultations fol-...lowed with those concerned with the programme (a presidential lead project).

Those involved included the provincial housing and safety and community ministry, the Cape Met-...ropolitain Council and the city council housing committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Sydney Ncute.

"We made our position clear from the start of this land inva-..." Ncute. "We are not going to tolerate people going on land in this manner without per-...mission. We will call in the police and they will be removed."

He notes that when land inva-...sions took place in the past "we were then fighting the government of the day, we were fighting for the government to change and listen to our voice..."

Today, though, "we have a government which speaks with one voice, we now have the legal path of government — local government — which is made up of the local councils representing the people on the ground.

For their part, the police ensured an atmosphere conducive to negotiations by not adopting an aggressive approach (see story below).

While tensions were eased and some already flaring, there was, mercifully, no violence that day.

The next day, however, the invaders had still not moved and police were back at the scene.

"Largely, they didn't shoot any arrows," says Nombembe.

"Just as they were reaching the riot act and people were asking how long they were expected to wait, I decided that was the perfect opportunity to at least talk to them. I asked them why they were doing it and it turned out that the majority were acting out of ignorance.

Most had come from the near-..."

The action was in defiance of agreements signed and accepted by the majority of repre-...esident of squatters due to be housed.

With the project having proceeded rel-...tively smoothly until then, "I was suddenly faced by this crisis," says Nombembe.

The situation was very volatile —..." you could have gotten into trouble just by standing up and trying to reason with the people."

A flurry of consultations fol-...lowed with those concerned with the programme (a presidential lead project).

Those involved included the provincial housing and safety and community ministry, the Cape Met-...ropolitain Council and the city council housing committee, under the chairmanship of Mr Sydney Ncute.

"We made our position clear from the start of this land inva-..." Ncute. "We are not going to tolerate people going on land in this manner without per-...mission. We will call in the police and they will be removed."

He notes that when land inva-...sions took place in the past "we were then fighting the government of the day, we were fighting for the government to change and listen to our voice..."

Today, though, "we have a government which speaks with one voice, we now have the legal path of government — local government — which is made up of the local councils representing the people on the ground.

For their part, the police ensured an atmosphere conducive to negotiations by not adopting an aggressive approach (see story below).

While tensions were eased and some already flaring, there was, mercifully, no violence that day.

The next day, however, the invaders had still not moved and police were back at the scene.

"Largely, they didn't shoot any arrows," says Nombembe.

"Just as they were reaching the riot act and people were asking how long they were expected to wait, I decided that was the perfect opportunity to at least talk to them. I asked them why they were doing it and it turned out that the majority were acting out of ignorance.

Most had come from the near-..."
Upper squatter housing

The upper squatter housing issue has been a contentious one for years. In recent years, the government has taken steps to address the issue, but progress has been slow. The main focus has been on providing affordable housing solutions, but the need for urgent action remains.

Conservative protesters in Crossroads prepare to attack younger "comrades" in fighting yesterday which saw more than 200 shacks burnt down.

But the forum was still to hold discussions with the ISLP, councillors and other players in the waxing and waning of this issue. The forum is very autonomous, nobody can decide for us. We still have to sit down with the ISLP and push the ISLP to also start working on levelling the ground of the Brown's Farm and Philippia areas because people have become impatient.

Flashing back, much of Crossroads squatter camp was destroyed in May 1996, when rioting broke out between rival factions.

We managed to get the police on our side and they were very helpful — they didn't just move in there and start spraying teargas all over the show.

"They gave us a chance to talk and agree to patrol the area till things had settled down."

He appealed for patience among squatter residents and assured them that no one had been overlooked in the housing process.

"This is a project that will run until 1999 and beyond, and the government is going to buy more land as and when the need arises. But nobody will be left out.
Haven for homeless becomes a nightmare for city's officials

200 sleep every night under highway flyovers

Julian Jacobs
Staff Reporter

It’s a town within a city, a haven to the homeless, a nightmare to city officials - the “Bridge Hotel” shantytown under the Western Boulevard flyovers that springs up every night is a prime example of the problem of homeless people the Mother City has to deal with.

The Bridge Hotel shantytown now has a population of about 200 people. Every night the “town” rises and becomes a hive of activity, with shebeens and spaza shops.

And life for the homeless on the streets of the city is to become much tougher if a Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry proposal that sleeping on the streets should become illegal is accepted by the city fathers.

The bright lights of the city, the lure of jobs and absent poverty in the townships are all factors that have seen the numbers of the homeless in the city increase.

“Where do they come from, what has driven them to the city,” asks CBD street worker Coleridge Daniels.

Mr Daniels visits the Bridge Hotel shantytown regularly to offer help and to hand out clothes his organisation receives from the public. He believes the problem of homeless people will not be resolved unless business and the public understand the plight of the people and try to help.

“Most of these people come from dysfunctional homes. Violence and abuse in the townships are all factors that have seen the numbers of the homeless increase in the city.”

Rounding up homeless people every night would not solve the problem, it would only highlight how inhumane a law would be,” said Mr Daniels.

Justice Snous, who has been living on the streets for 10 years, said: “We want running water, electricity and a nice comfortable home to go to.”

Unemployed Justice lives with his girlfriend in their makeshift home under a bridge. He is optimistic about the new South Africa and believes his luck will soon change.

Debbie Diamond, a street worker with CASP (Co-ordinated Action with Street People), said homeless people had for years been harassed by the traffic department and the police because law enforcement officials simply did not understand the problem.

“We have offered training to the police to help understand homeless people, but they have never responded to our offer. In many cases homeless people as a group are unfairly accused of robbing and loitering in the streets of Cape Town,” she said.

Ali Gierdien, chairman of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the chamber understood the plight of vagrants and an emergency task group had been set up to investigate measures on how best to improve the situation so that it did not become a catastrophe.

“This is a highly complex and sensitive issue and needs the utmost care and consideration,” he said.

Homeless people sleeping on the pavements have caused an outcry among retail business people and pressure has been put on the chamber to deal with the issue.

Mr Gierdien said that while sleeping on private property was an offence, sleeping on pavements was not. He said that there were homeless people who were simply destitute, while there were others intent on crime.

This was a difficult situation for the police to handle as they had to distinguish between the two groups before arresting people. Ms Diamond, a street worker for the past seven years, said that the problem of vagrants and homeless people was not unique to Cape Town.

“In any city in the world you will find destitute and homeless people and it needs an understanding of the problem before the issue can be addressed and solutions found.”

“Cape Town does not have sufficient resources to cope with the influx of homeless people,” she said. In the past year alone there had been a huge increase in the number of homeless people flocking into the city bowl. Most of these people come from dysfunctional families, while some were immigrants who had entered the country illegally.

“With Cape Town now on the short list to host the 2004 Olympic Games, pressure has been mounting to address the problem,” said Ms Diamond.

Nomusa Ndimumbi, a self-employed mother of two who has been living under the Western Boulevard flyover for the past 20 years said: “We were only eight people back then, and today we are about 200 people.”

Ms Ndimumbi, a member of the settlement’s committee, remembers how they were evicted on many occasions. Only recently did they ask a lawyer to assist them.

“If evicted, we do not want to go to another informal settlement, we want better housing,” she said. Other people in the shantytown had become used to living in the city, saved money on transport and wanted a safe place to live in the city bowl.

Helping the homeless has become the aim of the Big Issue, a magazine distributed among the homeless, who then sell the publication to earn money.

“The object is for people to work for themselves, as it helps restore their dignity and helps them help themselves,” says project coordinator Shane Halpin.

The Big Issue had 168 vendors in Cape Town. Already there were four people who had permanently returned to mainstream society and several others who had opened banking accounts, said Mr Halpin.

He said banning homeless people in the city would not solve the problem. He believed projects such as the Big Issue and the Green Brigade, a scheme where homeless people cleaned the city, as well as the car vendors project, represented a solution.

Child Welfare Society director Allan Jackson said the problem of homeless people could not be wished away or addressed by passing legislation as the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry proposed.

Mr Jackson said that finding solutions were never easy, but measures had to be investigated to best help homeless people.

“There are shelter programmes around and they have encouraged children and adults to educate themselves, but we need to re-orientate their lives and give them their pride and self esteem back,” he said.

Mr Gierdien proposed in a letter to the mayor of Cape Town that the council make available its street level garage at the Civic Centre in the evenings.

“This, he said, would control the homeless people and create fewer problems. Street care workers believed a back-up system, including rehabilitation and counselling, should be put in place to help the homeless once they had been removed from the streets.”
ANC factions in row over squatters

3,000 families face eviction

TAMIE MBENGO

A CONFLICT has erupted between rival ANC factions over a four kilometre-long squatter settlement in Khayelitsha's Harare area, overlooking Monwabisi beach resort.

The bitter row has broken out between the ANC's Bantu Holomisa and Michael Maphongwana branches, with threats to evict the squatters, consisting of nearly 3,000 families.

Some residents claim the Holomisa branch, which supports fired ANC minister Bantu Holomisa, have encouraged people to build shacks in an area which has been cleared for the development of a new industrial area.

However, the ANC councillor and leader at the Holomisa community branch, Mtawabantu Sibhinda, denied having called for the land invasion at a meeting last Sunday. "We only called a meeting after our people put up illegal shacks and we told them they should not build in that area. We are going to look for another site."

ANC member and councillor Mbulelo Ncedani, leader of the Michael Maphongwana faction, warned: "We are going to invade the area and forcefully evict them."

Ncedani said he called an urgent community meeting at which people were warned "not to proceed with building shacks". He claimed that some 3,000 Harare residents agreed with him that people should not build shacks there.

He said the land had been designated for industrial development and it was hoped that these new businesses would create jobs for the residents of Harare.

"President Mandela and his deputy Thabo Mbeki are busy trying to woo international and local investors to build factories closer to the people so that there is no need for long distance travelling to work," said Ncedani.

But, despite the warning, many people said they had no choice and would continue building homes there.

Tygerberg City Council decided at a meeting this week that the illegal residents should be removed.

However, many shack-builders said they would not budge. Typical of their attitude was Nsikelelo Ndana, who said: "Come what may, we are not making any move. If they destroy our shacks, we will build them. We have been pleading with these councillors to build us proper houses but to no avail."

A 76-year-old man, who declined to be identified, said: "I've got more than six adult children who live in the Eastern Cape. I am preparing land for them so that when they come here there is enough land for them to raise their families."

Ncedani warned that the issue could erupt into conflict if it was not resolved soon.

"We are still busy investigating who gave the people permission to build shacks without consulting us," he said, adding that notices of eviction had already been served on the illegal squatters.

"If they did not move this weekend, he warned, "on Monday we will forcefully evict them and destroy their shacks.""
Invasion threat spurs action

The Cape Metropolitan Planning Committee this week discussed the shortage of housing land and a government request to help find land that could be acquired.

Slabbert said about 15,000 housing sites would be provided this financial year from total spending of R330-million from RDP funds.

There was a dire need for industrial land with nearby housing for Marconi Beam-style projects, said Slabbert.

Committee member Daphne King warned that squatters could move into Bishopscourt and Rondebosch Common unless the provision of housing land was speeded up.

Funds of R1.2-billion are available from an integrated serviced land project planned to meet the needs of 40,000 households. But only R20-million has been spent in the last two years, it was revealed this week.

The 106,000 families are living in squatter settlements, backyard shacks and overcrowded conditions, according to James Slabbert, director: project execution, in the Western Cape Department of Housing.

The number of homeless in the Peninsula is estimated at 106,000 families — more than the combined populations of Bellville, Goodwood and Grassy Park.
Municipality to develop 100ha of squatter land

Linda Sisiro

CAPE TOWN — A 100ha piece of land near Pollsmoor Prison on the outskirts of Cape Town, occupied by squatters, has been handed over by central government to the South Peninsula municipality for upgrading and development.

Some of the land would be sold and the funds used to develop formal housing on the site, South Peninsula planning chairman Neville Riley said yesterday.

The land in Westlake is on the southern flank of Pollsmoor Prison, adjacent to the Westlake and Steenberg golf courses.

Announcing the development yesterday, housing MEC Cecil Herandien said infrastructure will be upgraded to improve roads, access, sewage and other services.

The development would halt ongoing illegal occupation of land and stabilise squatter communities, which would be closely consulted in the development process, he said.

South Peninsula executive committee chairman Graham Lawrence said the venture was the largest to be embarked on by the municipality since the new local government system came into existence.

The site badly needs good management and urgent upgrading of existing infrastructure, and we believe that this venture will result in the best possible solution for the area," he said.

The land was given by central government to the provincial government, which handed it over to the municipality.
State to get tough on white squatters
Daily duties: Linda Hartnick, right, continues with her chores as Trevor Trout talks to residents at Pigeon's Loft about the importance of cleanliness.
50 squatter families evicted

ASHLEY SMITH
STAFF REPORTER

Hundreds of residents have been evicted from Fisantekraal informal settlement near Durbanville and are at the mercy of Cape winter weather.

Nearly 50 of the 321 families in the settlement were close to tears yesterday when front-end loaders moved in to demolish their shacks under the eye of a strong contingent of soldiers and policemen.

The evicted families congregated around their possessions stacked haphazardly on a muddy patch opposite the destroyed homes.

Jan Stassen, sheriff of the Cape Town High Court, said an eviction order was issued by the court on May 19 after an application against the 45 families by the municipality, which now falls under Tygerberg. "We are here to demolish and remove unoccupied shacks and other dwellings built after April 22 in Fisantekraal," he said.

Virginia Roef, from People's Dialogue, an organisation that has helped people since they moved into Fisantekraal 18 months ago, is adamant that no new families moved into the area after April 22.

She also feared for the future of the remaining families and said repeated attempts to speak to the Tygerberg municipality had been "fruitless".
Cardboard box: Farieda Pluim stands in the doorway of her "house" in Lost City which is partitioned into sections with cardboard.

Bare essentials: four young children are part of the group of 14 who live in Pigeon's Loft. Here, their mothers - Sandra van der Westhuizen, left, and Theresa Manuel - try to clean up the building, while another resident looks on.
Residents call for rush on million-dollar plans

Down and out in Westlake
Northocherd realty asks for court interdict

Bid to contain squatting site

NEWS

4/3/94

John Feste
Waste dumps provide a living for squatters

IT'S A SAD Indictment of SA society that the unemployed and the poor, desperate to make a living, have to be kept at gunpoint from scavenging off rubbish dumps. Environment Writer MELANIE GOSLING reports.

On top of Vissershok hazardous wast disposal site a man stands guard, shotgun over his shoulder. His job is to make sure no one but the chosen 40 squatters from the nearby slums in the bush claim the dump to pick through the garbage for waste they can sell.

The butt of his shotgun is taped up. "It broke when I hit a man," Mr Bruce Nomzako explained in Afrikaans. "He wasn't one of those people who are allowed to come to the dump to pick. He wouldn't listen, I had to hit him to get rid of him."

It is a sad indictment of South African society that the unemployed and the poor, desperate to make a living, have to be kept at gunpoint from scavenging off rubbish dumps.

It's dangerous, dirty work, but it is sought after. Pickers say they can make up R100 a week from selling waste to a middleman. At Vissershok they refer to him as "Die Strooms", and it is he who pays Nomzako to "side-shoot" the dump.

Mr Eliza Goodman,a picker of many years, said he had come to the dump after he had tried everywhere else to find work. He scoffs at the dangers of the heavy trucks and bulldozers roarring by, and the chance of getting cut by smashed glass and ragged metal.

"As you know," he said, "there's more danger here than any other place." (If you keep your wits about you, it's all right.)

The amount they earn depends on how hard they work and the type of waste dumped. They collect plastic, metal, paper and bottles.

"We get paid by the kilo," Goodman said. "Sometimes you can fill a lot of bags, sometimes a few. It's hard work, but it's a living."

Thousands of households in Cape Town's metropole contribute to the 40 000 cubic litres of rubbish this dump alone receives every month. At the pickers' feet are hordes of jam tins, oil cans, wine bottles, milk cartons, piles of computer printouts, rolls of plastic and cloth, car tyres, gaskets, electric fuses, cardboard boxes, a broken toaster, heater, computer keyboard, thermos flask and a garden chair. In between are sweet fruit and vegetables, and thousands of supermarket bags, plastic bottles and candlesticks and cans.

At some formal dumps, pickers have been banned altogether, partly because of the dangers involved and partly because they hold up the work of bulldozers.

The average South African is clueless about recycling at source, and the authorities have no regulations or mechanisms to enforce it, so the pickers are doing it at the dumps. — UCT researcher Faried Khan

Green workers: A picker at Vissershok waste dump researchers now want integrated into the formal waste recycling.
Government calls on farmers to identify own unneeded land
The impact of pandemics and global warming on the world economy.

Due to the current pandemic situation, the world economy is facing significant challenges. The rapid spread of the virus has disrupted global supply chains, leading to shortages of essential goods and services. This has resulted in a significant decrease in consumer spending and business activity, which has negatively impacted economic growth.

Additionally, the global warming crisis has added to the economic burden, with extreme weather events causing massive damage to infrastructure and natural resources. Climate change has also increased the cost of energy and transportation, affecting the profitability of businesses and leading to higher consumer prices.

To address these challenges, policymakers need to take urgent action to stimulate the economy and combat climate change. This can be achieved through a combination of fiscal and monetary policies, targeted support for vulnerable industries, and increased investment in renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure.

In conclusion, the pandemic and global warming are posing significant threats to the world economy. By taking proactive measures, we can mitigate these impacts and secure a more resilient and sustainable future.

Sustainable solutions for the future.

By implementing sustainable practices, businesses can not only reduce their environmental impact but also enhance their long-term profitability. This includes the adoption of renewable energy sources, the implementation of energy-efficient technologies, and the promotion of circular economy models.

Moreover, companies should prioritize social responsibility by investing in employee development, ensuring fair labor practices, and promoting diversity and inclusion. By doing so, they can build a positive reputation and attract customers who value ethical business practices.

In summary, the pandemic and global warming pose significant challenges to the world economy. However, by adopting sustainable solutions, we can not only overcome these challenges but also create a more resilient and prosperous future for all.
Distribute: Sphokazi Mchithali left Masasa, where she rented a room, to build a shack in Harare.
Tygerberg to evict 1,600 squatters

Source: News

Shack-dwellers warned to make way for low-cost housing

Art 2118193

Tygerberg is set to evict 1,600 squatters.
Shack dwellers move into ‘empty’ Cape Flats homes

NORMAN JOSEPH
City Reporter

22/8/97

About 150 homeless people have occupied houses in the Cape Flats town of Mfuleni because, they claim, they have been empty for a year.

Mfuleni Youth Organisation spokesman Patrick Make said that people living in shacks which leaked when it rained decided to move into 46 empty houses in Extension Three yesterday.

Mr Make claimed that banks had declined to approve loans to people wanting to buy the houses last year because they were too small – 26 square metres.

After the “illegals” moved in, members of the youth organisation approached the company that built the houses for permission for them to stay and pay “affordable rent”.

The company referred them to the Tygerberg municipality, whose housing committee agreed to meet the illegal tenants today.

Municipal community development and liaison manager Ernest Sass said he and colleagues would assess the situation and, with Mfuleni administration officials, decide on a plan of action.
Houses empty, so squatters moved in

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

Ten illegal occupiers of houses in Mfuleli appeared in Kuils River Magistrate's Court on charges of housebreaking.

Recently 150 homeless people belonging to the Mfuleli United Residents Association moved into 60 houses on a site in Incini-

ba Road, Mfuleli, claiming they had been empty for a year.

No charges were put to the 10 and they were not asked to plead when they appeared in court yes-
terday.

Hundreds of association mem-
bers attended the hearing and protested in front of the court building.

Magistrate Len Scheepers and prosecutor Rachel Vogt set bail of R100 for five of the accused.

The others were released on warning.

The case was postponed to September 16 for further investiga-

tion

Mr Scheepers asked the accused not to return to the hous-
es they had occupied.
Dirty work: 'It is accepted that waste picking on landfills is a dirty, dangerous and often degrading job'

Waste pickers here to stay, says probe

Squatters depend on garbage

JOHN YELD
Environmental Reporter

Waste pickers—those desperately poor people who spend their days sifting through other people’s garbage to survive—are here to stay, at least for the short term.

This means their presence should be accepted by authorities at appropriate landfill sites as part of the formal waste management process. This is the key recommendation of the University of Cape Town’s Environmental Advisory Unit in its recent report: “Waste picking for survival—a report on the waste pickers of the Frankdale informal settlement”.

Frankdale is a community living in about 200 shacks close to the Vissershok waste disposal site north of Milnerton on the N7, which is Cape Town’s main landfill area.

According to the report, the community’s waste-picking is a stark illustration of the way in which poverty, health and environmental issues are entwined.

“For the people of Frankdale, waste picking constitutes their primary source of income. Working on the dump, the pickers salvage the most useful items, such as paper and plastic which can be resold for recycling. Bricks, wood and corrugated iron are sold to builders.

“Colourful rolls of jam- and washing powder labels are popular for use as wallpaper and shelf lining. The waste pickers also salvage bolts of cloth and remnants of material which are carefully washed for resale in spaza shops or sold to dressmakers.”

The pickers were tolerated by the site managers until October 1993, when a crisis developed.

The pickers found throat lozenges on the dump and sold them as sweets to hawkers. The hawkers in turn sold them to schoolchildren, many of whom promptly got food poisoning.

After threats by health authorities, the waste company which manages Vissershok controlled access by allowing only a specific number of pickers on the site, who also had to be directly employed by an outside contractor.

In an attempt to resolve the crisis this posed for the people of Frankdale, the Environmental Advisory Unit convened a working group.

This included representatives of the Surplus People Project, the department of community health at the University of Cape Town and industrial health research group, Health Care Trust, and the health promotion unit of the Department of Health and Population Development.

Since 1995, the unit has been investigating ways of integrating as many of the waste pickers as possible into the formal waste management process.

“It is accepted that waste picking on landfills is a dirty, dangerous and often degrading job—one which should ultimately be abolished, with alternative methods of waste recovery at source put into place,” its report states.

“However, since South Africa is a developing country with an acute socio-economic backlog in basic needs and services, it is unlikely that poverty, homelessness and unemployment will be resolved in the short term.

“It is, therefore, crucial that the issue of subsistence waste picking be dealt with in a constructive and humane manner.”
Council plan for
shack clampdown

The South Peninsula Municipality is to stop
shacks spreading at Masiphumelele near
Sunnydale, Fish Hoek, even
if it has to break them down,
because there are already
more people there than sites
available.

The council's housing services committee was told yesterday that the 350 families living temporarily on the school site and adjacent wetlands had risen to 560 and new structures would have to be demolished urgently.

The development of Masiphumele by Communicare - 811 residential stands in phases two and three - is already the subject of a High Court action this month.

The plan was to settle 821 of

The original households in phases two and three and the balance of 150 families would come from the 350 on the school site and wetlands.

Chairman Bealah Smith said the council would have to take firm control of the situation there.

As it was, people living on the wetlands is environmentally unacceptable. There were more people than land available.

Vice-chairman Gordon Merrington said more people were moving in all the time, including a criminal element.

Philip Bam said that unless the council came up with a proper policy on housing and had a strategy, it would be demolishing shacks continuously.

The committee decided to set up a separate committee on Masiphumele before taking strong action.
Seven Years of Debate Lead to R155 Million Housing Deal for Wybourn's Residents
Holiday ends for white 'squatters'

CHARL DE VILLIERS

ST 14/9/1997

DECADES of free holiday-making may be over for a handful of Namakaland whites — including former "Kubus King" Adrian Nieuwoudt — who are being investigated for illegal squatting on state land earmarked for a new national park.

The National Parks Board says the new park has been delayed for more than two years because the "squatters" have refused to demolish their holiday homes. They are now being investigated by a special unit headed by Mr Justice Willem Heath.

The unit has served 54 eviction notices on the "squatters" occupying state land at the mouth of the Groen River, about 350km north of Cape Town.

"We believe they have no right to be there," Peet Nel, a lawyer with the unit, said on Thursday.

But this has been disputed by the shack-owners, who will be appearing before a special tribunal on Tuesday to argue their claim to the land, their attorney, Teble Lerm, said.

The parks board, De Beers Namakaland Mines and local communities have been involved in years of sensitive negotiations to set up a 38 000ha park along a 47km stretch of coastline between Spoeg River and Island Point in central Namakaland.

The board’s Dr Anthony Hall-Martin said the proposed park spanned some of the most pristine territory on the Namakaland diamond coast.

Outstanding features included the only permanent estuary in the area, unique marine biology and one of the world's most species-rich arid zones.

Tourism and initiatives such as the proposed park offer hope for the about 15 000 rural villagers in the area.

The local fishing industry has effectively collapsed and stock-farming provides a meagre, subsistence existence for the descendents of the region's San inhabitants.
Hundreds hail Westlake plan

Packed meeting hears how to spend a billion

Outlines John Kyle explains the plan
Sun Valley outrage over influx

ASHLEY SMITH
Sun Reporter

The continued influx of hundreds of people to controversial Masiphumelele township has residents of neighbouring Noordhoek and Sun Valley up in arms.

At an emotional meeting in Sun Valley last night, residents expressed anger at the presence of new squatters.

Local government director of housing Hans Smit said about 38 new shacks had been demolished last week and between 54 and 66 a few weeks ago.

ARG 7/10/97

The land on which the informal settlement is situated belongs jointly to the provincial government and Communicare.

The area is being developed for an estimated 7 000 residents.

However, neighbours fear the latest influx could result in other land in the area being developed for informal settlement.

A Sun Valley resident said a clear agreement had to be made between the South Peninsula municipality, the provincial government, Communicare and the Masiphumelele residents that only people in the township before 1994 could stay there.

He said residents had had their share of squatters and enough was enough.

Another resident said there was no control over people moving in and out of Masiphumelele.

People had to be forcibly removed after their shacks were demolished, the resident said.

The only representative from the Masiphumelele community at the meeting said there had been no consultation with residents before shacks were demolished.

This was disputed by Mr Smit who said the relevant people had been approached.
Row over squatters in Athlone hots up

Cobbet moves on housing plan

JERMAINE CRAIG
Staff Reporter

Cape Town's new director of housing Billy Cobbett is to recommend to his housing committee tomorrow that a controversial project to build houses for 180 Athlone squatter families goes ahead.

But the proposal has been met with fierce resistance from residents whose homes border the project.

They have told Mr Cobbett his recommendation "stinks".

The council originally intended to build low-cost houses for 101 families living next to Vygeskraal Stadium and 79 families living in Jane Avenue, Rylands, on the site where the Vygeskraal families are squatting.

The project was passed and money was available from this year's council budget and the central Government's housing subsidy scheme.

But the plan was halted amid vociferous objections from the Belgravia Estate Civic Association, which said it was not consulted about the project.

Mr Cobbett was instructed to re-examine the matter and make a recommendation on how the council could resolve the impasse.

After visiting the area, Mr Cobbett made his recommendation to all role-players this week.

He has decided that the project should go ahead to uplift the living conditions of the squatters, some of whom have been without homes for more than 20 years.

But Mr Cobbett believed that instead of uniting the two squatter communities, the project should be separated and houses be built for the Vygeskraal families on the council land they were presently occupying.

He also believed the council should negotiate with the owner of the land in Jane Avenue and build homes for the families living there.

At a lively meeting attended by about 60 members of the civic association, Mr Cobbett said the council had previously misled Belgravia residents and he believed it would not be right to move the families from Jane Avenue and to Vygeskraal.

He said that by separating the communities densities would be much lower and the chances of improving living conditions better.

He believed that the proposal to build houses for the Vygeskraal community could be successful if it had the support of Belgravia residents.

However his proposal was flatly rejected by the residents, who opposed any housing project on the land.

"Your proposal stinks. We want you to say to council "no housing here". Council should see to the ratepayers first, instead of seeing to people living on land illegally," a resident said.

Chairman of the Belgravia Civic Baikrishnan Reddy said the land was originally intended for amenities for Belgravia, but he believed this would not be possible if the project went ahead.

A woman said residents were concerned about the crime rate because of the squatters' presence. Rapes and robberies were commonplace. She said residents would go on a rent boycott if the project went ahead.

The owner of the Jane Avenue land, prominent Athlone businessman Ranith Patel, wants the council to move the squatters as he has already sold most of the land.

After tomorrow's housing committee meeting, the matter will be referred to the full council for a decision.
M Plain fury at Cardboard City move

‘We weren’t asked’

But people living nearby have objected, claiming they were not consulted.

At a public meeting attended by about 200 residents this week, there were strong protests about the impending move.

Sheleena Pauw of the Sharemore Ratepayers’ Association said residents were concerned that the influx of people would have a negative impact on their community and were unhappy that the municipality had not consulted them.

“The community feels muggings are a big worry if the squatters move in and feel that the value of the houses in the area will drop overnight.

“We are not saying the people must not get houses, but why can they not be relocated to another area and why were the people here not consulted?” Ms Pauw said.

The area’s ward councillor, Wilhelm Schepers, said he was “100%” behind people objecting to the presence of the squatters.

“They do not accept it because the housing committee did not consult with us,” Mr Schepers said.

The matter will be discussed at a Cape Town council meeting today, where there is expected to be much debate on the issue.
Cardboard City calls off M Plain exodus

JERMAINE CRAIG
Sun'Brien
12/1/97

The trek to Mitchell's Plain by the 2,000 residents of Cardboard City shantytown under the Western Boulevard/iboven is being delayed amid claims that Cape Town councillors tried to disrupt the move.

After three months of negotiation with the municipality, the residents agreed to move this week, but their future neighbours objected, saying they had not been consulted.

At a council meeting yesterday, housing committee chairman Sydney Mceveny said the move meant Cardboard City stays where it is for the festive season.

A task team of the African National Congress said certain Mitchell's Plain councillors had gone to the squatters this week and told them not to move.

Representatives of the squatters, the Sharemore Ratepayers' Association and city director of housing Billy Cobutt met yesterday and signed a joint resolution, which was submitted to the council, to work with the Mitchell's Plain RDP forum to find a solution.

Mr Cobutt will report back to the council on the progress of the discussions at the end of January, which means Cardboard City stays where it is for the festive season.
Influx control ‘key to homes provision’

WILLEM STEENKAMP
SECURITY WRITER

INFLUX control is alive and well in the South Peninsula municipality — but its aim is not so much to discriminate as to provide established squatters with housing.

Mr Hans Smit, executive director of housing services for the South Peninsula, said the municipality was striving to become the best municipal provider of housing by early in the next century — but this could happen only if the number of homeless people coming into the area was controlled.

The municipality had 10 “major” squatter settlements with about 8 400 structures, he said.

Leaders of the settlements, such as the Westlake camp and Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay, had been drawn into the planning in an attempt to prevent expansion.

The municipality was also establishing partnerships with the community and devising outreach programmes to improve the squatters’ lot.

“If you don’t work with the community, then you have a big problem,” Smit said.

“Co-operation is pretty good.”

Municipal patrols or “rangers” kept a lookout for new shacks. They dismantled these and sent the occupants to another site or to the place at which they had spent the previous night.

The rangers had an “extensive” network of informants who kept them up to date about the activities of squatters and homeless people, Smit said.

“We’re establishing control throughout our area.”

An example of the kind of assistance the municipality would welcome, Smit said, was a letter setting out how the rangers worked and where they could be contacted that was sent by a Lakeside resident to other residents. The letter was written by Lakeside resident Mrs Kim Parker and reproduced in estate agents ERA Steer’s newsletter.

Parker wrote that according to “the squatter law of our country”, if squatters built a shack on public or private land and were not removed within 24 hours they had a right to the land until a court order was granted to remove them or they were given “an acceptable alternative” site.

Smit, however, disputed this. He said there were different interpretations of how and when action could be taken against squatters and homeless people.

“The law protects homeless people and squatters, as it protects you and me.”

Parker could not be reached for comment yesterday.

SHANTY HUT MEANS THE WORLD TO ME: A Westlake settlement resident peers out of her makeshift home. The South Peninsula municipality is devising outreach programmes to improve squatters’ lot.

PICTURE: GARTH STEAD
SQUATTERS—W. CAPE

1998
Desperate thousands squatters carry wood, iron away from sheriff's men

1,000 shacks torn down to clear housing site

ANR 6/2/48
Shantytown: some of the half-built shacks among houses. The informal settlement has mushroomed recently and home-owners are furious

Face-off over informal camp

Milnerton residents sell as squatters move in

NORMAN JOSEPH
City Reporter

Dozens of Milnerton homeowners are putting their houses on the market, claiming that a neighbouring informal settlement is causing property values to nose-dive.

Phoenix Village residents said an exodus would soon follow the “For Sale” boards going up outside most houses in Neptune Street and Zeus Drive. Residents have threatened to boycott the 1998 local elections if the Blaauwberg municipality does not do something about it.

Houses, starting at R175 000, were built in the village two years ago.

Owners claim the municipality promised buyers that schools, shopping centres and other community facilities would be built, but so far nothing has happened.

Dianne Petersen said the number of shacks in the Joe Slovo informal settlement was on the increase and that property values had dropped.

She said that it was unacceptable that a shanty town be allowed to mushroom next to a settled area like Phoenix Village.

Dean and Elize Paavelowitz of Zeus Drive said their home was for sale.

So, too, was the home of Abieda Jurias, who said that, because of the settlement, people would find it difficult to sell houses in the future.

The Western Cape Housing Consumers Protection Trust said it had received several complaints about the issue.

Trust chairman Mandla Mdludlu said that he and his organisation’s officials would inspect the area this week.

A spokeswoman for Seeff Property in Milnerton said that fed-up Phoenix Village home-owners wanted to sell, but added there had been no effect on property values.

Municipal spokesman Irwin Robson said: “I can confirm we are aware of the problem. We and all the roleplayers had a meeting this week and are dealing with it.”

Mr Robson said three working group committees had been formed.

One would investigate the extent of the problem, another would come up with solutions and strategies and the third would check the fire hazards in the area.

“The three committees will report back on February 26 and then proposals will be made,” he said.
Residents threaten to take law into own hands

School quarters face eviction

Photo Credit: Evan F. Jones 1998
Council to decide on Cardboard

Task team wants shacks under flyover demolished

JERMAINE CRAIG
City Reporter

The fate of the Cardboard City squatters will be discussed by the Cape Town housing committee tomorrow.

A high-level provincial task team has recommended that the shacks under the Western Boulevard flyover be demolished to help combat crime in the city.

The controversial settlement has been a bone of contention for months and the municipality so far has been unable to carry out plans to move the residents to Mitchell's Plain.

The task team of provincial ministers set up to tackle crime said last week that Cardboard City must go.

Late last year, Cape Town Director of Housing Billy Cobbett announced to the delight of many that the 200 squatters would move into 80 houses in a development of 341 houses in Mitchell's Plain.

They were about to move when objections from existing residents of Montrose Park scuttled the plans.

Mr Cobbett's office has been involved for three months in negotiations with all concerned to try to resolve the impasse, and are said to be close to agreement.

A report from Mr Cobbett's office to be handed to the housing committee tomorrow will ask the council to develop the Montrose Park site for housing and allocate 80 of the sites to the Cardboard City squatters.

A spokeswoman in Mr Cobbett's office said yesterday most of the role-players seemed willing to make the move a success, but Montrose Park residents were prepared to accept only formal housing in their area.

Coleridge Daniels, a social worker mediating on behalf of the squatters, said they were prepared to move if the municipality provided houses.

to help curb crime

Mr Daniels said conditions in Cardboard City were bad and that it was high time the residents moved into a better environment.

Police spokesman André Traut said there was not a major crime problem in Cardboard City, but police had information that some people staying there committed crimes.

He said the settlement was a danger to tourists, who were assaulted and robbed walking to the Waterfront.

"I am not saying that all the people staying in Cardboard City are criminals, but that there are people there who commit crimes, and we do have a problem in that area," said Captain Traut.

He felt the demolition of the camp would definitely help to reduce crime.
May in Mitchell's Plain Ready to Welcome Squatters

Council to Sell Cardboard City Site
Shacks are set to mushroom, warns council

STAFF REPORTER A NIC 7/8/98

The South Peninsula municipality does not have enough field officers or finance to prevent the spread of shacks in informal settlements.

This means the 8 000 structures in five settlements are likely to increase virtually unchecked.

It’s likely that all the local authorities in the Western Cape will find themselves in the same boat.

The south’s director of urban planning, Hugh Paton, told the municipality’s housing services committee yesterday that with the withdrawal of the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, no one may be evicted from his or her home and the home may not be demolished without an order of court.

"More staff would require more funds, and similarly more court cases would also require more funds.

"An undefended eviction order costs a minimum of R5000. If defended, this could cost in the vicinity of R6 000 - a case between the old Cape Town City Council and a group of unauthorised households has already cost R16 000 and the case is not yet resolved," said Mr Paton.

With the present financial and staff constraints, informal settlements would grow.

Field officers generally worked normal hours and were involved in the distribution of notices, the demolition of structures, and time-consuming surveys of structures and people.

They did not visit every corner of every informal settlement every day and every week.

Although officials would try to control the growth of structures in informal housing settlements, there was a need for active assistance of councillors to limit the growth of informal settlements."
Angry shack folk demand say in Hout Bay meeting

Walkouts mar bid to save police station

Hout Bay had excluded large sectors of the Imizamo Yethu community by not inviting them or the coloured community.

The people from the informal settlement demanded an interpreter so that they could also take part in the meeting.

The Hout Bay residents met at the Kronendal Primary School hall last night to discuss the imminent closure.

Soon after the meeting started, a singing crowd marched in and took over the stage.

A spokesman for the group said they had disrupted the meeting because “racist, white”...

and now the Department of Public Works has refused to pay the R12,000 a month rental.

There have been numerous attempts to change the present situation with success.

The residents believe that a new site for a police station should be found.

West Metropole area commissioner Ganie Daniels pledged that the police station would not be removed.

He told residents to stand together and demand the Department of Public Works provide alternative premises.

“I will never allow this police station in Hout Bay to close - even if I have to put up a shack in the street,” said Commissioner Daniels.

Public Works reportedly asked that police try to “downsize” the operation. But Hout Bay police have said this is impossible, as present resources are essential to the operation of the station.

Hout Bay councillor Dick Meter presented Commissioner Daniels with a memorandum to be passed to police MEC Gerald Morkel.

The memo has the support of the Imizamo Yethu Civic Association, Hout Bay Action Committee, Children’s Resource Centre and the local African National Congress branch.
Shack folk see homes destroyed

Green Park families slate Oostenberg municipality

Inhabitants of the Green Park shack settlement near Delft have accused the Oostenberg municipality of using apartheid tactics to harass people after it demolished about 24 shacks yesterday.

Elders and leaders tried to stop Oostenberg employees, who alongside armed guards trampled the already demolished shacks, dragging away corrugated iron sheets before loading them on to a truck.

Several fences were trampled down as well and wooden poles that were used to erect them left lying on the sand.

The workers were alleged to have taken away all new-looking material. Other shack dwellers gathered and watched their homes being destroyed.

Residents claim that the actions of the Oostenberg municipality were suspicious in that corrugated iron sheets were removed from the site.

They demanded to know where they would sleep tonight now that their shacks had been destroyed. They said the reason they had been forced to build the shacks was that the Government had not supplied them with houses.

One victim said the incident would cause anger – not only among them but also among their children – the future generation who saw their parents’ shacks being kicked and trampled down for no reason.

Another resident, Alfred Masimini, who is unemployed and has done casual jobs since he arrived in the area four years ago, said they did not know what was going on. He saw his shack demolished only a month after erecting it. “I won’t have a place to sleep tonight. I’ve just built my shack but now all those new sheets are gone – with only plants left behind.”

Another resident said: “This is inhumane. Not even animals treat their kind like this.”

The former Crossroads squatter leader, Johnson Ngobongwana, who also approached the group to find out what was going on, said no one wanted to listen to him.

“I tried to speak to them but they only told me that it was their right to demolish all the half-built shacks. I want all that building material they took returned. People here built their shacks bit by bit as they got money,” said Mr Ngobongwana.

The settlement was founded by former Crossroads residents who moved to the area during faction fights in Crossroads. Officials of the Oostenberg municipality could not be contacted for comment.
Council seeks court order in face of pre-election, distribution campaign symptom - "spat out in the market".
THE ARMY MAY be deployed to repel a "massive and dangerous" land invasion in Tafelsig as up to 3 000 squatters are settling into their "new home". CLAUDIA CAVANAGH and ERIC NTABAZALILA report.

The Cape Town City Council will apply first thing tomorrow for an urgent court interdict to remove as many as 3 000 people illegally occupying land in Silver City, Tafelsig, following a land invasion this weekend.

Described by council officials as "massive and dangerous", the land invasion encroaches on Wolfgat Nature Reserve.

Police and possibly the army will be called in to help the council evict the squatters — apparently from Khayelitsha, Driftsand and Mitchells Plain — at around noon today.

"This is a very serious situation and we need to ascertain who the people are behind this plan," said deputy chairperson Mr Saleem Mowzer. "We can see a pattern emerging in different parts of our city," he said, referring to the Crossroads incident.

He said the council must act "quickly and urgently" in applying for an interdict and call on the army and police for assistance before "all hell breaks loose".

NP member Mr Howard Parker said there was an "outside possibility" that the invasion was not a political issue.

"Let's make a big noise and do the right thing, but don't make wild sweeping statements with no facts," he told Cape Town Today.

And while the council debated the matter at length, families settled happily into their new homes in the cleared stretch of land. Many claimed they had been on a housing waiting list for more than 10 years and that their action was a quick solution to their need for a roof over their heads.

Mr David Roux, on the waiting list for 12 years, said: "Every time we go to the council offices to ask where we are now on the waiting lists and when are we going to get houses, we are told there is no land available.

"Or they would tell you to hang on. But look, here is an open space of land and we have cleared it and built houses.

Roux was renting a room in a brick house in the area, but high rentals forced him and many others to look for a place of their own.

Mrs Nurjehan Johnson, a mother of two whose husband is a hawkers, said she used to pay R150 a month for a shack in a yard.

The Johnsons had finished their shack and had moved in all their furniture and their family. She said she was happy as the land on which she and her husband had built their shack could end up being their permanent plot to build a proper house for their family.

The invasion of the land was a blessing in disguise for Ms Ivy Rooy, living on the streets of Cape Town until last weekend when her friends asked her to come and build herself a shack. Rooy, the mother of three-year-old asthmatic twins, said she was delighted for her children as they would have a place to call home after spending their infant life on the streets.

The invasion also brought hope to Mrs Crystal Booyes, whose struggle for a home for her five children started long before the late Minister of Housing, Mr Joe Slovo, became a minister.

Other residents from the nearby brick houses said they were happy that the land had been invaded as people had been killed, robbed and women raped in the busy area.

Mr Jasmine Trantraal said she hoped the rate of crime would drop if the invaders stayed on the land. She said though she had a brick house she felt it was necessary for her to support the invaders, as they had struggled for houses for a long time.

"These are our people and we need to support them. We want them to have their own houses like us," she said.

When the Cape Times team left the scene yesterday afternoon, people were bringing in building material in trucks, vans, wheelbarrows and council-issued dustbins. The noise of hammers and saws could be heard from a couple of streets away.
City seeks peaceful way out for squatters

JERMAINE CRAIG
City Reporter

The Cape Town municipality is confident it can persuade about 3 000 people illegally occupying council land in Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain, to leave peacefully.

Officials are meeting 15 representatives of the squatters today to try to solve the impasse.

The city council was granted an interdict by the Cape High Court yesterday allowing it to evict the squatters.

More than 500 shacks were erected this week in what council housing director Billy Cobbett described as a "very significant and apparently well-orchestrated land invasion".

As the situation was potentially explosive, the council decided to take legal action to remove the squatters and met police today to ask for their assistance.

The High Court yesterday asked the council to erect signboards informing the invaders why it was removing them from the land.

The council will also have to make 2 000 copies of the notice to distribute to the squatters.

Council spokeswoman Leonora de Souza said today that the council would try to negotiate the removal of the squatters first.

"Actual evictions and physical removal will be the last resort. We at the City of Cape Town believe we can settle this through negotiation. However these people have broken the law and the city is seeking a solution through the law and through negotiations," she said.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions has meanwhile entered the fray, calling on the authorities to act with restraint and to avoid the use of heavy-handed tactics.
Delft squatters agree to move

ABOUT 40 people occupying the housing marketing office at Delft undertook to move out last night. If they do not they will be ejected today.

Earlier the Provincial Housing Development Board and Indi Marketing cc, brought an urgent application in the High Court against Mr David Sinazo, Ms Cynthia Mbeki, the occupants of the marketing office and the people occupying 575 houses.

Sinazo is chairperson of the SA National Civics Organisation's Delft branch and Mbeki is its secretary.

An interim order was postponed to June 2. — Justice

Writer CT 3014 98
Council gets interdict to oust Tafelsig land invaders

ERIC NTABAZULU

THE Cape High Court yesterday granted the Cape Town City Council an interdict to remove more than 3,000 people who had illegally occupied land in Silver City, Tafelsig, over the weekend.

City Council spokesperson Ms Leonora de Souza said the presiding judge had asked the council to first erect signboards informing the invaders why the council was intent on removing them from the land.

The council would also make 2,000 photocopies of this notice. She said it was up to the sheriff of the court to decide whether to send in the army, but police would be present when the signboards were erected. This was to take place today.

De Souza said she did not see any chance of the people resisting, as the legal process had been followed.

“I think they will not resist the law. Confrontation is the last thing we need and I hope they will move peacefully,” she said.

A legal adviser told a council meeting on Tuesday that the decision to seek an interdict had been influenced by “the potential for violence and the fact that police would be reluctant to act without a court instruction”.

Cape Town housing director Mr Billy Coebe told a special exco meeting that “this is a very significant and apparently well-orchestrated land invasion. An estimated 500 to 700 shacks are being built in road reserves, across roads and on school sites.”

While the court and city council officials were busy with the interdict yesterday, more and more families moved into the area and began building new shacks.

The few people the Cape Times interviewed, who asked not to be identified after a newly self-elected committee told them not to make statements, said they would not like confrontation with police and the army but “felt strongly” that what they were doing was their right.

Meanwhile, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) yesterday called on the authorities to act with restraint and to enter into negotiations with representatives of the people concerned instead of using hard-handed tactics which could have disastrous consequences for the Western Cape.

Cosatu said it was willing to mediate in the dispute and offered its services to help resolve the issue in an amicable and meaningful way.

“We have repeatedly warned that working-class communities in the Western Cape have not seen any substantial improvement in their living conditions and quality of life under the current provincial government. We share the concern for the proper provision of housing and other social services like quality public education and health care.

“However, we must be cautious when employing methods like land invasion, the union movement said in a statement.

See Page 3
Squatters, tired of living conditions
told to be out by Monday
Return to homelessness for Talising squatters
Squatters set to defy bulldozers

JERMAINE CRAIG
City Reporter

About 800 Tafelsig squatter families stood firm today as the minutes ticked by to the deadline for them to move or be evicted from land they have been occupying illegally for two weeks.

The squatters said they would "rather die" than move, and planned to form a human shield around the area when police and sheriffs of the court arrived with bulldozers to evict them.

But by noon today, with the squatters chanting and dancing in the streets, there was still no sign of bulldozers, police or sheriffs.

Representatives of political parties, including the Inkatha Freedom Party and the United Democratic Movement, and Muslim organisations Qibla and the Muslim Judicial Council, had arrived to show solidarity with the squatters.

The squatters, who include an 85-year-old woman and a mother with two-month-old twins, were given until 10am today by the Cape Town municipality to move peacefully, or be evicted by force.

Many meetings have failed to resolve the impasse, and the council has vowed to act firmly against people invading its land, as there are more than 40 000 families on the waiting list for homes.

Among those waiting this morning was security guard Linda Wolmarans: "We would rather die than leave here. If they take me to jail today it will be better than this."

"We shall not be moved," page 3
Council to evict 3 000 squatters

FATIMA SCHROEDER

THE Cape Town City Council is to evict more than 3 000 squatters today from land they are occupying illegally in Silver City, Tafelsig.

This was announced at a heated meeting yesterday between the council and delegates representing the squatters.

Emotional squatters told the council members they refused to leave as some of them had been on waiting lists for homes for up to 30 years.

"The council is very unfair. I've been on the waiting list for almost 13 years," said Ms Christal Booyz.

She said a councillor had given her permission to squat in Tafelsig and insisted that "I will just stay here".

Chairperson of the Cape Town City Council executive committee, Mr Saleem Mowzer, said the council had given the squatters 3½ days to vacate the land and that a time extension would be a "mockery of our legal system".

He said the council had made sure they were acting legally and that they had applied for a Cape High court interdict to evict the squatters.

The presiding judge had asked the council first to erect five signboards informing the invaders why the council was determined to remove them from the land.

Five hundred copies of this notice had already been distributed to the squatters and another 1 500 would be distributed to families later today.

The court sheriff and police would be forced to break down the shacks if the squatters still refused to leave.

A report-back meeting with the entire Silver City community was held yesterday evening to explain what might happen.

Mowzer said the council recognised some of the problems the squatters had, but said it could not allow people to take the law into their own hands.

"Can you imagine what will happen if 120 000 people from different poor communities embark on the same action as the people of Tafelsig?" he asked at a press conference yesterday.

To avoid tension, Mowzer urged the squatters to vacate the land peacefully and said the council wanted to deal with the issue in a humane way that would not lead to conflict and violence.

"We made it very clear from the start that we want to resolve the matter in a humane way ... that does not lead to violence and tension."

Referring to alternative land for the squatters, Mowzer said: "They must go back to where they were living previously."

He admitted there was a chronic housing shortage in Cape Town and that local authorities were slow to deliver.

However, nowhere in South Africa had the new democratically elected government, or local government, given support for or allowed illegal land invasions as a means for communities or individuals to meet their housing needs.

Asked if the council would consider giving the squatters more time, Mowzer said: "We cannot allow this to continue any longer."
ANC backs council line – but other parties rally to squatters' plight

Tafelsig row sets bulldozers on election trail

NEWS
Three squatters gain reprieve of a few days
Invasion of land is not a solution

CAPE TOWN—The land invasion by squatters at Tafelsig in Mitchell's Plain was not a solution to the housing crisis, Western Cape African National Congress leader Ebrahim Rasool said yesterday.

He was commenting on squatters who moved to vacant land in the area last week.

The Cape Town city council obtained an interdict last week to have the squatters evicted, but on Monday the court stopped the eviction.

The council gave an undertaking not to enforce the eviction until Friday, when the squatters would be given the opportunity to state why they should not be evicted.

"It is highly irresponsible for certain community leaders to initiate such invasions. The poor and vulnerable are often used by unscrupulous elements to gain influence and control," Rasool said. — Saps.
CAPE TOWN

At home in a barren land

Something fishy behind the squatters

Was it a full-scale land invasion prompted by population pressure, or well-planned political theatre?

Over the weekend ending April 27, Freedom Day, hundreds of illegal squatters occupied land between Mitchells Plain and the False Bay coast. The area, known as Tafelsig, falls under the jurisdiction of the Cape Town City Council, which has demarcated it for socio-economic housing and schools. In addition, the 500-odd shacks that went up blocked some roads and border on the Wolfgat fynbos reserve.

By the beginning of this week, the number of squatters had risen to more than 3,000, with no adequate water or other infrastructure, and they were refusing to move despite a High Court interdict empowering the council to relocate them. The squatters have been given a stay of execution until May 8, when they will state their legal case.

The settlement has been named Freedom Park/City. The squatters are not newcomers to the Peninsula. Most appear to have converged on Freedom Park from overcrowded "backyard squats" in Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha. Signs along the coastal road and its extensions — from Muizenberg to the N2 and across to Stellenbosch — proclaimed this barren area "home sweet home" and the squatters, some of whom are on housing lists, say they will not move unless given alternative accommodation.

Cape Town — which has a council housing waiting list of 41,000 families, many said to have been waiting for decades — can make no such offer. It doesn't have cash. Its swiftness in seeking legal permission for the removal was prompted by Freedom Park's unwilling neighbours, who have received homes from the authorities, and resent the encroachment of queue-jumpers.

The official unemployment rate in the Western Cape is 22%-25% (nationally it is 33%). Worse, however, is that the Flats bears the brunt: unemployment in Manenberg is 66%, followed by Mitchells Plain.

Development agency Wesgro reports Department of Labour statistics stating that 50,000 new jobs must be created in the Western Cape each year to maintain social stability. But 10,000 jobs were shed last year despite a 4.2% economic growth rate.

A representative for a nongovernmental organisation involved in youth work in Mitchells Plain says she believes the Flats are being turned into "dumping grounds" for the jobless and poor. Clearly, though, a land invasion on this scale was co-ordinated. The squatters have received support from a number of political, religious and welfare groupings including Muslim group Qibla as well as Pagad. Cosatu has offered to mediate. Court evidence this Friday could help explain the abruptness of the invasion.

The issue of housing lists in the Western Cape has been controversial for some time. Some lists were devised in the previous era when colourboards were deliberately favoured above blacks in terms of work, welfare and housing. National Minister of Housing Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele last year accused NP-orientated Cape officials of continuing to use the old, discriminatory lists.

The Freedom Park invasion is a dramatic illustration, though, of the wiler malaise of an insufficiency of funds and an incapacity to deliver to the poor of whatever hue. Cosatu's comment on the situation is illustrative of how deeply the sense of grievance runs: "We have repeatedly warned that working-class communities in the Western Cape have not seen any substantial improvement in their living conditions and quality of life under the current (NP) provincial government."

This, of course, places the blame for the conditions that triggered the land invasion on the provincial administration; and pulling down the shacks will reinforce the NP's image as the party of community destruction. To be fair to the NP, however, 41,000 families cannot be housed overnight.

Petra Willem

---

Upper Class

Complimentary snooze suits and eyeshades, cozy duvets and pillows, not to mention position. All for a business class fare. Now that's a winning combination. Johannesburg
Tafelsig squatters' fate still in balance

The fate of about 600 squatter families who illegally occupied land in Tafelsig was still undecided at midday today.

A High Court challenge by the squatters to contest their eviction was delayed for lack of a courtroom. The Cape Town Municipality had brought an urgent interdict to evict the squatters, but their lawyers got the High Court to reconsider the application today.

About 30 placard-waving squatters arrived to follow the proceedings.

Among the residents at the court today was Jerome Smith, who brought with him his application for a council house dated November 11 1986. He said his wife and three children had been staying on the Tafelsig land for the past two weeks.
people are forced to move, the housing application process begins. However, the process is not as straightforward as it seems. Many people are unaware of their rights and do not know how to navigate the system. It is crucial for people to understand their rights and know how to protect themselves. 

A recent study conducted by a housing advocacy group found that many people who are forced to move are not aware of their legal rights. The study also found that many people who are forced to move do not know how to access legal aid. 

The study recommended that more resources be made available to help people who are forced to move. It also recommended that more education be provided to help people understand their legal rights. 

In conclusion, the housing application process is crucial for people who are forced to move. However, many people are unaware of their rights and do not know how to navigate the system. It is essential for people to understand their legal rights and know how to protect themselves. 

References:

Squatter shacks torn down

BADALWA SHOTA

TYGERBERG municipal workers and police moved in on the latest squatter camp in Khayelitsha and tore down two shacks this week as tensions mounted.

The action came after more than six months of peace at the Lindelani settlement. Joseph Mala, a member of the local street committee, said people were scared and confused by the council’s actions.

“We thought the council had no problem with us staying here. In January we wrote them a letter asking to stay here legally. We have not had any reply yet, but we know they are aware of us because they come to collect the rubbish,” said Mala.

The settlement has come under fire from other local people, particularly train commuters, as it is situated next to Nonkrubela train station and the Sam-lam shopping centre in Site B.

As a result the residents of Lindelani have to put up with daily abuse from commuters forced to dodge between the concentration of shacks and washing lines to catch their trains.

Mala said his small community had done all it could to make it easier for the commuters.

“We have left a path where these people can run for their trains, but they still swear at us when they pass. They tell us to move, that we are making the place dirty. But we will not be forced out by the people of Khayelitsha. This is the only home we have,” said Mala.

About 250 people lived in the area, but they had no running water or sewerage, said Mala. They relied on facilities at the nearby shopping centre, clinic and the Site B township.

However, people at Site B complained that their taps and sewerage were “being ruined” by the Lindelani folk.

Bongani Miyohobice, who also lives in the settlement, said the clinic personnel chased them away whenever they went to the toilets there. He said the station’s toilets closed early so people were forced to go to the clinic and Site B.

Mala said the residents desperately needed their own facilities and were worried about children crossing the railway line to fetch water.

At one stage they had negotiated with a council representative on getting bucket toilets, he said.

“But now it seems the council has changed its mind about letting us stay here. We are waiting to see what is going to happen,” said Mala. “We did not choose to be here. All of us were living in other people’s properties and being mistreated. Even though the houses get flooded, it’s still home.”

It’s never too late to own a piece of District Six

YVETTE VAN BREDA

A HISTORIC banking deal has made 93-year-old Amalia Kamphor a proud first-time home owner this weekend when she took possession of the District Six terraced cottage where she has lived for 51 years.

Kamphor and her family, together with 44 others in her street, were part of a deal between the Cape of Good Hope Bank and the District Six Civic Association, which enabled 45 families to own the homes they had been renting for more than 70 years in Osborne and Francis streets, Woodstock.

“We are very grateful to the bank for giving us the chance to own our homes,” said 77-year-old Grace Barron, who was born in the corner cottage she now owns.

“But it’s a pity it had to come so late in my life,” she added.

The widow of 27 years recalls how she was determined to stay in “my birthplace” with though her husband had bought a piece of land in Heideveld over 40 years ago. “He had to sell it because I did not want to leave my birthplace and go and live in the bush, which it was at the time.”

“I’ve been so happy here,” she says of the little cluster of houses on the outskirts of District Six.

The houses managed to escape demolition and the Group Areas Act in the apartheid era because they were built on land classified as an industrial area.

Morkel reje
gerald Morkel, premier, environment MEC, has rejected an application to subdivide land in a nature reserve near the Silvermine River for a crime and anti-social behavior task team.

Pedal pow

THE race against crime in Tygerberg area this week proposed to buy bicycles for the local police.

According to a council spokesperson, the 14 “Gary Fisher” bikes were to be bought for a police foot patrol.

A police spokesman said the move was to prevent crime.
Milestone for the Vrygrond

Papers signed to ensure better future for families

“This must be the happiest day of my life. It’s a dream come true,” said Oom Thys.

But, at the same time, he has fathered 18 children – from several wives – and 11 of them still live with him.

And at last it looks as if he will get a house with running water, waterborne sewerage and electricity.

After a seven-year battle – it’s not over yet – papers were signed by South Peninsula Mayor O J Jacobs, which mark the end of the process to wrap up the plans for Vrygrond and apply to the Housing Board for the finance to build a new Vrygrond.

The fund between opposing forces in the settlement has been simmering for a long time and is complicated, to say the least. It apparently stems from the original formation of the Vrygrond Community Development Trust, the body made up of representatives from Vrygrond to be the link between the development and the Vrygrond community.

There was a walkout by some Sanco and ANC members, while other members of both bodies remained on the trust.

Oom Thys Witbooi is a happy man because his dream is coming true.

He has lived in the Vrygrond informal settlement between Muizenberg and Retreat for 37 years.

He has put up with outbreaks of violence, the fires, the floods, the leaking roofs and bitter cold of winter and being sand-blasted and roasted by the south-easter and the heat of summer.
Squatters siphoning schools dry

BOBBY JORDAN

SQUATTERS are siphoning off millions of rands in water from Western Cape schools, according to the Department of Education.

The problem has reached critical proportions in Khayelitsha, where the council is also battling to move squatters who have built shacks on top of manholes.

The department appealed to the Tygerberg City Council this week to resolve the water problem.

This follows a showdown between the council and department officials last month over unpaid water bills of about R6 million.

The council has threatened to cut off water supplies to the Khayelitsha schools and has given the department until the end of the month to settle its account.

In a report tabled this week, council finance director Hein Herbst said the matter had been referred to Education MEC Nic Koornhof.

The department has denied responsibility for the outstanding amount, claiming the debt was largely inherited from the former Department of Education and Training.

Department officials this week said the education budget could not be used to subsidise municipal services to squatter communities.

"These astronomical water bills are absolute proof of what we've thought all along — that water is being drawn by squatter communities," said the department's chief director of administrative services, Jan Hurter.

"When we checked the water meter figures we worked out that the figures were extremely high for each pupil — ridiculously high," said Hurter. "We can only suspect that local communities have been making use of the water."

"Council and department officials would meet soon to resolve the matter, Hurter said."
Defiant De Lille under fire as squatters, cops clash over ‘invasion’

Residents of Thornhill in Rylands have accused the Pan Africanist Congress of "playing political football" with 50 families who occupied Cape Town municipal land with the help of PAC MP Patricia de Lille at the weekend.

The community's accusations were supported by the deputy chairman of the Cape Town City Council executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, who said city officials would hold top-level talks today to discuss the land invasion and the PAC's role.

"There are some shack dwellers who have lived on the land for 47 years and who may have a legitimate claim to the property, but this could have been jeopardized by the weekend invasion," he said.

A fact-finding team from the municipality will investigate conditions at Poek-se-Bos, the shack settlement on adjacent privately owned land from which the invaders came.

Mr Mowzer suspected the owner of the land, businessman Khandi Patel, was working with the PAC to profit from the settlement on his property so he could sell it.

Today Mr Patel dismissed this accusation as "nonsense" saying he had never been "in cahoots" with Ms De Lille on the issue.

"These people moved off my land because it is waterlogged and living conditions are terrible," he said.

He accused the council of laying all the responsibility for resolving the squatting crisis at his door. "Housing is not my problem. It is something they (the council) must sort out," Mr Patel said.

The move by the squatters led to confrontation with the municipality and police, who used teargas and rubber bullets to break a human chain trying to prevent bulldozers reaching the shacks yesterday.

After a three-hour battle, about 30 children were taken to Hanover Park Day Hospital or treatment for teargas inhalation.

The Poek-se-Bos squatters were reinforced by Tafelsig squatters ferried in by taxi organised by Ms De Lille, who said: "If I am an opportunist by helping these people then I'm a damn good opportunist. They can all go to hell! I don't need their votes."

In a letter, community leaders from adjacent Thornhill condemned the PAC's action, describing it as "the abuse of vulnerable people for short-term political gain."

Among the signatories were the Thornhill Residents Association, the Gatesville Traders Association and Athlone RDP Forum. The leaders also claimed that the PAC was working with Mr Patel.

Before yesterday's incident, the council was negotiating with Mr Patel to develop his land for housing to accommodate the people of Poek-se-Bos. Residents have suggested that having the people off his land would free Mr Patel to sell the land on the open market.

Ms De Lille fired back at the associations, saying they were "racists living in that area in luxury and opulence without lifting a finger to help the squatters living next door."

Provincial ANC leader Ibrahim Rasool called for the PAC to discipline Ms De Lille for her direct role in orchestrating an illegal land invasion of council land.
MEMBERS of the community who have been squatting for several years on private land in Rylands, Friday invaded adjacent Cape Town City Council land with the backing of Pan African Congress MP Patricia de Lille and support from fellow squatters specially bused in from Mitchells Plain.

The Rylands squatters, who had been living on land owned by city businessman Kanti Patel in Jane Avenue, invaded adjoining council land in Ramola Avenue and began building shacks.

Other squatters from Tafelsig, in Mitchells Plain, were brought in by minibus taxis after De Lille called for reinforcements to prevent the council from demolishing 22 newly-built shacks.

The Rylands and Tafelsig squatters formed a human chain when a large contingent of police and city council workers arrived to knock down the shacks they had built with new materials supplied by the PAC.

Police moved in with dogs to break up the human chain and then fired rounds of teargas and birdshot to disperse the large, angry crowd, to make way for a front-end loader to demolish the shacks.

During the demolition, a group of squatters appealed to De Lille, who was watching from the sidelines, asking her to intervene and stop the council from destroying all the shacks.

A compromise was agreed to by De Lille and city council official Anwar Isaacs, and the squatters were allowed to dismantle the remaining shacks themselves.

De Lille, who was also involved in the land invasion issue in Tafelsig earlier this year, said she became involved in the latest land invasion after she was approached for help by the Jane Avenue squatters, who told her they were waterlogged and that they wanted to move to the adjacent council property, which was drier.

"I got involved because they asked me to assist them," De Lille said. "I came to look at the conditions they were living under and realised that, even if they wanted to move their shacks, they were falling apart.

"I then went fund-raising and asked several businesses to donate money to buy materials."

De Lille said she had raised between R10 000 and R15 000 to buy wood, nails and corrugated iron sheets.

When council officials had indicated during a meeting on Saturday that the council would demolish the illegal settlement, she had decided to call in reinforcements from Tafelsig to resist the move.

"I know I'll be grilled over this, but what the hell," said De Lille.

The PAC's role in the weekend land invasion was condemned yesterday by the Cape Town City Council, which said the PAC was "whipping up the emotions of the homeless" for political gain.

"We strongly condemn the actions of the PAC and the manner in which they used innocent people for short-term party gains," said exco deputy chairperson Saleem Mover. "They (the PAC) are encouraging people to act unlawfully and this is something the council cannot condone. This is not the answer to the housing crisis."

The ANC also condemned the PAC for its "naive opportunism", saying the PAC should take disciplinary steps against De Lille for her direct role in orchestrating an illegal invasion of council land.

"The city council and the SA Police Service should fully investigate the role played by the PAC in providing materials for the building of shacks and organising the land invasion itself," said ANC provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool.
New hopes shattered after squatters' life of struggle

For more than 20 years, Pooke-se-Bos resident Victoria Mnanya has been "stealing" water from various places in Rylands and Gatsville.

Mrs Mnanya, who has never had a tap or proper sanitation, said she was one of about 200 people with high hopes of settling into a decent house in a low-cost housing project in Vygieskraal.

But this dream was shattered last year when she heard that the Pooke-se-Bos community, also known as the Janie Avenue squatters, were to be excluded from the project.

Then at the weekend she and about 100 other people were forcibly removed by the Cape Town municipality and police from a piece of "decent land" near Pooke-se-Bos.

"The removal happened less than 24 hours after they had occupied it and built new shacks," she said.

Describing life at Pooke-se-Bos, she said: "We survived by asking and sometimes stealing water from schools and residences."

Using this "stolen" water, she raised two children, now teenagers.

Like most other people in the shacks, Mrs Mnanya, 49, does casual domestic work in Rylands and Gatsville.

Another victim of the weekend's clash was Nancy Boul, 60, who lost most of her belongings, clothing and furniture.

On Sunday she was forced to move into temporary accommodation with relatives whose house is already packed to capacity.

De Lille wins hearts in battle of Pooke-se-Bos

Squatters back PAC after land clashes

The Cape Town municipality has assigned its cleaning, health and housing departments to investigate living conditions at Pooke-se-Bos shack settlement.

Saimir Mowzer, deputy chairman of the city council's social services commit- tee, said yesterday the municipality was in the process of identifying land for the more than 200 people living in Pooke-se-Bos.

About 100 Pooke-se-Bos residents occupied municipal land at the weekend with the help of the Pan African Congress MP Patricia de Lille.

"Saimir Mowzer was active in this community and has gathered their votes and now he disappeared," said a local resident.

But Mr Mowzer rejected the accusation, saying he was part of an initiative with the AfriForum REB and other residents to form one joint housing project for the Pooke-se-Bos and Vygieskraal shacks.

Mr Mowzer said the council recently resolved that only 90 houses would be built at Vygieskraal and they would be for homeless people from that area only.

He said the council recently provided protective plastic sheeting, medical assistance and job creation projects for Pooke-se-Bos people.

Meanwhile, a row has erupted between the African National Congress and the PAC over the involvement of Ms de Lille in the land invasion.

Provincial ANC leader Ibrahim Issaid offered to take disciplinary action against her for "getting the ANC involved in a illegal investment".

But PAC Western Cape organiser Jon Brown hit back, saying: "Any activity by Ms de Lille to alleviate the plight of the poor must come under the title of noble deeds.

He said the PAC rejected ANC attempts to undermine "our modern day Mother Teresa", Patricia de Lille.
Ratепayers foot the bill in city land war

Council spent more than £70 000 to ousted Plylands squatters

The problem of homeless people living in Plye is recognized by the city council and some government authorities. The city council has spent more than £70 000 in the past year to evict Plylands squatters.

The Plye problem has been ongoing for several years, with the city council and Plylands residents unable to come to an agreement on the situation. The city council has attempted to evict Plylands squatters in the past, but the residents have continued to occupy the land.

The Plye problem has been a source of concern for many residents in the city, and the city council has been criticized for its handling of the situation. Many residents have expressed concern about the cost of the evictions and the impact on the Plylands community.

The city council has attempted to address the Plye problem by providing temporary accommodation for Plylands squatters, but the residents have continued to live on the land.

The city council is now considering more long-term solutions to the Plye problem, including the possibility of providing permanent accommodation for Plylands squatters.

The Plye problem has also been the subject of recent media coverage, with many articles and reports highlighting the situation and the cost to the city council.

The city council has been accused of being slow to address the Plye problem, and many residents have called for a more urgent and effective response from the council.

The Plye problem is a complex issue, and the city council is working to find a solution that meets the needs of all parties involved.

The city council is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all residents, and will continue to work towards a resolution that is fair and just for all.

END OF STORY

MORE REPORTS

**The Plye Problem**

The city council has been working to address the Plye problem for many years, but the situation remains unresolved. The city council has attempted to evict Plylands squatters in the past, but the residents have continued to occupy the land.

The Plye problem has been a source of concern for many residents in the city, and the city council has been criticized for its handling of the situation. Many residents have expressed concern about the cost of the evictions and the impact on the Plylands community.

The city council has attempted to address the Plye problem by providing temporary accommodation for Plylands squatters, but the residents have continued to live on the land.

The city council is now considering more long-term solutions to the Plye problem, including the possibility of providing permanent accommodation for Plylands squatters.

The Plye problem has also been the subject of recent media coverage, with many articles and reports highlighting the situation and the cost to the city council. The city council has been accused of being slow to address the Plye problem, and many residents have called for a more urgent and effective response from the council.

The Plye problem is a complex issue, and the city council is working to find a solution that meets the needs of all parties involved. The city council is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all residents, and will continue to work towards a resolution that is fair and just for all.

END OF STORY
Defiant De Lille vows to help more squatters

Poor ask PAC firebrand for talks

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

Fiery Pan Africanist Congress MP Patricia de Lille has vowed to highlight the plight of more squatter communities across the country.

Aided by Ms De Lille, about 100 people moved at the weekend from Pookse-Bos in Rylands and occupied Cape Town municipal land 400m away. This led to confrontation between police and municipal officials and the squatters, whose shacks were demolished by bulldozers.

Now people living in squalar in Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Gauteng, North-West Province and the Western Cape have invited Ms De Lille for talks.

Ms De Lille confirmed the requests, saying hundreds of shack communities had appealed unsuccessfully to local authorities for help over the years. “I will use my profile to highlight homeless people’s plights because local authorities everywhere are turning a deaf ear.”

Pookse-Bos squatter representative Miea Hofstadler said: “Out of desperation this community turned to Patricia de Lille and the PAC for help. She did not come to us; we went to her because the people heard about her good deeds.”

Cape Town municipal squatter control officer Anwar Isaac alleged that Ms De Lille was using the Pookse-Bos squatters, and that the PAC had whipped up trouble in the settlement.

Meanwhile, African National Congress provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool has again called on PAC leader Stanley Magoba to take disciplinary action against Ms De Lille.

In a letter to Dr Magoba, Mr Rasool claimed Ms De Lille had led squatters in an invasion of land, helped them to set up structures and brought people from other areas to resist the city council.

In response, Ms De Lille said Mr Rasool must observe protocol. The ANC’s national leader should approach Dr Magoba, not Mr Rasool.

The PAC supported her and “the ANC must discipline their own members”.

“The ANC and others tried to take action against me in Parliament but they failed,” Ms De Lille said.
**Rylands squatters to get running water, sanitation**

**ART 18 | 7 | 98 (307)**

**JERMAINE CRAIG**

After many years of living in squalor, the Jane Avenue squatters of Rylands are finally getting running water and sanitation facilities.

This was achieved only after they had broken the law and invaded municipal land after staying on private land for more than 20 years - with no facilities.

Land invasions have become commonplace in Cape Town and have exacerbated the housing crisis in the province, with more than 20,000 Western Cape families in dire need of housing.

These invasions, such as the one at Rylands last week, in Tafelsig earlier this year and the illegal occupation of houses in Deft have served as a reminder of the desperate circumstances people are living in and want to get out of.

The situation has been described as one of "utter anarchy" which could lead to open warfare. Although many housing plans have been announced and formulated, there has been virtually no concrete delivery of homes, which has become a highly emotive political issue.

In the run-up to the next general election, political parties will be using the housing issue as a vehicle to garner votes.

Many have criticised the dramatic contribution of Pan Africanist Congress firebrand Patricia de Lille in the Rylands incident, where she helped squatters invade council land - but the situation was ripe for the picking.

Ms De Lille said she was simply "championing the cause of the poor and downtrodden" and the time had come for "concrete steps" to be taken to uplift the living conditions of the thousands of homeless people in the country.

Whatever the merits of Ms De Lille’s actions, assisting the Rylands squatters in breaking the law could set dangerous precedents and make it even more difficult to deal with the problem.

In May the Western Cape housing minister, Cecil Herdien, lashed out at local councils in the Cape metropolitan area, accusing them of a “lack of interest” in tackling the housing backlog.

“They can talk very easily of housing delivery, but to me it seems they are not very serious,” Mr Herdien said then.

He then convened a housing summit in June to fast-track the delivery of houses, at which local councils agreed on a metropolitan-wide approach to tackle the housing backlog.

A task team was appointed after the summit to look at ways of taking the housing delivery process forward.

Mr Herdien’s spokeswoman, Surita Botes, said the task team had completed draft guidelines which they will forward to the minister this week.

She said Mr Herdien then intended to discuss these new measures and get them through the legislature.

Ms Botes said the ministry was doing “everything it possibly can” to get the housing process off the ground, but a major stumbling block was the lack of funds.

The main problem at the moment is that there are no more funds available this year to execute any new housing projects. What the local authorities will have to look at is getting some means of getting bridging finance in place so that projects can start running, until province has money again.

“We have petitioned the national Government for extra funds, but their purses are basically empty as well. There are a lot of projects that are ready, if we are given the money today they can start tomorrow,” Ms Botes said.

To date the housing ministry has received more than 95,000 housing subsidy applications and was ready to implement projects worth more than R300 million. If it had the money.
Promises of homes, but Delft illegals still face action

NOMNAGS (200)
AND CHARLES NGOULE

The Western Cape Housing Development Board is pressing ahead with court action against Delft South's illegal occupants in spite of a decision to allocate houses to them.

Provincial housing Minister Cecil Herandien announced on Monday that houses would be given to "illegals" whose names appeared on either the Tygerberg or Cape Town Municipalitly's housing lists.

The move would hopefully end the ongoing housing conflict in Delft, said Tygerberg municipal officials.

The board is seeking an eviction order to remove about 150 illegal occupants from houses in the Integrated Serviced Land Project development, the largest in Cape Town.

Last Friday High Court judge Mr Justice Ben Griessel postponed the board's application to evict the illegal occupants to Friday.

The 150 illegals would first be evicted and then the housing department would consult with them.

Housing conflict in Delft South appear to be ending but police and the justice department will continue with a clampdown on illegal occupants.

Bellville South police commander Jan Solomons and state prosecutors held talks at the Bellville Magistrate's Court on Monday regarding charges laid by legal homeowners against illegal occupants.

Superintendent Solomons said five cases of intimidation were under investigation - 25 extra police from different units were drafted into Delft South on Monday to help prevent further clashes.

Superintendent Solomons said he hoped the fighting would stop now that the housing department made a positive move.

In the past two weeks the conflict resulted in the death of one resident and the wounding of another. Doors were kicked down and people assaulted.

Provincial housing spokesperson Surita Botes said illegal occupants whose names appeared on the waiting lists would be allocated houses, but those people whose names were not on the lists would be evicted.

Illegal occupants living in houses earmarked for legal buyers would be asked to leave and other houses elsewhere in the town given to them.

Claude Ipser, chairman of Tygerberg Municipality's standing committee on housing, said the provincial housing department's decision was consistent with its move in April to accommodate illegal Crossroads people. He said it would hopefully end the conflict, but must not be repeated.
Outsiders giving Cardboard City

RESIDENTS of the flyover shanty town known as Cardboard City have been blamed for mugging tourists, breaking into cars and the escalating violence in the Waterfront area. But they say they are an ordinary community of hard working people. CLAUDIA CAVANAGH and ERIC NTABAZALILA report.

Waterfront, it has been blamed for most of the muggings of tourists in the area. While it is why the City of Cape Town plans to move it out.

"Good, says Maphike, "it will keep the skelkies out. We're like a big family. While there are more skelkies living here, most of us work and look after one another."

Many of the 200 residents have lived in Cardboard City for years.

On the morning of the Cape Times visit, the police had been called to the aid of a resident.

"She was asleep in her shack when passers-by walked in and tried to rob her," said Maphike.

"The other day, a car sped up, dumped a whole pile of rubbish in the middle of our road, it hit and drove off. We had to call the fire brigade."

"As for the nightiarchs across the road, they say we break into their cars, but you should see the litter they throw around our houses."

A handful of residents, on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that criminals used the place as a hideout and threatened those willing to speak to the police.

But they stressed that the criminals did not live there.

"There wasn't any crime when we first started staying here about 10 years ago. We were only about 70. When the population increased criminals used it opportunistically, they knew it would be difficult for police to find them," said James tempting, a resident's committee member struggling to improve the image of the shanty town.

"We need to stress to everybody, including tourists, that these criminals are not from here. I think the city centre especially around St George's Mall is more dangerous and many people think.

"I came from Section E in Khayelitsha about six years ago and used to steal around the city looking for a job. He said, "I was angry because police always arrested at Cardboard City in search of criminals who were broken in the Cape Town."

"Many of the people who break into cars are from other areas, like these boys from Bokzaap."

"All this bad publicity is giving us a bad name and people have stopped giving us food because they say we are criminals," he said.

But things are looking up for the people of Cardboard City.

Land has been set aside for low-cost housing near Lentegeur Hospital in Mitchell's Plain and they've been promised some of the sites there — once conditions set by their new neighbours have been met by the council.

I hope it all will be sorted out by the end of the month. Then they can move," said City Manager Andrew Horne.

"The area under the bridge is clearly unsuitable because it is down town, derelict and dark. It needs to be secured with a fence and a gate for legitimate residents."

"The residents are vulnerable and often subject to harassment and theft. At least then they'll be able to sleep well at night," he said.

"The private sector will come in to help develop the area and make it safe," he said. For instance, become a properly secured car park, a place to store boats or be rented for film studies. This will help stabilise the area," he said.

Sew Point ward councillor Chris Joubert says he's investigating extending the Rent-a-Cop scheme to the area.

But Maphike is still worried.

"It's a tough life here and you've got to live with our people to really know their problems. You can't drive past and expect to know all their expectations and fears."

I feel we ought to do things for ourselves, to make our own life," he said.

BORN IN 'THE CITY': Caroline Abrahams with her son Andile, who was born in the shanty town under a flyover.
Cardboard City a bad name

4 years ago. We were only about 20. When the population increased criminal elements moved in. That offered an opportunity for us because they knew it would be difficult for police to find us,” said Justice Somathe, a resident’s committee member struggling to improve the image of the area.

“We need to stress to everybody, including tourists, that these criminals are not from here. I think the city centre, especially around St George’s Mall is more dangerous than many people think.”

Zione Malilo, who came from J-Sec, in Khayelitsha about six years ago and used to steal around the city looking for a job, said he was angry because police always arrived in Cardboard City to catch culprits when cars were broken into in Cape Town.

“Many of the people who break into cars are from other areas, like those young boys from Boksha.

“All this bad publicity is giving us a bad name and people have stopped giving us food because they say we are criminals,” he said.

But things are looking up for the people of Cardboard City. Land has been set aside for low-cost housing near Lengondlo Nyalala in Mitchell’s Plain and they’ve been promised some of the sites there – once conditions set by their new neighbours have been met by the council.

“I hope it’ll all be sorted out by the end of the month. Then they can move,” said City Manager Andrew Bratton.

“The area under the bridge is clearly unsafe because it is downtown, derelict and crime-ridden. We need the security of a fence and a gate for legitimate residents.

“The residents are vulnerable and often unfairly blamed for crime. At least then they’ll be able to sleep well at night.”

Bratton said members of the private sector had agreed to sponsor and pay for work for former Cardboard City residents, for a year after they move to Mitchell’s Plain.

“The private sector will then develop the area and make it suitable for use. It could, for instance, become a properly secured car park, a place to store boats or be rented to film studios. This will help stabilise the area,” he said.

Clover Point ward councillor Christo Jouwerts says he’s investigating extending the fleet-a-Cop scheme to the area.

Maphike is still worried.

“It’s a tough life here and you’ve got to live with our people to really know their problems. You can’t drive past and expect to know their expectations and fears.

“I want to give them a proper balanced life. We have to learn to do things for ourselves, to make our own life.”

AT SCHOOL WITH FRIENDS: Andile (centre) attends the local creche with his friends. Their parents work at parking lots in the city centre during the day.
Cardboard City fights newly released criminals

Squatters help demolish shacks

Cape Town's Cardboard City

3014479/47/48

(30/4/79) ARU}
Squatters unite to keep ‘illegals’ out

CITY council officials yesterday moved in with police reinforcement to demolish “illegal” shacks in Cardboard City, beneath the city’s foreshore flyovers.

Members of the Cardboard City community co-operated with the council officials and pointed out the shacks that were to be torn down.

Yesterday’s removal of “illegal” occupants was the start of a planned fencing of the area which has allegedly been a nest for criminals.

CITY council officials yesterday moved in with police reinforcement to demolish “illegal” shacks in Cardboard City, beneath the city’s foreshore flyovers.

Members of the Cardboard City community co-operated with the council officials and pointed out the shacks that were to be torn down.

Yesterday’s removal of “illegal” occupants was the start of a planned fencing of the area which has allegedly been a nest for criminals.

TORN DOWN: City council officials demolished “illegal” shacks in Cardboard City underneath the Foreshore flyovers yesterday, while police stood guard. Members of the settlement co-operated with the council officials and pointed out the shacks that were to be torn down. Yesterday’s removal was the start of a planned fencing of the area which has allegedly been a nest for criminals.

PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR

Squatters unite to keep ‘illegals’ out

CITY council officials yesterday moved in with police reinforcement to demolish “illegal” shacks in Cardboard City, beneath the city’s foreshore flyovers.

Members of the Cardboard City community co-operated with the council officials and pointed out the shacks that were to be torn down.

Yesterday’s removal of “illegal” occupants was the start of a planned fencing of the area which has allegedly been a nest for criminals. Cardboard City community leaders welcomed the removal as a sign of a move to eradicate the bad elements in the community.

But the remaining residents were still frightened that they would be victimised by owners of the demolished shacks.

Cardboard City has been labelled the most dangerous area for tourists in Cape Town. Less than a kilometre from the V&A Waterfront, it has been blamed for most of the muggings in the area.

But the 200 or so people who have been living under the flyovers for years are adamant that they are not the criminals. They say people who use it as a hideout give the place a bad name.

The Cardboard City community is to be be relocated to a settlement for low-cost housing near Lentegeur Hospital in Mitchell’s Plain. The move is planned to take place before the end of the month.

“We are supporting the breaking down of the ‘illegal shacks’ because it is important to keep down the numbers of the people to be relocated,” said Coberidge Daniels of the Salesian Institute.

Daniels, who has been working with the community for more than three years, says residents just want to get on with their lives and do not want criminal elements jeopardising their chances of a better life.

Cape Town City Council spokesperson Leonora de Souza said the council and the community had agreed on the relocation, but that the shacks that were originally not on the list should be excluded. The area is to be secured with a fence, gate and guard for legitimate residents until the move takes place.
Delft South ‘illegals’ fight with own lawyers in court

NORMAN JOSEPH AND CHARLIE MOULIDGE
Staff Reporters

About 145 angry people who have occupied houses in Delft South argued with their counsel in the Cape High Court.

This happened yesterday at the hearing of an application by the Western Cape Provincial Housing Development Board for an order evicting the people from the Delft South housing development.

The 145 people, who are opposing the application, are among about 600 people who allegedly forced their way into new houses about a month ago, claiming they had been on council waiting lists for many years.

They branded people living in other houses in the area as the “illegal occupants”.

Before the hearing, they met their legal team, headed by J C Marais, who apparently suggested they agree to move out of the houses.

This led to the angry exchanges. Later Mr Marais promised the people he would argue in court that they should not be evicted unless the Government provided alternative accommodation.

Mr Justice John Hlophe postponed the application to tomorrow, saying another judge had agreed to preside over it.

The original judge, Mr Justice Ben Grilseel, was not available to continue with the case because the High Court was in recess.

Judge Hlophe told the court he had seen all the documents and it appeared the case was ready for hearing.

“The case appears to be legally complicated. I hope some kind of political solution will be found to the problem. I hope the parties, if they negotiate in good faith, will be able to agree,” he said.
Where must we go now?

Judge orders Delth illegals to move out
Delft's illegal squatters to appeal

Justice Writer

"I MUST remind them (of the 1999 elections). When they campaigned in 1994, they promised that jobs and houses will be provided for all."

This, with nods from scores of supporters, was how Buyiswa Bala responded to a High Court order which gave her and 84 other illegal occupants of houses in Delft South two weeks to move out. Judge Willem Louw authorised the Sheriff to evict them by no later than August 31 should they refuse to move.

The judgment followed several court appearances after the Provincial Housing Development Board wanted to evict the occupants of 139 houses.

The court was told that Towns 3 to 6 of the Delft South project would comprise 3 700 serviced erven, of which half would go to people on the Cape Town City Council waiting list, and the other half to people in the Tygerberg municipal area.

Late last month, 55 of the illegal occupants agreed to vacate the homes they occupied while the remaining people had to satisfy the Housing Board their names appeared on an official waiting list and that they qualified for a housing subsidy.

Bala said the eviction was hurtful and they would appeal: "What criteria does the housing MEC use? Do they want people with a lot of money? It obviously depends on who you are. If you are in Parliament you get everything."

Charles Louw SC and Alisdair Sholto-Douglas, instructed by the state attorney, appeared for the Housing Board. Jan Marais, instructed by Milton de la Harpe, appeared for the occupants.
Threat of evictions in Delft

MOTSHIDISI MOKWENA

OCCUPANTS of the Delft South Reconstruction and Development Programme houses are to be evicted today from the homes they unlawfully occupied. This follows an order granted to the Provincial Housing Development Board by the High Court two weeks ago.

Spokesperson Surita Botes said the housing department has appealed to the residents to co-operate with officials during the evictions. "Those who refuse to vacate the houses will be forcibly removed from August 31," said Botes.

Meanwhile the "illegal occupants" are adamant that they will not move.

"If they remove me from this house I will erect a shack next to it until I am given another house," said Mmoneleli Ntlokoko.

The father of five said he has been on the waiting list since 1992, to no avail. "This is unfair because there are people who have never put their names down on the waiting list who already have houses."

Another resident, who did not want to be named, dismissed Ntlokoko's claims that he was on the waiting list. "They are not on the waiting list. They occupied these houses unlawfully. I have the legal papers and a key to show that I am the legal occupant of the house."

Relating Ntlokoko's sentiments, Mmangela Vinyela, who lives with his girlfriend and two children, said he is not moving anywhere.

Ghebades Ventura, the National Party councillor in the area, said he sympathises with the people who will be evicted but that there is nothing that can be done.

"We are doing everything in our power to get everyone housed but people have to be patient and wait their turn to be allocated houses," Ventura said.

"Only those people who are on the waiting list will be allowed to remain in the houses," he added.

Nomangisi Watkins said she was devastated by the judge's eviction decision. "Where does he expect us to go?" she asked.

"I occupied the house because I had to find a home for my children. When we move out of here where are we going to stay?"

Botes said that the provincial ministry hopes that the court's decision will send a clear message that illegal occupations or invasions of land will not be tolerated.
PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

Face-twisting dose of harsh medicine

Producers tighten belts as generics hit the market

The pharmaceutical industry is bowing to pressure from powerful market forces which are squeezing volumes and margins. Consumer have the most to gain in this price-sensitive environment while the industry rallies to form new alliances and strategies to cope with the increased competition.

Two main forces are driving the market — cost-cutting by the medical aid industry through the introduction of managed health care, and a marked shift away from original (ethical) medicine to generic drugs — copies of original drugs whose patents have expired.

The private-sector generics market grew 13% by value (in real terms) over the year to February 1998, while the market for originals hardly changed over the same period.

Local generics manufacturers should gain from the swing to cheaper generics, but it is bad news for the multinationals that produce original drugs.

Generics are up to 60% cheaper than original drugs and margins are far tighter in this market. Therefore a large shift to generics can be expected to reduce the overall medical bill markedly. This is a windfall for the consumer, provided these savings are passed on by medical aids and pharmacists.

The consumer was the winner in a price war sparked last month by the entry into the SA market of the new generic antimalaria drug, Melfilam. Swiss multinational giant Roche slashed the price of its ethical product, Lariam, by 47% to compete — a move its competitors estimated would cut virtually R4.5m/year off Roche’s bottom line.

Daryl Kranos... Adcock Ingram’s generics sales up by 50% (Financial Mail March 13).

Generics will be in even greater demand when Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma’s sweeping legislative changes, aimed at cutting medicine prices, kick in.

The Medicines and Related Substances Amendment Act was enacted late last year but is on hold pending legal challenges. The Act makes generic substitution all but mandatory and allows for cut-price imports of international brands marketed by multinationals.

Patients, too, are fed up with spiralling medical inflation and are beginning to demand cheaper generics.

With medical inflation having consistently outrun the Consumer Price Index since the late Eighties, medical schemes are also desperate to cut costs and are turning to managed health care.

Managed care is a US cost containment strategy which requires the medical aid company to monitor and manage the cost, amount and quality of care every member receives to ensure that the treatment dispensed by doctors and hospitals is cost-effective and necessary. If, in the medical aid’s opinion, it is not, it may refuse to pay.

Using managed care techniques, medical aids are trying to restrict doctors to dispensing only cost-effective drugs on preferred drugs lists and are encouraging them to use generics where possible.

The State is doing the same to contain public-hospital costs through the introduction of an essential drugs list, made up largely of generics.

The Health Department has made no secret of its intention to tour the world for cheaper bulk supplies of drugs for public hospitals. Some local manufacturers have cut their prices to below last year’s levels — barely covering their costs — to fend off foreign competitors for massive State drug tenders.

SA Druggists’ pharmaceutical division, Pharmcare, is the largest supplier of generics to the State. Pharmcare CE Kobus Nel says he is not concerned about the prospect of increased foreign competition, but he fears a provision in the Act that allows for the fast-track registration of imported generics under certain circumstances. He says that if this provision is used widely, and not just in extreme circumstances, it will mean local manufacturers will be at a disadvantage when competing against imports.

Even though the generics market is taking off, the industry as a whole has had a hard year. The 1997-1998 pharmaceutical statistics bear the hallmarks of a downturn.

The total volume of medicine sold to retail pharmacies by wholesalers shrank for eight consecutive months to February this year (see graph), and in December there was even a nominal decline in the rand value of that medicine. The indicators improved in January and February this year, but researchers say this is a seasonal phenomenon and the overall trend is still downward.

The latest medical aid industry figures also reveal a decline in medical aids’ expenditure on medicine — probably as a result of managed health care and other innovations, like medical savings accounts.

According to the newly released Representative Association of Medical Schemes 1996 data, annual increases in the industry’s expenditure on medicine have slowed from a high of 45% in 1992 to 14% in 1995 and 11% in 1996.

It is a bleak picture for the pharmaceutical industry, which has become accustomed to annual industry growth rates of 10%-15% since 1994.

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell pharmaceutical analyst Peter Armitage forecasts a “dismal year” for the pharmaceutical industry, with volumes down across the board. “We are not going to see any new investment in the SA industry and could possibly see companies scaling back on R&D expenditure.”

Mirryena Deeb, CEO of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers’ Association (PMA), which represents the large multinational pharmaceutical companies, says: “I don’t think we are feeling the downturn yet, but there is a sense that things are going to get worse. The key thing for manufacturers, particularly those with production facilities in SA, is to keep their volumes up.”
Cardboard City's bid for homes

The Cape Town municipality has applied to the provincial Housing Development Board for housing subsidies for 20 Cardboard City families.

The council plans to move more than 200 homeless people from Cardboard City, the squatter settlement under the Western Boulevard flyover, to Montrose Park in Mitchell's Plain.

The families, whose breadwinners qualify for subsidies, will move into the first phase of a 341-site development.

Acting Cape Town housing director Mervyn Bregman said that, conditional on the board's decision, the families would be moved before the end of the year.

Municipal spokeswoman Leonora de Souza said the housing subsidies were for R178,000 each.

City manager Andrew Boshane said no new squatters were being allowed at the settlement.
City land grab ‘scam’ sparks row

LYNNE RIPPERAAR
STAFF REPORTER

The illegal occupation of developed land in Weltevreden Valley has been labelled a scam by the Cape Town Municipality’s housing committee chairman and by Gladstone Ntamo, a member of the committee.

Mr Ntamo said that the Integrated Services Land Project already had allocated 1 015 sites in Weltevreden Valley to the Samora Machel community.

However, during a meeting with the SA National Civic’s Organisation (Sanco) and leaders of the Samora Machel community held on Thursday, extra land for about 428 families was demanded.

He said the Cape Town housing committee had urged the community to write to the housing committee so that an alternative plan could be made to accommodate the extra families.

Mr Ntamo said the committee had only counted 312 illegal structures at the site.

Mr Ntamo said this could mean “there are leaders who are corrupt in that area” who had taken money from individuals in exchange for land.

“It seems like they are using Sanco’s name. “I believe there is corruption in this area.”

He said the sudden disappearance of Shooter Nobon, chairperson of the Samora Machel branch of Sanco who allegedly told residents to occupy the land, made this more likely.

Mr Ntamo said that the housing committee would consult its legal department today about action to be taken against occupants. “This is, in fact, illegal occupation,” he said.

He believed this was “a planned campaign from whatever quarter”, using Sanco as a “launching pad for this action”.

The majority of Sanco’s members are members of the United Democratic Movement.

Gauteng housing and land affairs MEC Dan Mofokeng has allocated residential sites to about 1 000 families, formerly from informal settlements, in Boipatong near Vanderbijlpark, reports Sapa.

The allocation of sites on Friday was made through the department’s Mayibuye programme, aimed at providing land ownership to the landless.
COUNCIL TO DEMOLISH SHACKS

Families occupy new land

THE ALLEGED false promise by a Sanco official caused the mass occupation of developed land in Weltevreden Valley yesterday. Gasant Abarder reports.

Doris Dianga has been living in a squalor with her five children in the Samora Machel informal settlement near Philippi. "I'm sick and tired of living in a squalor camp for four years. This place is dirty and here where I'm moving to is nice," she said.

Dianga was one of about 300 people who illegally occupied a large area of developed land demarcated for homes yesterday, allegedly after Shooter Nobombo, chairperson of the Samora Machel branch of the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), told them to move onto the land.

Nobombo could not be reached to confirm or deny these allegations.

Chris Stail, regional chairperson of Sanco in Khayelitsha, said Nobombo had addressed a meeting yesterday morning on housing, but had told residents that the land in question was not earmarked for them. According to Stail, residents took the action on their own.

Families said that at yesterday's meeting they were told by Nobombo that they could move onto the 1,600m² of land in Weltevreden Valley near Philippi. They said they were promised water, electricity and toilet facilities.

Whitney Jacobs, Cape Town City Council chairperson for housing, said the land was earmarked for people who have been living in squatter areas in Langa and Guguletu. They were to move onto their plots this week.

Said Jacobs: "There was a whole process that had been agreed upon. The scheme here is similar to that of Delft," near Tshwane.

The families — from New Crossroads, Philippi, and surrounding areas — started bringing bakkie loads of furniture at 11am. By yesterday afternoon, shacks had already been erected. "There is nothing we can do now. We are planning to meet with our legal department and we'll demolish the shacks after a 48-hour waiting period. I'd rather have the law on our side," Jacobs said.

Nobombo was "giving the people the wrong information by telling them to move there," said Gladstone Niamo, a member of the housing committee of the central substructure. He said Nobombo had "confused" the residents.

"On Thursday, I chaired a meeting where it was decided that the people without houses in Samora Machel would be counted and they could write letters to the housing committee so that an alternate plan could be made for them."

The Samora Machel residents were not the only families to move to the new site. Jacobs said that the news spread like wildfire and residents from other townships quickly moved to the area.

Wiseman Mpangisana, 36, was erecting his shack while his wife Fonia was carrying appliances and furniture to their "new" site.

"I've been living in a shack for five years with my wife and four children. We don't have lights, toilets or water. I don't want to wait for a house any longer," he said.

Sisters Yoliswa Mbehlo, 21, and Xoliswa Mbehlo, 19, were promised water and lights if they moved to the new site.

"We are going to have water and lights. They promised us these things this morning in the meeting," Yoliswa said.

Niamo called the alleged action of the Sanco member " sabotage" and said it was "ironic that the planned move coincided with Masakhane week."

PROMISED LAND: Sisters Yoliswa and Xoliswa Mbehlo said that they were promised water, electricity and toilet facilities if they moved to the developed land in Weltevreden Valley.

PICTURE: LEON KNIFE
LAND TO BE CLEARED BY FORCE

Invaders to be driven off

A MEMBER of the housing committee believes community leaders have sold Weltevreden Valley land to people and are unable to repay the money. ERIC NTABAZALILA reports

FORCE is to be used today to remove people illegally occupying land in Weltevreden Valley.

Attempts to negotiate an agreement have failed.

About 300 people moved illegally onto the land, earmarked for houses, and began building shacks on Sunday.

Whitney Jacobs, chairperson of Cape Town's housing committee, said last night that police had advised the Cape Town City Council not to act yesterday as this would have led to unnecessary confrontation.

"We thought, after giving these people enough time to think about the invasion, they would pull out, but instead they are coming in large numbers," Jacobs said. "There are now more than 300 people in the area. We will be acting to bring the situation back to normality."

Jacobs said there had not been any confrontations between police and the illegal occupants, but the situation was tense.

The City of Cape Town viewed the invasion in the most serious light as it worked against the implementation of properly administered housing policies and the rapid release of land for housing, Jacobs said. Land invasions tended to undermine and undo these processes.

The participants in the land invasion were outsiders, Jacobs said. They had not been involved in the extensive consultations on which the orderly allocation of land was based.

The squatters claim that they were given the go-ahead to move onto the land by a branch chairperson of the South African National Civics Organisation, Shooter Nobom.

"We have had meetings with these people to try to convince them that the illegal occupation of the land is not a good thing," he said.

"To me it's quite clear that some leaders within the community have sold some of the land to people in the area and surrounding areas and are faced with the problem of not being able to pay these people back. That is why they are causing this confusion.

"I think we have been fair enough to these people. It is time that we show them that our patience is running out."

Ntamo said the City Council had tried in vain to contact Nobom and his "clique" to clarify the allegations.

The chairperson of the Cape Town executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, said extensive negotiations had been held with the illegal occupants on Sunday to minimise the potential for conflict and to restore due process in favour of the people who had rights to the land.
Showdown looms on land grab

Confrontation is looming between Cape Town Municipality and squatters who occupied land in the Weltevreden Valley near Philippi at the weekend.

The squatters, from the Samora Machel settlement, have vowed not to return to the unhygienic conditions they left.

They say they will go only if the municipality provides alternative land.

The Weltevreden Valley land has been earmarked for a housing project.

Yesterday, squatters were still erecting shacks there.

Phathiswa Mpolwana, a mother of two, said if police moved in

with bulldozers she and her neighbours would ask them to stop.

Ms Mpulwana said they had waited long enough on unserviced land at Samora Machel where they had stinking bucket toilets that were collected only once a week.

Her sentiments were echoed by Nomza Valeshiwa, a mother of five, who said she, too, had had enough.

Most of the squatters said the decision to move was their own, taken at a meeting on Sunday.

They all denied reports that Samora Machel SA National Civics Association chairman Shooter Nombombo advised them to occupy the land.

Instead, they alleged that local councillors were corrupt.

Whitey Jacobs, chairman of the city council housing committee said the Weltevreden land had been allocated to 15 communities.

"As the city council, we allocated plots according to an agreement taken by squatters themselves.

"We find it very strange for the Samora Machel community to sabotage that decision," said Mr Jacobs.

"Some people from Samora Machel have plots where they already own houses.

"But they occupied the new plots for their own benefit," said Mr Jacobs.

He claimed most of the squatters were on the council’s waiting list for housing, but wanted to jump the queue.

Mr Jacobs said councillors had not been involved in the land allocation. The land allocation was done by squatters and the Integrated Services Land Project.
Police stand guard as council bulldozers demolish Welverden Shacks

Four Sancisco officials held over land invasion
Illegal home owners: angry Delft residents outside the High Court where the Western Cape Housing Board is applying for an interdict against 496 people occupying houses illegally.

Delft homes 'awash with squatters'

LENORE OLIVER
High Court Reporter

Three of the six townships in Delft are occupied by illegal squatters, the Cape High Court has heard.

This was the evidence of Bennie Rheede, provincial deputy director of housing, in the application by the Western Cape Housing Board for an interdict against 496 people occupying houses illegally.

Mr Rheede told the court that since June 26 the unlawful occupation of houses in Delft had escalated.

Yesterday groups of homeless people filled the court corridors as they waited for the case to be heard.

Earlier this year the Housing Board successfully obtained an interdict against another group of illegal occupants.

At the time Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien said he sympathised with homeless people but those trying to jump the housing queue were creating anarchy, which could not be allowed.

The squatters are demanding that Mr Herandien stick to his earlier promise that people on the waiting lists of the City of Tygerberg or City of Cape Town will get houses.

The hearing was postponed to November 2.
FIRST TO MOVE IN DECEMBER

City squatters set to become home-owners

CARDBOARD City squatters are happy to move from under the Western Boulevard flyover to Montrose Park in Mitchells Plain as home-owners, reports ERIC NTABAZALILA.

ANY residents of Cardboard City are about to become home-owners for the first time.

Acting city housing director Mervyn Bergman said negotiations have taken more than two years, but have resulted in all concerned being happy with the results.

"We convinced them that the city council can't provide services to them in that area. No promises were made to them," he said.

He agreed that the process had taken too long, but said all of them, including the residents of Montrose Park, had to be accommodated.

"As the city council, we are happy that everybody is comfortable with the results. Now we have to check whether they are eligible for the government housing subsidy," Bergman said.

The houses have not yet been built.

"We are not going to relocate all the residents at once. The first group of the community will be relocated on December 15." The city council has tried on several occasions to move the Cardboard City community to Mitchells Plain, but their new neighbours vehemently objected to the move, claiming they had not been consulted. The relocation of the residents is expected to cost about R500 000.

Zelda Ndumbini, secretary of the Cardboard City Residents' Committee, agreed that everybody was happy with the outcome.

"We are families here, and I believe all these people will be happy to have a decent house with a bathroom, a toilet, a bedroom and a yard — something they have never had."

"I will be among the first people to move into my new home. Every night since the agreement was reached, I have dreamt about being in my own house," she said.

City council officials will visit the area today so that residents can fill out housing subsidy forms.

Although everybody in the squatter area is over the moon about the decision, there are some who are concerned because they are unemployed and it would be difficult for them to look after their new homes. Some residents do piece-work in the city centre and would have to come to town everyday to earn their living.

Ndumbini assured residents that they should not worry, as city manager Andrew Boraine had promised that members of the private sector had agreed to sponsor train tickets for them for a year after they move to Montrose Park.

Altogether 340 sites have been identified near Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospital for relocating the residents. Eighty of the houses will be given to the Cardboard City residents and the rest will be given to Mitchells Plain families who need accommodation.

The first eight squatters who were spotted under the bridge in December 1992 were evicted by the city council.

"Every night since agreement was reached, I have dreamt of being in my own home."

The community later approached the Legal Resource Centre, which helped them to continue staying in the area.

The pattern of rebuilding and demolishing the dilapidated buildings has continued over the years and the community has grown to 80 families.

In July, the city council decided to put a security fence around the area and place a guard at the entrance in a bid to keep out criminals who were using the place to hide after committing crimes.

This was welcomed by the residents, who defended themselves as a community of hard-working people. But the council was forced to find a solution after pressure from businesses in the vicinity that were affected rejected further delays in the relocation of the squatters.
The provincial housing board has approved more than R2-million in subsidies for Cardboard City shack dwellers and destitute Mitchell’s Plain people.

The money will be used to build houses in Montrose Park, Mitchell’s Plain.

Provincial housing director Gerrit Erasmus said the approval was subject to the condition that the City of Cape Town prioritised housing needs in its area of jurisdiction.

A plan by the municipality to move about 80 Cardboard City families to a transit camp near Montrose Park at a cost of R500 000 while their houses were being built was vehemently opposed by the Mitchell’s Plain Councillors’ Forum this week.

Members of the all-party forum said Mitchell’s Plain residents did not want to see homeless people going from “shack to shack.”

They wanted people moved from shacks to proper housing.

Another of the forum’s grievances was that while Cardboard City enjoyed preferential treatment from the council, other squatter communities had been waiting for houses for many years.

Acting housing director Mervyn Bregman said it was decided at a forum meeting this week that 20 Cardboard City families and 20 Mitchell’s Plain families on the council’s housing waiting list would be moved into completed houses in Montrose Park by December 15.

Only 40 houses would be ready by the end of the year because of building industry holidays.

He said the Mitchell’s Plain beneficiaries would be people living in inadequate conditions and in backyards.

Mr Bregman said the moving of Cardboard City residents was taking “longer than we anticipated”.

City of Cape Town executive committee chairman Saileen Mowzer said the council hoped the second phase of 150 houses would be completed in January.

A third phase of 150 houses was in the pipeline and “these were a victory for the homeless.”
Council wants a rethink on squatter laws

Protection for owners ‘unsatisfactory’

JEAN LE MAY

The Cape Town city council has decided to ask the Government to take another look at the law designed to prevent illegal land occupation and illegal evictions.

Because dealing with land invasions has become an administrative and political nightmare, the council decided last week on a combined approach to the central Government by local authorities and the Cape Metropolitan Council.

A top legal expert asked the city council on 10 new laws described the protection given to landowners’ rights as “less than satisfactory”.

There has been extensive land invasion in the Western Cape, such as in Tafelsig, where 700 squatters are living on land designated for a school, and in Weltevreden Valley. And a councillor said illegal occupation of houses was common on the Cape Flats.

The new legislation, which gives no special protection to local authorities that own land. They are in the same position as any private landowner.

As the law now stands, you’re in trouble if you go away for a weekend and discover on your return that squatters have put up a shack on your front lawn.

Because the squatters have “lived” there— even for one night— you’ll have to apply for a court order to evict them.

The squatters must be given 14 days’ notice of your intention to evict them. If you apply for an urgent order, you’ll have to prove you will suffer more damage if the order is not granted than the squatters will suffer if the order is granted.

And the court must take into account whether alternative accommodation is available and whether old people and children are among the squatters.

Either way, you’ll be faced with huge legal costs or with the cost of arbitration by a mediator. Some mediators charge R5 000 a day, said one council official.

In June, Parliament rushed through the new law to replace the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, which everyone agreed was unconstitutional. Only the Democratic Party and the Freedom Front voted against the new Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Illegal Occupation of Land Act.

“The title of the act makes clear where the emphasis is. It’s a perilous piece of legislation,” said Errol Moorcroft, the DP spokesman on land affairs.

Annelize Crosby, the legal adviser to the South African Agricultural Union, said: “It gives far more protection to the squatters than to the landowners.”

Mrs Crosby said that the old Trespass Act was still in force and that there was a thin line between trespassing and illegal occupation.

“If you treat an invader as a trespasser and evict him without a court order, you may find you have evicted an ‘occupant’ and, in terms of the new law, you will have committed a criminal offence,” she said.

Cameron Dogmore, the African National Congress spokesman in the Western Cape, said the ANC unequivocally disapproved of land invasion.

But until the provincial government released more land for low-cost housing, the problem of land invasion would not go away, he said.

Cape Town city councillor Daphne King, of the ANC, also has problems with the act.

Mrs King, the deputy chair of the housing committee, described how she felt about the court order— since withdrawn—obtained by the council to evict the Tafelsig squatters.

“We can’t tolerate people who invade land and houses,” she said. “I feel very bad about this. We were the people who led the protest originally. We need to turn the city properly— we have policies in place and we need to implement them.”

People “attacked” houses on the Cape Flats almost daily, she said.

“Someone fails to pay rent, then he moves out and gives the key to somebody else who does not pay rent. The council is faced with two problems: getting the illegal tenant out and collecting rent.”

“Gangs are involved in allocating houses. We can’t let up— there would be chaos.”

Land invasion was becoming such a problem for the council that it organised a workshop for councillors and council officials. A report on the workshop was handed to the council’s Economic Development and Property Committee this month.

According to the report, city advocate Gerrit van Schalkwyk SC advised that anyone occupying land without the permission of the owner did so illegally, but, at the same time, no unlawful occupant could be evicted without a court order.

The crucial question was what stage a person in the process of occupying became an occupant, he said. A person was not an occupant while he was in the process of constructing a shelter or moving in furniture, he said. But once he or a member of his family had slept one night within it, that was the stage at which an illegal occupant became an occupant.

Alan Doley, the head of protection services, said shelters took various forms, including cardboard or plastic structures, which complicated the definition.

Anwar Issacs, the manager of the section dealing with illegal settlements, said land invasion was often orchestrated. Officials were often placed in danger, he said. Police could be called in only if officials were threatened.

The probability of gang members moving into the settlement exacerbated the hazards and the potential for violence, he said.

Mr Issacs added that pressure was exerted in invasion situations by groups opposed to the council’s actions, including “taxi drivers, gangsters, political groups and welfare associations.”
No action taken against veterans because law protects against eviction

School officers invade city school
Desperation makes Delft a housing hot potato

Norman Joseph
Metropolitan

The illegal occupation of Delft South houses is not politically motivated - it stems from sheer desperation.

But it should not be tolerated, say politicians, who believe the shortage of houses has led to people disregarding the law.

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien will meet top police this week in an attempt to halt illegal occupation of land and houses.

Delft ward councillor Gerhardus Ventura, of the New National Party, said he believed the illegal occupations were driven by the desperation of homeless people.

But he criticized the allocation of half the houses in Delft South to people on the City of Cape Town's waiting list, with the remaining half for those on the City of Tygerberg's list.

Democratic Party deputy provincial leader Cedric McNeil said that if the authorities and councillors worked together they could ensure the law was enforced.

Western Cape African National Congress leader Ebrahim Rasool said the housing ministry had to act swiftly and not tolerate illegal occupations and invasions.

Pan Africanist Congress MP Patricia de Lille said a plan of action had to be set up by the provincial government to provide more houses.

Mr Herandien insisted his department was not losing the battle to provide housing in Delft South. Since June 1997, more than 5,000 houses had been built.
Southern Sun sure of filling new Cape hotel.

AUDREY D'ANGELO

Cape Town — Southern Sun was confident that growth in international tourism would ensure high occupancy levels for its 545-room Cape Town Waterfront Holiday Inn, Hal Perreira, the chain's managing director, said yesterday.

He said claims that the Cape Town area had too many hotel rooms for existing demand, even without the new R200 million Holiday Inn, were misleading.

"What happened was that a shortage of rooms in Cape Town itself caused hotels on the periphery, in areas like Somerset West and Bellville, to do well.

"Now that there are more rooms in the Waterfront area, which has proved a successful hotel and entertainment node, tourists and business people are going there and hotels in outlying areas are feeling the pinch."

"International tourism is growing at a rate of 17 percent a year, even without adequate marketing overseas. The US market, in particular, is growing.

"The only problem with filling hotels in Cape Town is that it is a seasonal destination."

The Holiday Inn, to open in July, will be one of the largest hotels in southern Africa. It is part of a four-year R380 million Liberty Life Properties hotel development project. All the hotels will be managed by Southern Sun.

Those opened so far are the Holiday Inn Garden Court in Sandton, the Holiday Inn Garden Court in Eastgate, Gauteng, the Holiday Inn Garden Court in Hatfield, Pretoria, and the budget Holiday Inn Express in Eastgate."
SQUATTERS - W. CAPE
1999
The eviction was quiet with no coercion. Sitting down was the main practice. The former tenants and other new residents formed a vigil around the eviction site. The man on the site said, "We've been here since 1998."

The following is part of the statement.

"We have been here since 1998."

If any tenants from other areas were present, they were not the ones who lived in the shack.

Other former tenants were also present, but the shack itself belonged to a different developer. A new shack was being constructed nearby, and this was the reason for the eviction.

The shack, located on a main road, was being used as a temporary shelter for homeless individuals. It was constructed in 1998 by a local developer, who had promised to move out and restore the land after the tenant had lived there for 10 years. However, the developer never honored this promise, and the shack remained in place.

In response to the eviction, the tenants formed a solidarity movement and staged a protest to demand the right to remain on the site. The protest was met with police intervention, and some of the tenants were arrested.

The eviction sparked a debate about the rights of tenants in South Africa, and the case became a symbol of resistance against the eviction of poor and vulnerable communities.
One woman shot, another injured during clashes as council workers evict 'illegal' East Rand invaders.

Police open fire on 'illegal', during eviction

NEWS
There is life after Chukchowntown
across quarters discover
The ticket to the mines was to cast your vote before 10 a.m. Tuesday. The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.

The miners were told they would receive a year's worth of food and supplies if they voted for the coal company's proposed agreement, which included a 25% pay cut and a two-month layoff for non-union workers.
Squatters homeward bound

Metro News

Westlake families to get brand-new three-bedroom brick house — for life

🗞️ (La Jolla, 92037)
Sex shop back on the agenda

Mystery

R50m Project approved

at Long Last

Wynberg

Houses For

Unemployment

Neighbors

Two men who know

Vandling

Neighborhood

not approved

Now available in

Cape Argus. April 6 1999
Ownership demands compensation after land is turned into settlement

Invasion snatchers develop
Mutually declares war on new Mandela Park dwellings

Hundreds of illegal shacks

Hout Bay officials demolish

*NEWS*

*named* Cooling, disappeared after burglary, said Mr. Potts.
Unlawful occupants expelled

PRISCILLA SINGH (307)
CT 1616199

ABOUT 155 families were evicted from a housing development in Saldanha yesterday morning because they had been illegally occupying the dwellings.

The Vredenburg Town Council gave orders for police to force the residents out of the houses, along with all their belongings and furniture, early yesterday morning.

Heavily armed policemen took up strategic positions to ensure that none of the residents attempted to re-occupy them.

Mark Fritz, one of the people evicted, said they did not receive any warning or notification that they were going to be tossed out of their homes.

He said at least 300 houses had been built on the site and that only half were occupied.

About 155 houses were standing empty since last year and were since occupied illegally.

Fritz said he had moved into one of the dwellings in February after his landlord kicked him out from the previous place he was renting.

He and his wife and three children found that they had nowhere to go and their only thought was the empty houses in Saldanha.

"We knew these houses were standing empty since last year already, and other people had moved in because they were tired of waiting for the council to tell them if they were going to get a house. I put my name on the housing list in 1994, but I am still waiting."

"Where are we going to go now? They did not even warn us that the police were going to kick us out with all our things, so we could have found another place to stay," Fritz said.

He added that the police had also fired shots at a crowd of residents trying to remove the last of their possessions.

Johan Veldeman, assistant treasurer of housing, was unavailable for comment.

"With winter already upon the Cape, these families are now destitute and have no place to go."

"All we're asking for is a roof over our heads, especially for the children," Fritz said.
Families say they fear for their children after being threatened with guns and arson.
Invasion of the land-snatchers a "local emergency"

MANDLA NYAKAMA

A LAND invasion by about 2,000 shack residents in Moonwood, Philippi, was described as a "local emergency" at last week's City of Cape Town planning committee meeting — and the dispute is far from resolved.

Since February, Brown's Farm shack residents have been removed by local area committee members from land to make way for a housing development. These residents then moved to a private site owned by a German investor, Helmut Ernst.

Ernst has earmarked the 20 hectares of land for a R12-million industrial project and is now applying for a court order to evict the invaders.

Yesterday, residents said they did not know what was happening. "We know we live here illegally and we know the land we lived on before was to be developed for housing purposes," said one.

Eliot Ntabeni, a Philippi councillor for Ward C20, said the land invasion was a serious problem that urgently needed to be resolved.

Madoda Gwose, chairperson of the Greater Philippi Reconstruction and Development Programme, said the issue was controversial because residents had settled in their new spot without consulting anyone. "They were led by the so-called 'no-name leaders' and we are very concerned about that because on the land they previously occupied we provided them with services like toilets and water," Gwose said.

Residents who have invaded a piece of land nearby say they settled there after being moved by council officials and police two weeks ago from plots they occupied in the township.
Future bleak for Miltonion squatters
Illegal aliens are being housed in the problem structure, the problem structure.

The problem structure, the problem structure.
Rebels halt building at Vrygrond site

Court slaps ban on group

The South Peninsula Municipality has obtained an urgent High Court interdict preventing a dissident minority group from holding up the construction of 1 600 houses for the families of the Muizenberg informal settlement, Vrygrond.

The group, the Vrygrond Community Organisation, has about 120 members in a community of about 5 000 and has been at odds with the legitimate leadership of Vrygrond and the South Peninsula for years.

Members allegedly used sharpened sticks to threaten construction workers on Wednesday, forcing work on the site to be stopped.

The construction group, Ubuntu, was awarded the R20-million contract and Cape Premier Gerald Morkel handed the 84-hectare site to the company on May 17.

Late on Thursday Mr Justice Comrie interdicted the organisation, its members or Jeremiah Thile and nine others from interfering or obstructing any construction activities at the site or intimidating, harassing, assaulting or interfering with any employee of the municipality or Ubuntu.

The organisation and its members were also ordered not to damage, destroy or in any way interfere with the property of the municipality or Ubuntu, or approach within 100m of the site office or construction works.

In a sworn affidavit, the resident engineer at the site, Johann Joubert, told how Vrygrond resident Jeremiah Thile, apparent leader of the breakaway organisation, used a loud hailer to summon people to a public meeting in an open field on Wednesday.

About 120 people attended. After a memorandum was read by Mr Thile, the crowd marched on the construction site, singing and chanting, and carrying sharpened sticks, brandished in a "threatening manner".

"Mr Thile said if we did not stop work they would stop for us," Mr Joubert said.

The south's executive director of housing services, Hans Smit, said Mr Thile and the other nine, all residents, purported to represent the Vrygrond community under the banner of the Vrygrond Community Organisation.

"Such representation is disputed by the majority of the inhabitants of Vrygrond and the Vrygrond Community Development Trust."

The Vrygrond Community Development Trust is supported by more than 95% of Vrygrond residents.

The municipality entered into a partnership with the trust and late in 1996 the Vrygrond Working Group of councillors, officials and Vrygrond representatives was set up.

The social compact between the trust and the SPM breaks new ground in that all the plots for businesses and community purposes will be transferred to the trust. They will probably be sold to provide funds for further empowering work by the trust.

Vrygrond, established in 1942 for trek fishermen, is the oldest informal settlement in the Western Cape.

When Mr Morkel handed the land to the contractors, a key member of the trust, Trevor Siljeur, said: "The way the community has moved from outright suspicion of the local authority to a partnership with the SPM is an amazing, heartwarming story."

"This partnership and the way it has delivered to the community should be a model for the rest of South Africa."
Residents battle to set up home on waterfront site as council says there's no other land available.

Grubworry digs in its heels over N2, 'eye sore'
Tale of the two Retreats...

The South Peninsula Municipality promised to deliver 1,100 low-cost houses before Christmas after they were accused of dragging their feet on delivery... but for some families it was too late and they have come up with plans of their own.

"Look down any road and you will see one or even two families living in someone else's yard. Overcrowding is a big problem here and is overlooked. It is like having two retreats in one. But we have a plan," says Teeto Touf from the People's Housing Project, based in Retreat.

Local authorities agree that overcrowding is one of the biggest — but most overlooked — aspects of housing in this province.

Jem Kahn, housing researcher for the Cape Metropolitan Council, estimates that only 23% of Cape Town's population lived in houses, while 40% were living in unhealthy, overcrowded conditions.

The remaining Capetonians lived in modest-sized homes on the single family units. The 40% live on the Cape Flats, Nyanga, Khayelitsha and Gugulethu.

The marriage between overcrowding and unemployment has largely contributed to the city's high crime rate, the highest TIR rate in the world, gangsterism, street children and domestic violence.

It has also led to one of the biggest breakdowns of basic services in the city's history.

Three years ago, the housing department, which was supposed to receive R8 million to supervise the breakdown and over-used dumpsites, waterpipes, sanitary drains, and sewerage systems.

Neglect on the part of the residents was crucial in the breakdown of these amenities and local authorities fear a repeat of the 1980s when the residents of Retreat experienced overcrowding.

Pretend overcrowding is addressed through the age-old system of state while housing projects take off slowly because of the strained budgets.

The housing department is hoping to start a fresh list by bringing through each municipality and taking note of the number of subsidies needed to address the housing crisis.

Thulani almost 22,000 families were living in backyards or on the streets of the South Peninsula alone — the exact number of subsidies in the province for a year.

If money is all that's standing in the way of distressed families getting homes, South Peninsula families have been galvanized into action to find it.

A few months ago, the People's Housing Project approached Black Empowerment Company, AIDF, to help them pay all their rent and rates arrears worth millions. They believed that this huge debt had led them to be shunned.

"With this agreement we are hoping to give the government and the residents some hope to build houses for these families. This must work, it's our only hope," Touf said.

Providing more housing stock will be the obvious solution to overcrowding, but with the threat of subsides to this province, only a handful will benefit.

Kahn said: "Overcrowding is not about how much land is on a plot. It is about available land space; and we can see plenty of empty houses in the backyard. Why not make it feasible and upgrade that second dwelling?"

At the moment Kahn is trying to persuade the authorities to split subsidies into two; half for new houses and the other for upgrading.

"It is the council's job to provide water, sewers and electricity to people anyway. Accessibility could be a problem, but the biggest problem is getting enough money to get more subsidies to do this."

Children are most vulnerable

GERTRUDE SOWENTU, founder of South African Female Empowerment (SAFE), spent 11 weeks searching for the puzzle link between the fighting communities of Laurens and Nomzamo.

For this she invited 24 women, whose lives we're like a tangled mass of pears, to a tea party, where no one limit existed to test opinions — and they were truly free to say what they felt and thought without restriction.

At the end of her research, Sowentu said they were the 'most amazing women' she had ever met and took their stories in their raw form as her final report, which she's sharing with audiences across the world.

Sowentu started telling me about an eight-year-old girl who was raped. She shared the details and said only that if the child had lived in a house with running water, she wouldn't have had to walk to the tap that day.

If there were street addresses and numbered houses, the rapist's hiding place wouldn't have all looked the same and he wouldn't be free.

Without homes, the children are the most vulnerable, she said. In the report she wrote of all their dreams of owning a house and how that dream was killed by poverty.

Sowentu concluded: "Essentially, these people don't have enough money to make demands on society. Nor do they have the power to initiate social action on their own."

"If they start a business, it cannot grow because, in the words of a lean and woman, you have no knowledge to make things bigger and when things do grow bigger, you have no means of controlling it — lack of knowledge is poverty."

"These women want to send their children to better schools. More than sending their children outside to a better school, they want to better the local school. They want better homes — even better than the new RDP houses they know how to build better and cheaper.

"They want to change their community and we must be asking, how can we serve these people so they can carry themselves and their community further that we could ever imagine?"

"Cleary, give-way housing and welfare do not help anybody, fair pay and job security do."

"These people simply want to be recognised as human beings and treated accordingly in the workplace. That power will give them the security and resources to build their communities."

A HOUSING subsidy is worth R1,000 and provides a four-roomed house with basic services like running water and sewerage facilities. Maintenance is your responsibility. To get on the waiting list for a subsidised house you must:

- Be a South African citizen and have an identification book to prove it;
- Earn from nothing to R2,500 per month;
- Have dependents;
- Must be a first-time applicant for a subsidy;
- Live close to a place under development;
- Not previously owned a home or land;
- For more information contact your local municipality.
Morkel gets tough with squatters

A special anti-land invasion unit is to be established in the Western Cape to crack down on the province's growing squatter problem, says premier Gerald Morkel.

After the provincial cabinet met yesterday, Mr Morkel said while a land release programme was under way to provide land and houses for people in the Western Cape, land invasions by squatters were complicating and delaying the process.

"There have been a lot of people coming into our province and taking up housing and land," Mr Morkel said.

A recent independent survey had indicated that many more people were living in the Cape than had been assumed by the national government or shown in the recent countrywide census.

Mr Morkel said municipalities had been given the responsibility to deal with squatters on "an agency basis," but this had not been very successful.

Provincial housing minister Cecil Herandien had begun a programme for the rapid release of land but it was being frustrated by land invasions.

"It is unfair when land has been earmarked for housing and is then invaded. The invasions deprive those who have been on a waiting list for 10-20 years," Mr Morkel and Mr Herandien said the number of land invasions was "quite significant."

Mr Morkel said: "I believe people should not be tenants in our province but we are against land invasion. A special unit is to be established to deal with the problem of squatters."

Government officials said this week the province would put considerable effort into getting as much data as it could on the number of new residents using the Western Cape's housing and educational facilities.

Mr Morkel said more accurate data would help convince central government that a larger allocation of funds was needed for the province.
Cave-dwellers of the Cape

STRANDLOPERS IN BANTRY BAY

MP's Call for

SAT SCHOOLS

FIND SEARCHES
Judgment creates protection for squatters against eviction

David Greybe

CAPE TOWN — Illegal occupants facing eviction under new legislation now have greater protection in terms of a judgment handed down by Cape Deputy Judge President John Hope.

Evicting illegal occupants without giving them proper notice of impending court proceedings would no longer be allowed, Hope said in a judgement on Friday.

People facing eviction would have to be given at least 14 days "written and effective" notice of a court application.

In the case at hand, this should have included written notice in Xhosa (the mother tongue of the occupants) and the use of loud hatters to inform occupants.

Hope’s ruling comes a month after another ground-breaking judgment, also based on "second-generation rights" framed by the Constitution. In the first case, the same high court gave greater protection to tenants facing eviction.

That judgment revised procedure — in force for more than 60 years — for removing people from residential accommodation. It ruled that landlords seeking to evict tenants must do so before a magistrate or judge, and that neither a magistrate’s court clerk nor high court registrar may grant the order by default.

Hope overturned a rule nisi issued in June by Judge John Foxcroft against "about 542 families" living on a farm near Killarney motor race course in Cape Town.

Some of them had been there for the past 18 years.

While Foxcroft’s order gave the residents of the area an opportunity to approach the court to explain why they should not be evicted, Hope ruled that it did not comply with the procedures required under the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act of 1988.

Counsel for the applicant, Cape Killarney Property Investments, said all attempts to evict the "illegal occupants" had failed. The occupants were represented by the Legal Resources Centre.

The new act, Hope said, "has been described as ‘a great step forward in the fight for the rights of occupiers of land in general and tenants in particular’ because the common law was cruel to occupiers and tenants who faced eviction. It replaced the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951.

The new act was clearly intended to provide mechanisms for dealing equitably with a large number of people who have moved onto land without an owner’s permission and established their homes" there. However, the original eviction application order did not comply with this.

Hope said he had further problems with the order because, when served on the respondents, it was "far from effective" as required in terms of the act.

The undisputed allegations on the respondents’ papers were that the overwhelming majority of the respondents are Xhosa-speaking and many of them are illiterate.

Hope agreed with their counsel that the copy of the order should have been accompanied by a Xhosa translation.