TRANSPORT — PRIVATE — GENERAL
1993

332

Reconsider, taxi owners urge Zim

OWNERS of minibus taxis operating between Zimbabwe and SA have appealed to the Zimbabwe Ministry of Transport to reconsider its decision to ban SA-registered minibuses from entering Zimbabwe. Cypress 3/1/93

The chief representative of Sabta in Zimbabwe, Keen-Marshall Charumbira, said this week that the ban on South Africans violated the spirit of an agreement entered into by Zimbabwean Transport and Energy Minister Denis Norman and his SA counterpart, Dr Piet Welgemoed.

Zimbabwean-registered minibuses may operate inside SA, because they have been issued with long-term permits by the SA government.

Danger on both sides of the fence

S/Times 3/1/93 (332)

By CHARLES LEONARD

FICKSBURG taxi driver Bongani Mthimkulu does not have 1993 on his mind.

He lifts one hand from the minibus steering-wheel and points at the fast oncoming light. Exactly a week before another taxi driver was in the same position on this road. He was shot dead by three white extremists who, fuelled by their leaders' war talk, were driving around in their bakkie firing indiscriminately at black taxis.

"That could very easily be the killers again," says Bongani. Twenty metres away it is clear that the vehicle is also a bakkie, and Bongani shifts his grip on the steering-wheel. The bakkie, a white one this time, whooshes past towards Ficksburg.

Scared

"I would not have had a chance," says Bongani softly, almost to himself.

Early in 1992 Bongani had a brush with death. It happened in Qwa-Qwa when a gunman mistook the taxi in which he was a passenger for another one involved in a taxi war.

Again the driver was killed. The other occupant was shot through the heart and a bullet pierced Bongani's chest, missing his lungs by centimetres.

"Of course I am scared," he says glumly as he turns the nose of the taxi back towards Ficksburg for the return journey.

"But I can't just stop. This is my bread and butter — I have a family to look after."

In taxi-driver lingo "doing dead miles" means a return trip alone after you have dropped off your passengers at a distant destination.

For drivers in the volatile eastern Free State "dead miles" has a sinister undertone, because you are even more vulnerable on your own.

Bongani is visibly relieved as the rainy sky gets an orange tinge. He pulls into his hometown, Ficksburg, and the smile is back on his face again.

Journey No 2 had its origins in front of the Ficksburg town hall, where two cabinet ministers were shouted down by angry farmers and right-wingers just before Christmas, following attacks on white farmers in the district.

It is here that well-known right-winger Eddy von Maltitz gets out of his bakkie on Thursday.

Listening to this self-described "militarist, politician and farmer" leads to the thought that some of his utterances border on the farcical, but he still has a larger-than-life presence in Ficksburg. People take him seriously.

"The National Party, the ANC and Apla are all in the same camp," says Eddy with a knowing smile. "My biggest problem is the United States — they are the 'Third Force'. I am fighting the US."

Raging against the typical conspiratorial enemies of the far right-wing, his attention shifts to Jewish people.

"It is the Jews sitting behind the ANC," he says. "But I'm not anti-semitic; I'm just realistic."

Then Eddy finally concedes to a request to go on one of his nightly patrols with what he calls his "reactionary" vehicle.

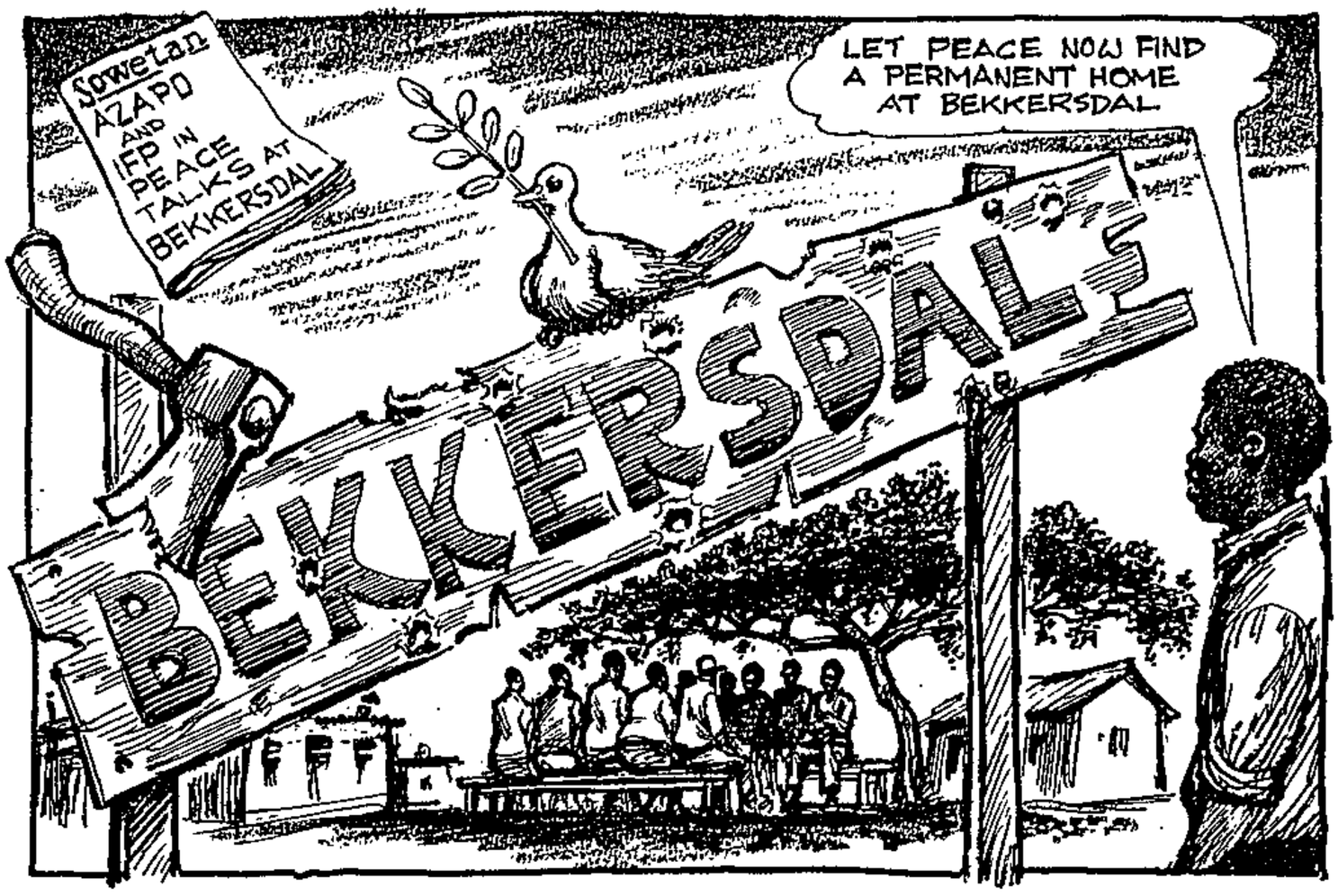
Vulnerable

He knows what he is doing as he leads a convoy of four bakkies in the pouring rain, visiting scared farmers on their farms. Like the taxi-drivers, they are always on the lookout for the faceless enemy.

The people are glad to see Eddy as it makes them feel reassured.

"I believe there will be a war here," says Eddy. "But we are all ready for them; we are not scared. I promise that our men won't take out innocent people but will take out their leaders — we know who they are."

The patrol ends early. "The men are worried about their families alone at home tonight."



focus on taxi feud

Sowetan 7/1/93. (332)

The expulsion of the president of the Pretoria Taxi Association by the Transvaal Taxi Association - affiliates of the Southern Africa Black Taxi Association - has sparked off a major row. **Joshua Raboroko** reports:

A SERIOUS conflict that could have grave consequences is looming in the Transvaal taxi industry.

At the centre of the discord is the expulsion by the Transvaal Taxi Association (TTA) of the president of the Pretoria Taxi Association (PTA), Mr Enos Makena, at a meeting last month.

The TTA warned this week that "many heads will roll should any official or member try to bring the association into disrepute".

"We do not regret the action against Makena and we will do it again for the sake of black economic development," an official said.

Makena's axing means that he has also been expelled from the executive committee of the giant Southern Africa Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

Makena was one of the disgruntled taxi owners who last year called for the resignation of all office bearers of the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services (Fabcos) to which Sabta is affiliated.

They also demanded that a commission of inquiry be appointed to investigate the use of the organisation's finances during the past four years.

In a memorandum claimed to have been signed by 13 of the 18 regions of Sabta in the Transvaal, the taxi owners said they wanted to stop corruption and the misuse of money to finance Fabcos and its marketing wing and the over-payment of some members.

Their demands were;

- That the Sabta executive committee resign;
- A steering committee be elected;
- Repossession of vehicles be stopped;
- Full payment of Wesbank monies back to members; and
- Future Bank, formed by Fabcos, be rejected.

An executive member of the PTA, Mr Solomon Mgidi, said that the Sabta Foundation Scheme, designed to assist prospective taxi owners with finance, no longer served the purpose.

"Many members are having their kombis repossessed at an alarming rate, while hundreds of thousands of rands of members' bank interest is being paid out to marketing and Sabta," the memorandum said.

Insurance premiums paid by Sabta were unacceptably high, especially when other insurance companies provided cover at far lower rates, the memorandum added.

Sabta public affairs manager Mr Mike Ntlatleng said the conflict was sparked off by misunderstanding between an official and a former employee of Sabta Marketing.

He was afraid the row could lead to bitter warfare, dragging in innocent passengers and taxi-owners.

The taxi business ... going through hard times.

Ntlatleng said that the Sabta executive committee would only resign if asked to do so by members at an executive annual meeting. And even then, regions and provinces should have dealt with the matter.

"There was no need for a steering committee to be elected at this stage as that would be unconstitutional," he said.

As far as the organisation was concerned, no executive had raised the matter at the last annual meeting.

Ntlatleng agreed that there had been large-scale repossession of kombis due to non-payment and other difficulties faced by the owners.

According to taxi owners and finance houses, minibus sales have dropped from an average of 600 to 400 a month in the past two years.

A large number of payment defaults has resulted in some financial institutions demanding much higher deposits and shorter repayment periods than before.

Sources said sales had dropped by about 80 percent in the last six months of 1992.

Ntlatleng attributed the non-payment to the downturn in the economy.

"Many owners are going through a lean period. Customers are getting fewer because of unemployment, the drought and poverty among most blacks."

He explained that Future Bank was a joint venture between Wesbank and Fabcos to provide loans to the informal sector, including taxis.

"One of the major tasks of the bank is black economic empowerment. It is trying to create a more emphatic approach to people who have previously been barred from conventional banks," he said.

The notion to reject the bank was "nonsensical" and those calling for its disbanding must change their minds.

Ntlatleng said that every taxi owner could insure his vehicle and could make arrangements with a company of his choice.

He denied that there was any misuse of money by Fabcos and Sabta. They had fought against the infiltration of the taxi industry by whites.

"We have always been against the infiltration of the taxi industry by these people because that often resulted in taxi wars," he said.

"If any member is dissatisfied with our services, our door is open for negotiations.

"We want peace in the taxi industry. Let us stop the wars," Ntlatleng said.

Waiting for the bargaining to begin

FM 8/1/93 (337)

Michael Prowse is a columnist on the London *Financial Times*

Bill Clinton inherits a promising economic outlook from President George Bush. The economy, having grown sluggishly for six straight quarters, now seems to be gathering momentum. Yet, thanks in part to the cautious policies of Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan, the US is also in striking distance of re-establishing stable prices for the first time in a generation.

At the same time, after 12 years of budgetary gridlock in Washington, the same party at last controls both White House and Congress. There is an opportunity for action on many of the pressing problems facing the US. Congress, moreover, appears to recognise the importance of addressing long-term structural problems such as slow productivity growth.

Clinton's economic team includes congressional dealmakers Lloyd Bentsen, chairman of the Senate finance committee, who was named Treasury Secretary, and Leon Panetta, chairman of the House budget committee, who was named Budget Director. These are the two most senior posts in his team. Alice Rivlin, of the Brookings Institution, was named Deputy Budget Director, while Laura d'Andrea Tyson, an economics professor at the University of California at Berkeley, heads the Council of Economic Advisers. Wall Street investment banking is to be represented by Robert Rubin, co-chairman of Goldman Sachs, named to run the new White House economic council. Roger Altman, of the Blackstone Group, is to be a deputy to Bentsen at the Treasury. Robert Reich, who lectures in political economy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, was named Labour Secretary.

Bentsen, Panetta and Rubin are trained lawyers while Altman has an MBA from the University of Chicago.

There is scope for some tension in this team.

Bentsen is likely to put greater emphasis on tax incentives for saving and investment than would Panetta and Rivlin, both of whom have reputations as deficit hawks. Bentsen also has an unfortunate history of regarding the tax system as a mechanism for rewarding individual sectors, such as oil, gas and real estate. Once out of the Senate, however, he will no longer face political pressure to put sectoral interests above national ones.

But neither Rubin nor Altman has a policy axe to grind; both seem likely to serve as efficient implementers of administration policy. Rubin, in particular, is seen as playing a co-ordinating role in economic policymaking.

What the senior appointees have in common is more important than what divides them. They are all solidly in the political and economic mainstream; they believe in market forces, free trade and responsible fiscal policies. Fears that Clinton would lurch to the left after the election thus appear unfounded. Indeed, it has been the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, rather than Republicans, that has voiced misgivings.

The team seems likely to establish amicable relations with the Federal Reserve. Before the election Clinton went out of his way to defend the Fed's independence in monetary policy. He recently invited Greenspan to Little Rock to try to reach a mutual understanding on the economy.

But what, it may be asked, has this conventional team of moderates got to do with the more radical ideas Clinton outlined during the campaign? Are these the people to "rebuild" the American economy, to oversee large new investments in education, training and infrastructure?

There are two possible answers. The first is that Clinton is a politician through and through. He said what he had to say to solidify Democratic support and defeat Bush. Now that he has won he will drop many of the policies (and people) associated with the campaign.

A more charitable interpretation runs as follows. Clinton has conventional macroeconomic views and has always seen deficit reduction as one of the keys to higher national savings and improved productivity growth. He has thus named a macroeconomic team capable of reassuring financial markets and pushing tough deficit reduction legislation through Congress.

But he has not forgotten the other, more radical part of his agenda. He does want to transform industrial skill training, invest more heavily in commercial R&D and, perhaps, develop a more aggressive industrial policy. The principal players here are likely to include Tyson and Reich. But, by giving the most senior posts to moderates, such as Bentsen, an advocate of free enterprise, who will restore the Treasury's traditionally dominant role in economic policymaking, Clinton is ensuring that the interventionists will not gain the upper hand.

Clinton, moreover, stressed again recently that he remains the chief economic decision-taker. It will be his job to balance the conflicting demands of different agencies and departments. And, while the administration has great opportunities to solve economic problems, it faces formidable challenges, some of which reflect Clinton's own inconsistent campaign pledges.

He cannot achieve all his promised goals simultaneously. The hard bargaining has yet to begin.

Cop, driver die in taxi boycott

C/Press 10/1/93.

No compromise in sight, police warn

332

By FRED KHUMALO

TWO people have died after KwaNdengezi commuters voted with their pockets and refused to pay fare hikes imposed by local taxi operators.

Now alarmed police, finding themselves in the crossfire, are warning that both parties to the dispute were only interested in scoring points, with noone interested in solving the problem.

Sgt MM Zwane, a member of the SAP, this week became the second sacrificial lamb in the bloody tug-of-war between local taxi operators and the community.

The first victim was bus driver Shadrack Ngubane who was gunned down three days before Christmas while taking passengers into the tiny township.

The acrimony started at the beginning of last month when local taxi operators announced new fares of R3 for a trip from KwaNdengezi to Durban (a 70 cent hike) and R2 for a trip from the township to Pinetown (a 50 cent hike).

On the other hand, Olympic Bus Lines, the only competitor of the taxis in the township, charges R2 for a trip to Durban, and only R1,45 for a trip to Pinetown.

Members of the community tried to register their displeasure at the hikes by staging an impromptu march to the Olympic Bus Lines depot where they pleaded with the company to dispatch more buses to the township.

As a result, Olympic, which had been running four buses in the township, increased its fleet to meet the needs of the people.

A spokesman for Olympic said after the company had increased its fleet, the depot started receiving death threats.

Matters came to a head on December 22 when bus driver Ngubane was gunned down while dropping off passengers near the local shopping centre. Because the engine of the bus was still running when he was shot, the bus careered off the road and crashed into an embankment.

He had been shot in the head, neck, chest and feet.

No suspects have been arrested in connection with the murder. "Our buses have been prevented from operating in the township since then," said a company spokesman.

The spokesman said the company had been approached by local residents to resume the service.

"We can't take chances, not until we get an assurance from the taxi operators that our buses and drivers are safe in the township."

A resident, Mi Makhaye, said the community was not consulted about the fare hike.

"The taxi operators just imposed their will on us and are now blocking Olympic Bus Lines from helping us."

As thousands of people finished their end-of-the-year holidays this week, the acuteness of the transport problem was evident in the township.

Thousands of workers trudged a distance of about three kilometres to a point outside the township where they were picked up by the Olympic buses.

On Monday an enraged group of people marched to the local police station where members of the KwaZulu Police were holding a meeting with local taxi operators.

The mob disrupted the meeting which was held on a hilltop near the station, and started throwing stones at cars which were parked nearby.

Sgt Zwane, of the SAP, who had been visiting a colleague at the police station, rushed from the gate towards his car which was being stoned by the crowd.

He was collared by the unruly mob and shot in the head with a shotgun.

A KZP gateguard fired three shots into the crowd, which fled. Two taxi owners were also shot and wounded.

Zwane's car and four taxis were damaged and a car was stolen, but a swift SAP unit soon recovered the stolen vehicle along with a shotgun and arrested two suspects.

Local KZP branch commander W/O Mduduzi Mngoma said on Wednesday that the situation was "quiet but tense" in the township.

"Anything might happen. These people – both taxi operators and the commuters – do not want to talk seriously and resolve their problem. We've had several meetings with both parties but nothing constructive has come out of those meetings," said Mngoma.

"They all want to score points instead of solving the problem. It is annoying because people are dying as a result. We are trying our best to get both parties to make compromises in order to resolve the problem."

Cops called to ease taxi fight

C/Press 17/11/93 (332)

By KEDIBONE LUSENGA

AN argument over fake taxi permits, which caused a rift in the Soshanguve Taxi Association, erupted into violence last week.

Fighting broke out when suspended taxi owners and drivers prevented other drivers from using the Mabopane Station rank and forced commuters out of taxis.

Several taxi drivers were allegedly assaulted when they picked up commuters and used the rank.

Sources said the rift started when the association discovered forged taxi permits issued in Bophuthatswana.

A taxi fleet owner alleged the rift was caused when the fake Certificates of Fitness, issued under the Bophuthatswana Road Traffic Act of 1973, were found in the possession of members of the association, who were then asked to vacate the rank and fix their vehicles for the safety of commuters.

"However, instead of repairing their broken-down vehicles and applying for genuine fitness certificates, the operators attacked our members and drivers," he said.

Among the victims was Robert Malema, 28, who was hauled out of his taxi and assaulted by the group.

Victims of the taxi war, who refused to be named, have appealed to Sabta and the police to intervene for fear the violence may spread to commuters.

The alleged ringleaders of the suspended group declined to comment and referred all enquiries to SP Matsemela, the former PRO of the association, who could not be reached for comment.

SHIPBUILDING

Struggling to stay afloat

SA shipbuilding is suffering from a sinking feeling these days. Not only has the country's leading carrier, Safmarine, been employing shipbuilders in Europe to expand its fleet. Now the biggest local builder, Durban-based Dorbyl Marine, is on the verge of losing overseas contracts also. The reason is that Dorbyl cannot compete on price with subsidised yards abroad, says MD Joe Bullough.

Safmarine says local yards do not have the capacity to build vessels of the size it needs. The first of two 16 000 m³ refrigerated vessels it ordered under a R150m contract was launched at Gdansk, Poland, recently and is scheduled for delivery in the next few weeks.

Meanwhile, the chairman of Columbia Shipmanagement of Cyprus, Heinrich Schoeller, has given Dorbyl just a few weeks to put together the financing package for the construction of two ships or lose the R200m order.

Dorbyl recently completed three ships for Columbia, at a total cost of R300m. Schoeller, who was in Durban recently for the launch of the third ship, the Cape Byron, said the first three vessels had been built without a hitch and met all quality and performance standards.

But Columbia's next order is running into problems with the financial rand. Reserve Bank Governor Chris Stals confirms that a proposed financial package that uses the financial rand was rejected by the Bank, but declines to say why. "Full reasons have been given to Dorbyl," Stals says. Dorbyl is still negotiating with the Bank.

If the order is scrapped, Bullough says, Dorbyl might have to slash its workforce at its Durban shipyard from 1 500 to only 300.

Shipbuilders already benefit from several incentives to encourage local construction:

- ☐ Shipbuilding qualifies for the highest rewards under government's export incentive scheme. For the three Columbia ships, Dorbyl could receive a huge payment; and
- ☐ Iscor subsidises the cost of steel to SA shipbuilders, partly to offset the high cost of the material locally.

But Bullough says these are not enough to offset the disadvantages.

If local shipbuilders want the work, they must find ways to compete on price, but this is proving very difficult. Schoeller says yards around the world are crying out for work and some will even build ships at a loss to keep people employed. ■

Rival taxi bodies in court bid to have members freed

Pretoria Bureau (332)

Two rival taxi organisations yesterday brought an urgent application in the Pretoria Supreme Court against the Minister of Law and Order and a senior police officer for the release of 18 of their members detained near Pietersburg at the weekend. Star 11/1/93

The application, which was heard in Mr Justice M M Joffe's chambers yesterday and postponed to today, follows the arrest of 13 members of the RSA Taxi Association and five members of the rival Lehlabile Taxi Association (LTA).

The men are being held in preventive detention after being arrested in connection with traffic violations.

Both the taxi associations — citing Minister of Law and Order Hernus Kriel and the head of the Far Northern Transvaal Crime Unit, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles van Wyk, as respondents — applied for the detentions to be declared unlawful and invalid.

In papers, LTA secretary Valentine Sekhukhune said he was told by telephone on Saturday afternoon police had arrested some members and confiscated their minibuses.

He was told the arrests were linked to touting and traffic offences — but the men had been detained in terms of Section 50 of the Internal Security Act.

The police, in papers before the court, said the arrests were aimed at curbing violence.

One such incident had occurred on November 15 when four men shot eight people dead and wounded three.

The hearing was due to resume at 2 pm today.

'Informers given weapons'

Star 11/1/93.

Own Correspondent

Police informers at John Vorster Square in Johannesburg are being armed illegally with pistols, allowed to raid the homes of suspects, and sometimes take part in the interrogation of suspects.

These allegations were made in a sworn statement by Chris Coetzee, a police spy from 1983.

In an affidavit Coetzee — a coloured man — implicates several members of the South African Narcotics Bureau and the Langlaagte Dog Unit.

The Sowetan newspaper forwarded the list of implicated officers to the police.

Reacting to the allegations, Witwatersrand Police spokesman Lieutenant Wikus Webber said the claims would be investigated "with the utmost urgency".

According to Coetzee, informers were at times used against their will as domestics at the homes of officers under whom they served, performing duties such as gardening and refuse removal.

The informers also took part in searches for dagga, Mandrax tablets and liquor in the homes of "trapped" illegal dealers.

In the process, the informers would steal expensive items such as rings, watches, cameras and liquor. He says officers in charge knew about this.

Coetzee (44) is currently in hiding, fearing for his life, after quitting as an informer in December.

He spoke of his experiences as a gun-toting spy, raiding shebeens on the Reef and being used against his will as a domestic servant at his boss's home in Turffontein, Johannesburg.

The man in charge of Coetzee has been promoted from constable to sergeant.

Another informer, named in the affidavit as Marlin Kater, lives with the sergeant.

Coetzee said he once made an arrest in the presence of his boss, whom he referred to as "baas".

Coetzee claims that:

- Police encouraged informers to steal property and money during raids.
- Police accepted bribes from detainees.
- Police warned some illegal dealers of pending raids.
- State vehicles were at times used privately.
- Police visiting brothels at night left their service pistols with informers outside the premises.
- Confiscated liquor stored at John Vorster Square was often stolen by the police themselves, using informers.

Coetzee claimed that he and Kater had guarded a police vehicle outside a brothel in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg while three policemen went to "enjoy themselves inside".

Bid to free 16 fails

An application in the Pretoria Supreme Court for the release of 16 Pietersburg taxi operators has been dismissed with costs. STAR 13/11/93.

Mr Justice Joffe yesterday dismissed the urgent application by the Lethlabile Taxi Association and the RSA Taxi Association, which had asked for the release of their members arrested by the police in Pietersburg on Saturday.

The taxi associations contested that the arrests, carried out under section 50 of the Internal Security Act, were unlawful. (332)

The detained taxi operators were fined for traffic offences before their arrest.

The judge found that the provisions of the Road Traffic Act had been applied before the taxi operators were arrested, but to no avail. — Pretoria Correspondent.

War waged against taxi drivers

By Bunty West 332

Randburg Traffic Department is waging war against taxi drivers after a shooting incident last month which left one man dead and a child injured.

In a bid to stop disputes between taxi factions, the Randburg traffic police, South African Police and the Transportation Board are checking roadworthiness and permits and searching for illegal weapons.

Chief traffic officer Johnny Smith said: "When ordinary motorists complained about taxi drivers breaking the law, we acted on it immediately.

"After the shooting incident which occurred between two taxi groups operating on the Pietersburg route, in which one taxi driver died, a schoolboy was shot in the leg and one of my officers was fired on, we decided to take action to ensure this would not happen again."

Andrew Lebakeng, a spokesman for the South African Long Distance Taxi Association, said: "We are tired of being persecuted by the traffic police, who stop us for any small violation. I received a R250 fine yesterday because of a faulty seatbelt and because my certificate of fitness had expired at the weekend.

"It is not worthwhile going to court to plead my case," he said.

STAR 13/11/93

Taximen to stay in jail

Sowetan 13/1/93

■ Judge turns down application to release 55 taxi drivers:

332

By Alinah Dube

AN application for the release of 55 taxi drivers held in the Pietersburg and Potgietersrus areas has been dismissed with costs in the Pretoria Supreme Court.

The case was brought by RSA Taxi Association and Letlhabile Taxi Association against the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Hernus Kriel, and Lieutenant-Colonel Charles van Wyk of the Crime Prevention and Investigation Unit in Pietersburg.

Dismissing the case yesterday, the judge said there was a history of taxi violence which eventually spilled over into the community. Despite numerous meetings with police, violence had increased since November last year.

Old Mutual declares trusts' distributions

CAPE TOWN — Four of the Old Mutual unit trust funds declared their distributions on Friday. B/Day 11/1/93 (232)

□ Old Mutual Top Companies Fund will pay 4,03c a unit for the six months ended December 31, 1992.

The total declared for the past year is 10,39c a unit.

A total of R2,9m will be paid out to investors on February 28. Total distribution for the year to December 31 is R6,5m.

□ Old Mutual Mining Fund will pay 4,28c a unit for the six months ended December 31.

Total dividend for the year is 9,43c a unit.

A total of R1,9m will be paid out to investors on February 28. Total distribution for the year to December 31 is R4,2m.

□ Old Mutual Gold Fund will pay 2,55c a unit for the six months. Total for the year to December 31 is 5,08c a unit.

A total of R1,4m will be paid out on February 28. Distributions for the year total R2,6m.

□ Old Mutual Income Fund pays 3,12c a unit for the three months ended December 31. Total declared for the past year is 13,68c a unit.

A total of R3,6m will be paid to investors on February 28. Total distributions for the year amount to R11,9m.

Nearly R10m will be paid out to Old Mutual trusts' investors in distributions at the end of February.

Distributions paid out to investors over the past year by all Old Mutual unit trusts' funds amount to R140m. — Sapa.

New man at the top seems full of contradictions, writes **Conrad Berge**

Is Transport Minister on right road?

STAR 14/1/93. (332)

ANXIETY IS creeping into the ranks of transport watchers and the reason is the relatively new Minister of Transport, Dr Piet Welgemoed.

A former academic in transport economics, Welgemoed headed a commission in 1983 that recommended the outlawing of the then-emerging black taxi industry.

His specialist background sets him apart from most of those who have gone before him. But, unlike many of his forerunners, he seems to rely less on his establishment and outside advisers. Some bluntly call him an autocrat.

Yet a keynote address given to a conference on transport in Johannesburg last year reveals a man anything but decisive.

In one frame of mind he declares that market forces should prevail, acknowledges the energy of private enterprise and recommends devolution of authority to the lowest level.

In another mood, he stresses the need for subsidisation, predicts the creation of all-powerful regional passenger transport authorities and calls for centralised organisation.

He also calls for "levelling the playing field" for the different types of public transport — a stance that has a free market ring to it but in this case is geared to central control.

Sensing the contradictions, he offers an unexplored notion of "appropriate balance" and tops it by revealing that the Government, in any case, hasn't enough money to move projects from paper to the ground.

This is not the stuff that makes policies.

It merely continues a tradition of frittering that recently spawned two volumes of public transport studies, costing taxpayers R7 million and R5 million.

There is no substitute for creative thinking and enthusiasm — especially in times of hardship. The trick is to persuade the Government and big business to break out of the web of existing interests and practices and listen to innovators.

There are many promising ideas to increase the efficiency of bus services and to help the black taxi industry grow organisationally instead of simply saturating cities with the same old product.

Subsidies can be carefully worked into a free market approach to encourage better services or assure a staple service such as the trains. They should not become tools of coercion.

The way ahead obviously has much more to do with marketing than engineering and with enlightened co-operation rather than the big stick.

The question is — can the Minister of Transport handle this road? □

● *Conrad Berge is secretary of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Action Group (Jomag).*

Piet Welgemoed . . . anything but decisive.

ISM split into mini-operations

STAR 14/1/93. (232)

The Information Services Group (ISG) has unbundled its core subsidiary Information Services Management (ISM) in order to respond more quickly and efficiently to the rapidly changing needs and demands of the industry.

ISG chief executive Brian Mehl yesterday gave details of the restructuring process, which began four years ago.

"What we have in effect created is a lot of mini-ISMs operating on their own," he said.

Some 16 autonomous business units have been established from the existing ISM structure and will operate in a specific niche of the information services industry.

Mehl said the change had been necessitated by the accelerating changes in the industry and the inability of the monolithic structure of ISM to respond quickly to those changes.

"The market told us we had to be nimble, agile and focused to service the industry, but we couldn't do this as a big business."

The new structure would enable the group to keep pace with industry changes as well as "make us highly profitable over the next couple of years".

He did not expect much impact on earnings in the next year.

But he felt that the energy that had been unlocked would have a positive impact in the medium-to-long term.

ISG posted attributable profit of R52 million in the last financial year and ISM contributed more than 90 percent to group profits. — Sapa.

Micor to open its books for independent audit

B/DAY 14/1/93 (332)

TIM MARSLAND

MICOR's management has agreed to open the group's books to independent evaluators after vigorous complaints by minority shareholders that the controlling directors were attempting to buy Micor's assets for far less than their true worth.

At a shareholders' meeting yesterday to approve the buyout of minorities, Allan Gray Investments and Sechold, which together represent 31% of shareholders, won access to the complete accounts.

An auditing firm and a firm of stockbrokers are to value the company and should complete their work — particularly evaluation of the foreign operations and locations Micor has largely concealed from shareholders — before the meeting is resumed on January 27.

A consortium of directors headed by chairman Cecil Kaplan and his son Mark has offered 90,719c a share for Micor's assets and the right of minority shareholders to buy back 130 Micind shares for every 100 Micor shares held at a cash price of 20c. Micor holds 92% of Micind.

An analyst said this effectively meant minorities were being offered 138c a share compared with the net worth of 200c gleaned from the partial disclosure of the formal accounts.

Micor's controlling directors do not disclose complete details of the group's foreign assets, making use of Section 15a of the Companies Act to hide them and their trading performances.

Section 15a was designed to protect SA firms with foreign operations during the the years when SA was subject to sanctions. Micor has travel and finance businesses in the UK and US.

Yesterday, former director Mick Delahunt, who ran the offshore business and who had disputed the fairness of the price offered by the Kaplans, made a cash offer for the foreign assets.

Delahunt quit the company when the Kaplans made their offer as he believed it to have been unfair, particularly as the offshore business was a rand-hedge investment.

He said that in September the board approved a balance sheet stating Micor's total net assets of R33m, but pointed out that the Kaplans' offer in December had valued the company at only R15m based on a multiple of earnings.

An analyst said the R15m excluded the value of the offer to buy Micind shares.

Accused

Minorities were unable to make a fair assessment of the company as they did not have access to all the information available to the directors' consortium.

Another analyst, closely associated with the directors' bid, said the offer was fair, based on Micor's earnings capacity. He accused the minorities of "trying to get a better price for the shares".

He underscored his contention by saying that when the company had planned a rights offer earlier in 1992, it was unable to find underwriters at 60c a share.

The rights offer was subsequently dropped due to the lack of interest.

Cecil Kaplan would not comment on yesterday's developments.

SHIPBUILDING FM 15/1/92

That sinking feeling (332)

SA's biggest shipbuilder, Durban-based Dorbyl Marine, has had the wind knocked out of its sails by European fleet owner Columbia

continue →

FM 15/1/93 (332)

Ship Management's decision to scupper a R200m order for two new container vessels.

Though MD Joe Bullough says the cancellation was not altogether unexpected, he concedes it could signify the end of SA's international competitiveness as a builder of large vessels — at least as long as rivals abroad have the advantage of State subsidies.

The cancellation of the contract was the precursor to about 250 retrenchments at the Durban yard and more are expected unless sufficient alternative work is found.

The yard, which employs about 1 500 people, is still busy but it needs more work to keep its doors open. Dorbyl is currently completing another container ship, the *Cape Byron*, due for delivery in March. It is the last of three vessels being built for Columbia at a cost of R300m under an earlier contract.

Last year, Columbia publicly expressed a wish to extend its relationship with Dorbyl by ordering another two vessels.

However, it backtracked when Dorbyl failed to structure a sufficiently attractive purchase package.

Columbia made no secret of its desire to pay for the vessels in financial rands. But the Reserve Bank refused to sanction this on the grounds that shipbuilders already qualify for export incentives (*Business* December 11) — even though the earlier contracts allowed for payment in financial rands. The Bank argues that allowing a purchase to take place in finrands would amount to a double sweetener for Columbia.

Where does that leave Dorbyl? Bullough is surprisingly optimistic: "There are some distinct opportunities. They may not provide us with immediate continuity, but there are possibilities for the medium term."

He says Dorbyl has already landed "a fair amount" of industrial engineering work where shipyard skills are approriate. Its large machine shop enables it to attract work from the paper, sugar and petrochemical industries.

The company is also casting about for structural fabrication contracts for the West African offshore oil industry.

On the shipbuilding side, Bullough says: "We'll focus on building smaller vessels such as tugs, barges and fishing vessels for local and export markets. SA's ageing fishing fleet, for example, is a ready market. Our research shows that there are probably between 200 and 250 vessels in need of replacement over the next decade. These range from smaller in-shore vessels to the deep sea trawlers costing between R5m and R20m apiece."

Overall, he is confident the yard can find enough work in the medium term to keep going. ■

Stop! It's time to put brakes on taxi chaos

SOUTH 16/1 - 20/1/93. (332)

Mehlaleng Mesotho speaks to those in the overtraded taxi business and is told that it's time to get the industry onto a smoother road by restoring controls:

THERE was a time when the taxi industry was so rigidly regulated that the cry for the shackles to be eased was heard all the way to Pretoria. Today, many say the floodgates have been opened so wide that the industry has been inundated with new problems.

The situation is not unlike that of a woman who has not been able to have children, so she takes fertility drugs and ends up with more offspring than she can handle.

"The industry is certainly overtraded," says Mr Peter Rabali, president of the National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto).

"We believe that most of the taxi wars, road accidents and the overall poor image of the taxi industry can be directly attributed to overtrading. There are simply too many operators fighting to make it in the business and this breeds conflict and careless operating methods."

Mr James Ngocoya, president of the South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta), agrees. "Shares of the cake are small because of an influx of traders. So taxi owners end to put a lot of pressure on the drivers to do as many trips as possible in an effort to grab a bigger slice than that of the next operator.

"In the rush, standards and safety are thrown to the wind."

Who is to blame for the situation? Is there a lack of common sense among operators? Is the government to blame? Does the problem lie with both? Are external market realities, such as lack of jobs in other sectors, resulting in so much overtrading that disaster results?

Many in the taxi industry blame the government for the crisis.

Previously, the Road Traffic Act gave the state full control over passenger transport for blacks. Deregulation was lauded by some as a generous act on the part of transport regulating authorities, while others saw it as an excuse to phase out much-needed monitoring.

Rabali comments: "When deregulation began in the taxi industry a few years ago, we all welcomed the move. But it soon became obvious that the government was moving from one extreme to the other by throwing things open.

"The result is that some white operators have been able to filter up to 20 taxis a person onto the market by using black proxies.

"Naturally, the current unemployment levels and the fact that the taxi industry is an attractive business to most black people are factors that have seen things get out of control."

Mr Veli Mokoena, a transport fleet services manager with Stannic, believes that the deregulation process was carried out recklessly.

"There was an over-issuing of permits which led to an excessive concentration of taxis on certain routes while others were insufficiently catered for," he said.

"This happened because there was someone in Pretoria making decisions without having first-hand knowledge of the market."

IF the government is indeed to blame for the situation, was this a deliberate effort to destroy the industry, or was it an over-reaction to guilt about past repression of a growth-oriented industry?

"I believe the government did this deliberately," says Rabali. "It is trying to destroy the industry by flooding it with operators."

The situation is a Catch-22. It would seem easy to crop the number of permits by seeking out people who own more than their fair share of licences and taking them off routes. The problem is that most of these people have been careful to use others to register permits.

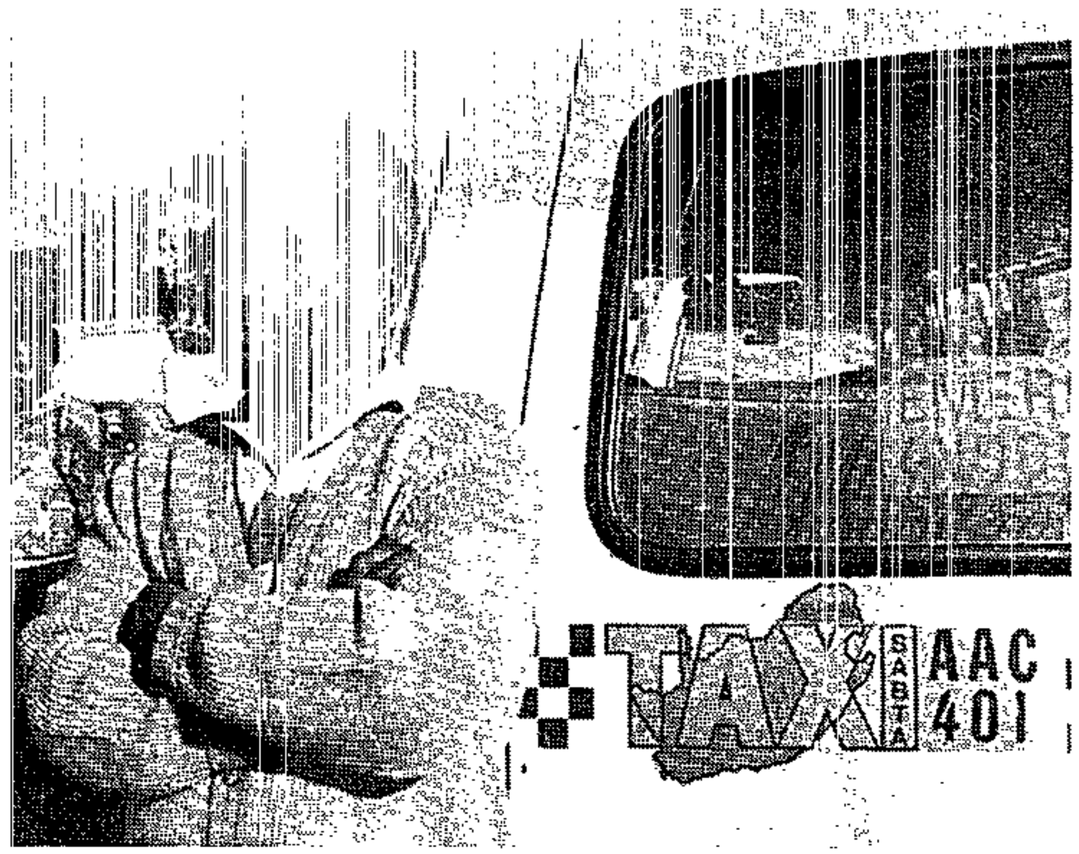
On the other hand, it may appear practical to establish set quotas for any given route and have a cut-off point for issuing permits. But this could be seen to be a return to the old apartheid-style repression of the industry, with people being denied the chance to earn an honest living.

This is dangerous territory as political and business leaders try to manoeuvre their way through the thorny issue of wealth redistribution.

The taxi industry is by far the biggest in which most operators are black. Kicking out existing operators or setting up barriers to keep out aspiring ones would be seen to be defeating the ideal of changing the balance of wealth through market mechanisms. By and large, it is believed that this calls for less, not more monitoring.

Jali agrees there are contradictions: "If you speak of letting people have jobs, coming up with controls would appear to be unfair.

"On the other hand, in the current situation, the operator is forced to run his business in circumstances that are often so fiercely competitive as to be unprofitable.



WAITING FOR ORDER: Safety has been thrown to the wind with the deregulation of the taxi industry

In the end, I believe that a return to some sort of control over the industry, with stricter regulations in terms of licensing and safety standards, can only benefit the sector as a whole."

Jali believes that market forces will lead to a decline in the number of operators.

"One of the problems is that black businesspeople have been operating mainly in protected trading zones.

"The overtraded market has destroyed this and brought in aggressive competition. This will lead to a peak, with a natural weeding-out process taking place."

HE says good operators whose businesses are professional and adhere to safety standards and sound business principles will remain, while others fall by the wayside.

"But for things to be truly effective, the industry needs formal controls," says Jali.

Mr Peter Ackerman, fleet services manager with Nissan, also believes that market forces will have the most impact on the taxi industry.

"Overcrowding happens in any industry that suddenly experiences rapid growth. But I also believe that active intervention in the taxi industry is necessary."

According to Rabali, the solution lies in bodies such as Nafto and Sabta participating in the process of re-establishing controls.

"Such bodies are in a better position to assess routes, help determine acceptable permit quotas and participate in setting cut-off points."

● *This article first appeared in Energos magazine*

Taxi, bus projects approved

By Montshiwa Moroke

The Central Witwatersrand Regional Services Council (CWRSC) yesterday approved major projects which include taxi and bus facilities in Soweto and Alexandra at a cost of about R8,3 million.

The funding of the projects was announced at the monthly meeting of the CWRSC at the Johannesburg Civic Centre yesterday.

However, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Action Group (Jomag), which serves on the transport task team of the Metropolitan Chamber, said in a memorandum distributed before the meeting that the planning had taken place without consultation and was presented as a fait accompli at the task team's stakeholders' meeting on January 11.

Financial contributions of R200 000 by the CWRSC will be made towards the upgrading of Soweto's White City Crossroads taxi rank, whose total cost is estimated at about R525 000.

The other 60 percent of the costs will be borne by the Urban Transport Fund.

In Alexandra, the total estimated cost of at least nine ranks to be constructed over a four-year period at strategic locations is in the region of R4,34 million. The CWRSC has said about R1 million was necessary to commence work on the highest-priority ranks.

Taxi operators are to be involved in the processes of design and tender preparation.

The CWRSC said: "Taxis are fulfilling a very important role in the transportation of the public throughout Alexandra and the neighbouring areas of Johannesburg, Sandton and Randburg."

Imperial expands tour operations

B/DAY 29/11/93

LINDA ENSOR (332)

CAPE TOWN — JSE-listed industrial holding group Imperial has made further inroads into the tour operator business with the purchase of Garden Route Tours from Nedtravel, a Nedcor group subsidiary.

Imperial MD Bill Lynch confirmed the acquisition yesterday but would not disclose the price, saying it was still under negotiation.

The purchase consolidates Imperial's recent acquisition of Springbok Atlas, a former subisidiary of the liquidated Tollgate Holdings (TGH) group.

Lynch said Imperial was also interested in acquiring another TGH subsidiary, Greyhound Coachlines, which operates an intercity passenger service.

He said the purchase of Garden Route Tours would give Imperial a foothold in the tourist industry in the eastern Cape, a prime tourist attraction.

Lynch said Imperial's interest in the tour business was restricted to the transport aspect and it would not become involved in hotels or other aspects of the industry.

Imperial is involved in a wide range of transport and motor-related businesses.

New taxi association welcomed as 'healthy'

STAR 21/1/93. (332)

Stan Hlophe

The formation of a new taxi body, Taximax, was yesterday welcomed as healthy competition by the giant Southern African Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng, yesterday said Taximax — formed recently with two former Sabta executives James Chapman and Enos Makena among its directors — posed no threat to Sabta. Both resigned from Sabta last year amid controversy.

A Taximax spokesman said that the new organisation was not set up as a rival to Sabta. Its main objective was to assist legal taxi owners in Pretoria, irrespective of their affiliation.

Ntlatleng said competition would serve the interests of its membership and the industry.

Asked about the resignation of top executives, he said problems which had plagued the organisation had been resolved and the executives were looking forward to turning Sabta into a profitable organisation.

A meeting to resolve a dispute over the Durban/Johannesburg route between Sabta and Eagle Liner bus company was postponed until February 4 after talks deadlocked yesterday.

This followed allegations by passengers that gunmen had forced them to leave a Johannesburg-bound bus and board minibuses at twice the price of the bus trip.

Passengers who attended the meeting said they had been threatened and accused of supporting white businesses. Many of them had lost their luggage and food parcels.

A bus company spokesman said it was the right of passengers to choose their mode of transport.

'Poison' killer jailed for 15 years

A taxi driver who shot dead a former policeman and taxi owner from a rival faction, yesterday told a Springs Circuit Court that he committed the deed to "rid the community of poison".

Petrus Khumalo (38) was sentenced by Mr Justice J F Myburgh and two assessors to an effective 15 years' jail for the murder of Pascallas Mea of KwaThema and for unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition. — East Rand Bureau.

11 appear over R30-m gold theft

STAR 21/1/93

By Anna Louw
East Rand Bureau

Eleven former employees of Rand Refinery appeared briefly in the Germiston Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with the theft of unwrought gold valued at more than R30 million.

The accused are Jan Botha (25) of Germiston; Jan Fourie (45) of Germiston; Louis Snyman (27) of Johannesburg; Johan Fourie (30) of Primrose; Johann Smit (21) of Springs; Eduard Pieterse (23) of Prieska; Rudolph Olivier (23) of Springs; Johan Volschenk (25) of Meyerton; a 17-year-old youth of Elsburg; Andries Swart (32) of Elsburg; and Henry Howell (26), of Rosettenville. 21/1/93.

Bail of between R1 000 and R5 000 was granted. Some were released on warning.

Two other former employees recently appeared in the Kempton Park Regional Court in connection with the same theft.

Jacques Jonck (23) of Heidelberg was jailed for nine years. Reuben Lezar (29) of Elsburg was jailed for five years.

The 11 accused will appear again in March. — Sapa.

Accused 'not trusted enough to get guns'

STAR 21/1/93

By Peter Davies

A Goldstone committee chairman investigating attacks on police yesterday told former Umkhonto we Sizwe member Brandon Samson it was unlikely that former ANC security boss Joe Nhlanhla had ordered him to Piet Retief, in the eastern Transvaal, to kill policemen because Samson was not trusted by the ANC.

Chairman Gert Steyn said, in Pretoria, that, despite Samson's insistence that Nhlanhla had provided him with weapons from ANC headquarters at Shell House in June last year, it was logically "dangerous to hand out weapons to people you don't trust".

Samson claims Nhlanhla ordered him to Piet Retief to monitor certain policemen, and later to return and kill them. He said only he and Nhlanhla, whom he referred to as "the old man" knew about the mission.

Samson admitted he had been considered a spy by the ANC after returning as a dissident from exile in 1991. He said that Nhlanhla had indicated his "case was still open" and that Samson must "show commitment to the movement" by "proving himself" on missions to Piet Retief.

He was also sent to Natal where he was to monitor the movements of alleged Inkatha man Pat "McGregor" Hlongwane. Hlongwane is the head of the returned exiles committee which campaigns on behalf of ANC dissidents.

ANC lawyer Azhar Cachalia said that Nhlanhla did not have the authority to dispatch weapons, and that Samson was lying.

Court records in Piet Retief indicated that Samson previously admitted he had received weapons from a man known as Mthobi.

Cachalia said Nhlanhla had admitted to "bumping into" Samson on a few occasions, but said they had never discussed any Piet Retief mission.

When quizzed by Cachalia, Samson said the ANC had an official and an unofficial policy towards the assassination of policemen.

He said the official version, as documented by Nhlanhla in Durban last year, was that the ANC opposed any campaign to kill policemen.

Samson insisted that this official policy was for "public consumption" and that there was an unofficial ANC policy which tacitly condoned attacks on policemen.

Directors optimistic as Laser puts curb on losses

B/DAY 22/1/93. (332)

EDWARD WEST

LASER Transport last year reduced losses incurred in 1991, leaving chairman Peter Thomas optimistic that massive corrective action would put the group back in the black at the end of the current financial year.

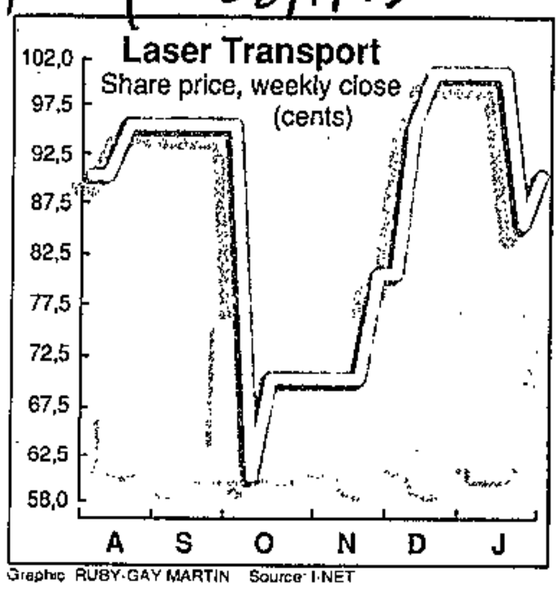
Among Laser's main subsidiaries are Stuttaford Van Lines, Pickfords Removals and Frasers International.

In the year to-end September 1992 Laser's loss a share was 28,3c against a loss of 49,7c at the end of the 1991 financial year. The dividend was passed, results published today show.

Turnover was up 33,2% to R116,2m from R87,3m in 1991, but operating income before rationlisation costs fell 31% to R4,2m from R6m, indicating a substantial drop in profit margins.

The cost of rationalisation, including closing an unprofitable division, disposing of underutilised properties and retrenchments, amounted to R3,4m. Further cost cutting measures were being considered.

Operating income was substantially lower as a result of rationalisation costs — R767 000 against R6m in 1991. Laser's interest bill more than doubled to R4,9m (R2,3m).



Graphic RUBY-GAY MARTIN Source I-NET

Interest-bearing liabilities climbed to R12,2m (R5,1m). Thomas said borrowings were used to fund tax payments from previous years and to fund the group's losses during the past two years. Taxation was R1,3m (R8,7m). The 1991 tax bill included a R6,9m provision relating to disputed film schemes the group invested in during 1987 and 1988.

Losses before extraordinary items amounted to R2,8m (R5m).

A R3,9m extraordinary item related to losses on disposal of property, discontinued operations and provision of diminution in the value of loans to the share incentive trust.

During the year R1,4m was paid to a former director without board approval. Negotiations were under way to resolve the issue, directors said. Results for the year to end-September 1992 included a provision of R650 000 against this payment, which was written off as an extraordinary item.

Contingent liabilities included a R550 000 claim for an undertaking to provide surety, given by a former director on behalf of the company without authority. However, the group was unlikely to suffer a loss as the undertaking was invalid.

Laser traded 5c higher at 90c on the JSE yesterday.

Thomas did not believe an offer of 68c a share, made to minorities after the Pocot Trust acquired former CEO Denis Kaye's controlling shares, would be taken up.

Taxi chief shot in car

JOHANNESBURG. — Alexandra Taxi Association chairman Mr Peter Manamela became the latest victim of taxi violence when he and his three-year-old granddaughter were shot and injured in an attack on his car. ARG 22/1/93

Police said Mr Manamela, 40, his wife Mrs Rosina Manamela, 40, and their granddaughter Mpho were fired at in their car by two men in Kew, near Alexandra.

He lost control of the vehicle and smashed into a cement block. His attackers fired at him again. Police spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel David Bruce said seven bullets struck the vehicle, three hitting Mr Manamela.

Colonel Bruce said the Rev Elizabeth Carmichael, of the Alexandra Interim Crisis Committee, had gone to the scene of the attack and had told him it was definitely part of a continuing taxi war. — Sapa.

B/DAY 22/1/93

AIDS lesson travels well

THEO RAWANA

THE taxi is the best vehicle to carry the AIDS message because it reaches further than any newspaper, radio or television, says Hennie Meyer of the National Health Department.

Meyer, officially launching the taxi-borne AIDS advertising campaign yesterday, made a tour of taxi ranks on the Reef with Trans Ad, the advertising arm of the National Information Bureau for Taxi Associations.

Trans Ad had been commissioned to run the four-month campaign, for which nearly R1m had been allocated, said Trans Ad director Damian Boyce.

Boyce said the campaign was running on 700 taxis. "Information huts" had been placed at 10 major ranks around the country.

Boyce said trained drivers were able to hand out information and condoms, and had a basic knowledge of their adverts' message.

Meyer said cassettes were played carrying the message of AIDS.

Supreme Court releases detained taxi driver

CT 22/1/93 (332)

PRETORIA. — A taxi operator detained under security legislation secured his release yesterday when the Pretoria Supreme Court found his arrest and detention unlawful.

Mr Justice M J Mynhardt ordered that Mr Sonnyboy Makgati, who was arrested with several other taxi drivers last weekend, be released immediately.

The Minister of Law and Order was also ordered to pay the costs of Mr Makgati's application.

Legal representatives for the other detained taxi drivers said the court's finding might positively affect negotiations for their clients' release. - Sapa.

Insurance plan for taxi commuters

WILSON ZWANE

INSURANCE broker Mashego Mahlatsi has formed an insurance company, Comsure, to provide cover to taxi commuters. 332

Comsure evolved when Mahlatsi and short-term insurer Concord were discussing SA's high accident rate and the slow manner in which the Multilateral Motor Fund was processing claims. It usually takes at least four years for the fund to settle claims.

Comsure, established in December, is 100% underwritten by Concord.

Mahlatsi said Comsure would provide accident cover for any fare-paying commuter for a fixed amount, payable to nominated beneficiaries in the event of death or permanent disablement while commuting. B/DAY

The cover costs adults R60 a year for a R30 000 payment in the event of death or permanent disability. Comsure also pays R3 000 towards the funeral costs and up to R15 000 for burns and disfigurements.

Children under 14 pay R20 a year for a R10 000 payout in the event of death or disability. Other benefits are a R3 000 funeral cover and up to R5 000 for burns and disfigurement. 22/1/93

Mahlatsi also hoped to interest managements in his product and would try to get companies to "meet the workers halfway".

FM 22/1/93

(332)

MICOR

Predators queuing up

Frenzied jostling to establish prime positions around freight and travel company Micor has been the talk of the market. This follows the announcement by the controlling shareholders that they intend buying the assets at a price well below NAV (but significantly above the market price when the deal was disclosed). It's almost certain that counter-bids will be tabled shortly.

Enraged minorities succeeded in securing an adjournment "to give time for the proposals to be considered in more depth." That is a polite way of saying some minorities want to determine whether they can structure a deal of better advantage to shareholders. The general meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 27. FM 22/1/93

Controlling shareholders, principally the Kaplan family with about 45% of the issued equity, have indicated they want to accept an offer from a consortium to buy the core businesses of Micor for about 90c a share. The company's auditors, Kessel Feinstein, have indicated the offer is "fair and reasonable" taken with the right to acquire shares in Micor Industrial (Micind) which, says senior partner Zel Rangecroft, increases the offer price to R1,38 per share.

As the buying consortium is controlled 60% by the Kaplan family, minority shareholders believe the Kaplans are selling the assets to themselves. And the Kaplans, who also control the Micor board, have elected to sanction the arrangement by using S 228 of the Companies Act, which provides that a resolution may be approved by a simple majority of voting shareholders. This has evoked howls of protest.

The *FM* has now found that the proposals for the asset strip were formulated by the Kaplans after a Johannesburg financial institution, unnamed but since learnt to be Sechold, was alleged to have indicated it intended launching a takeover bid with the ultimate purpose of stripping the assets to realise value.

Sechold MD Arthur Kelly says the allegation is "nonsense"; director Louis Ehrlich says the company acquired shares in Micor almost by accident. "The stock is tightly held, so we took what looked a good opportunity when 1m shares were offered to us," he says. "We were attracted by the substantial market price discount to NAV. Later, we discussed the group's future with the Kaplans, but any suggestion we were on the asset stripping trail is rubbish."

Kelly says the first Sechold knew about the controlling shareholders' decision to strip out the core businesses was when the bank's executives read the notice in the media. "It's not attractive to us as a business. What we want is to ensure we are paid what the company's worth — and that's a lot more than the derisory offer that's been made."

Allan Gray, the Cape-based investment operation, is equally incensed by the offer. Executive director Jack Mitchell has joined Sechold in an effort to ensure minorities are better treated. He has indicated that, if necessary, application will be made to the Courts in terms of S252 of the Act, which provides for minorities to be given relief from oppression.

Micor's activities include significant overseas operations, particularly in Europe and the US. In terms of a S15A ruling, Micor's directors are exempted from disclosing details of foreign operations.

A Micor director, company employee Michael Delahunt, took such exception to the buyout proposals that he resigned from the board. At last week's meeting, he announced he would submit a firm cash offer, based on NAV, backed by appropriate guarantees, to buy Micor's overseas companies. Delahunt claims the exciting prospects of the overseas division, its rand hedge qualities and anticipated impressive results, have been ignored by the Kaplans and Micor's auditors. But he refuses to divulge the source of his funding.

More than one minority shareholder commented unfavourably on the wide discrepancy in NAV figures indicated by recent reports. The annual accounts for the year to June 1992 and dated September 8 show a NAV of about R33m. The circular containing the buy-out proposal and dated December 9 — three months later — indicates NAV of about R15m.

Meanwhile, SA Bias Holdings and Merhold chairman Christopher Seabrooke confirms he is interested, in principle, in acquiring certain Micor assets. He declined to enlarge on his intentions. "I know I'm being cagey," he says. "I've held discussions with Sechold, Allan Gray and the Kaplans and we hope to be in a position to formulate an offer soon."

Rand Merchant Bank executive director Reg Sherrell says the bank is advising Seabrooke and may provide bridging finance. "Our principal concern is to ensure shareholders receive adequate compensation," he says. "On the face of it, the offer made seems very unsatisfactory."

Predators are queuing up and that can only be because they sense a killing can be made. Shareholders should take care to ensure it isn't done at their expense.

David Gleason & Kate Rushton

Taxi industry on the skids

S/Times (BUSS) 24/1/93. (332)

BY DON ROBERTSON

THE black taxi industry is in a state of collapse and has asked Government for transport subsidies.

Profitability in the R4,5-billion industry has been hit by "unfair" subsidies paid to bus and rail transport operations, according to a spokesman for the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

The increase in the price of 16-seater minibuses in the past few years and the inability of taxi owners to increase fares accordingly, has made it almost impossible for them to maintain monthly instalments on vehicles. This creates a barrier to entry into the industry and makes it almost impossible for newcomers to even consider the purchase of a vehicle.

Shrinking passenger volumes, caused by the current state of the economy, unemployment and the decline in disposable income, have aggravated the problem.

Sabta says it is fully aware that stringent Government budgets prevent any increase in subsidies paid to transport operators, but maintains that what is available should be split three ways.

As a result, the various national taxi associations have pooled their strengths and presented their case to the Department of Transport in the middle of last month asking for an immediate revision of subsidy policies. Discussions are expected to continue for some time.

Philip van den Heever, general manager marketing at Future Bank, the largest financier in the industry, agrees affordability is the industry's major problem.

"A recent survey showed that current instalments for the purchase of a taxi are about 50% higher than most owners believe they can comfortably afford."

The collapse of the industry, as one motor manufacturer put it, has resulted in a sharp decline in what has been a lucrative business in minibus sales.

In 1984, 16-seater minibus sales represented 3,1% of all light commercial volumes. This rose to 7,7% in 1990, but last year fell to about 2,5%.

A survey conducted by Toyota shows that the price of vehicles has risen by 120% in the past five years, while fares have risen by only 60%. As a result, the average deposit required for the purchase of a minibus is about R22 600, which would require a monthly instalment of between R1 300 and R1 600. Insurance adds another R1 200, while running costs range between R3 500 to R4 500. Monthly expenditure to operate a single taxi could, therefore, be as high as R7 000.

Sabta has about 60 000 members and it is estimated that the national taxi fleet is about 120 000.

Sabta members use about 800-million litres of fuel a year worth R1,2-billion, 3,5-million litres of engine oil worth about R21-million and spend R800-million on spare parts. They travel about 440-billion kilometres a year.

Because of the substantial distances travelled by taxis, they last for about 30 months only and it is not possible to finance them for longer than about three years. This increases monthly instalments. Insurance premiums are also high because of the high incidence of accidents.

Sabta operates a scheme in which members contribute about 20% of the value of their vehicles. If a taxi owner falls behind on his instalments, the pool makes good the difference.

Flats taxi driver chased, killed

A NYANGA taxi driver was chased and killed at the weekend. CT 25/1/93

Police said they were investigating a claim that the dead man had recently switched from one taxi group to another. (332)

Mr G G Ndongeni was allegedly chased by a group of men while driving near Black City, Nyanga. His bullet-ridden body was found later. — Sapa

Key witness in killing of civic leader shot dead

JACQUELYN SWARTZ, Crime Staff

A KEY witness in the investigation into the assassination of civic leader Mr Michael Mapongwana has been killed.

Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association member Mr Goodwill Ndongeni, 44, of Nyanga, who was allegedly present when Mr Mapongwana's killing was planned, was shot dead near the Nyanga taxi rank at 4am on Saturday. (332)

He had been missing since November and police were unable to subpoena him to give evidence in the inquest on Mr Mapongwana which began in Wynberg this week.

According to Major Louis van Brackel, regional co-ordinator of the unrest and violent crimes unit, police suspect that Mr Ndongeni's killers followed him in his taxi and gunned him down, apparently when he got out and tried to escape on foot. ARGT 26/1/93

Mr Mapongwana was chairman of the Khayelitsha Civic Association and involved in trying to end of the bloody war between rival taxi associations when he was shot in Lansdowne Road in July 1991.

Arrest warrant for missing taxi driver

332

ARG 26/1/93

VUSI KAMA
Staff Reporter

A WARRANT for the arrest of a former Western Province Black Taxi Association driver, who failed to appear at the inquest on ANC activist and civic leader Mr Michael Mapongwana, has been issued — but has been stayed until March 9.

The driver's lawyer, Mr I Murray, told the court he had been told his client had been in a car accident near Beaufort West and could not attend yesterday's proceedings.

At an earlier hearing, the driver — whose name may not be published by order of the court — told the hearing that members of Webta planned and carried out the killing of Mr Mapongwana, chairman of the Western Cape Civic Association, on July 8, 1991 and celebrated his death at a meeting place in Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain.

The information emerged months after the State had withdrawn charges of murder against Webta members because of lack of evidence.

Mr Mapongwana, who was gunned down in Lansdowne Road, was involved in peace initiatives to end the taxi war between members of Lagunya and Webta.

Yesterday former Webta taxi owner Mr Sidima Tshokotsha said he was not prepered to testify at the inquest because his lawyer was not present.

"I cannot testify in this court because I do not know why I am here in the first place and my lawyer is not here," he said.

He refused to answer questions about Mr Mapongwana.

Documents handed in to court have linked Mr Tshokotsha's name to the alleged assassination.

New Crossroads civic chairman Mr Sidwell Ncate told the court he saw three men in a Chevrolet firing shots at the taxi in which Mr Mapongwana was travelling.

The men then fired at him at point-blank range as he lay helpless on the ground, Mr Ncate said.

He said the balaclava-clad men left Mr Mapongwana for dead, saying they had "finished off the bastard".

The hearing continues on March 9.

Mr S L van der Walt is presiding, Mr J H Van Staden appears for the State and Mr S Hockey for the Mapongwana family.

Govt may subsidise taxi services

B/Day 27/1/93. (332)

TIM COHEN

CAPE TOWN — Restrictions on the issue of new taxi licences and the subsidisation of the taxi industry could result from government's recognition yesterday of a new, unified taxi organisation.

Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed said he had exclusively recognised the new organisation at a meeting with leaders of the three black taxi groups.

Leaders of the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta), the National African Federation of Transport (Nafto) and the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) welcomed Welgemoed's decision.

Welgemoed said the formation of the organisation was an important step.

Sabta CE of marketing Jabu Mabuza said liaison, discipline in the industry, profitability, driver skills and training, and management had been discussed in the meeting.

Mabuza said he appreciated the Minister's recognition that it was unfair that buses and trains should be subsidised by the state but not taxis.

"We understand the situation of the economy and appreciate the Minister's acknowledgement that there should at some time be subsidies," he said.

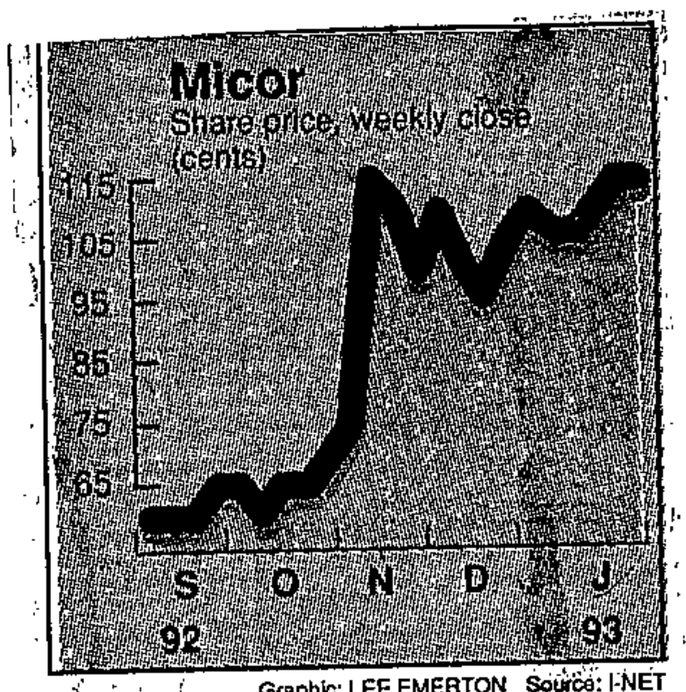
He denied that the meeting envisaged the creation of a cartel, but he stressed that the recent taxi wars were a result of the industry's lack of profitability.

Departmental officials have, however, stressed the necessity of pointing out to the independent local road transportation boards the implications of issuing too many taxi licences.

Welgemoed said the department's plan was to establish the "corridor principle", in terms of which a passenger would, for example, be serviced from his door by taxi to the station, by train to his regional destination and by bus to his final destination.

The plan was to create an "integrated ticket system" to allow passengers to buy one ticket for all three modes of transport, he said.

"We cannot afford to have a situation where only bus and train transport is subsidised," he said.



Graphic: LEE EMERTON Source: I-NET

Increase in bid for Micor assets

(332) PETER GALLI (332)

MICOR shareholders were pleasantly surprised yesterday when the consortium bidding for the company's underlying assets upped its offer by more than 50% to R23,15m, or 140c a share.

The final offer is about R8m up on its initial offer of R15m or 90,7c a share and followed a threat by minority shareholders, believed to be Allan Gray Investments and Sechold, to interdict the sale.

The bidding Hackenhoff consortium is headed by Micor chairman Cecil Kaplan and his son Mark. The Kaplans hold a 45% interest in Micor and a 60% interest in the consortium. B/Day 28/1/93.

An early morning general meeting yesterday was postponed to let the parties discuss the proposed interdict and the consortium's offer. However, at this stage chairman Cecil Kaplan said a R20m counter-offer had already been received from minority shareholder Sechold.

The consortium rejected the earlier offer, but in turn increased its bid to R20,6m or 125c a share. When the meeting resumed in the afternoon, Kaplan said a counter offer had been made for R23,15m or R1,40 a share. This was also rejected but matched by the consortium.

"As a result of this, agreement was reached by the substantial minority share-

To Page 2

Micor

B/Day 28/1/93. (332) (332)

From Page 1

holders to accept the Hackenhoff offer. The resolutions were eventually approved by 97,7% of the shareholdings represented at the meeting or by 90,7% of all shareholdings," Kaplan said.

Minority shareholders have been concerned that Micor directors were "both the buyer and the seller" and that the initial offer price of R15m was well below the net asset value of 200c a share. They said the offer was "neither fair nor equitable".

Minority shareholders retain the right to buy back 130 Micor Industrial (Micind) shares for every 100 Micor shares held at 20c a share. Micor holds 92% of Micind.

Micor shares were suspended yesterday at 115c — 25c lower than the final offer price. Trading will recommence today.

Hard times hit taximen

Sowetan 25/1/93.

By Joshua Raboroko

■ Financial institutions repossessed 800 minibus taxis in past six months:

"Many owners are unable to meet their financial obligations and the banks have no option but to repossess vehicles"

332

FINANCIAL institutions repossessed about 800 minibus taxis in the past six months, citing feuds, decline in the economy and bad money management as some of the main reasons.

Others reasons were given as unprofitability on certain routes, boycotts, arrears and the spiralling cost of living.

The repossessions affected members of the South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta), the National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) and individuals.

The public affairs manager of Sabta, Mr Mike Ntlatleng, said the number of vehicles repossessed in the six months (June-December 1992) was 450.

About 350 taxis were repossessed during the same period in 1991. The 1992 figure represented an average of 2,5 percent of the total number of vehicles bought through the Sabta Foundation Scheme.

Sabta members were financed by Wesbank but all those accounts had been transferred to FutureBank which opened two years ago.

Nafto president Mr Peter Rabali said more than 300 taxis financed by the Wesbank and Standard Bank were repossessed during the same period.

Chairman of the Cape Organisation of Democratic Taxi Associations Mr Kidwell Maqwayi said about 100 taxis were repossessed by financial institutions.

Most of the repossessions took place in the Transvaal, the Western and Eastern Cape and Natal where violence has become a way of life for taxi owners.

The general manager of FutureBank, Mr James de Smith, said many minibus taxis were repossessed because owners were in arrears. He did not have the exact number of clients affected but estimated the figure at about 450.

He said taxi feuds, unprofitability of routes, the bad economic climate and high instalments contributed to the downturn in the taxi industry.

"The bank normally negotiates with clients before such actions are taken," he said, adding: "Depriving them of their livelihood is the last thing we would like to do."

'Heavy beating'

Senior marketing manager of Stannic (car financing wing of Standard Bank) Mr Andrew Reekie said the taxi industry had taken a "heavy beating" as a result of the downturn in the economy.

Many owners were unable to meet their financial obligations and the banks had been left with no option but to repossess vehicles.

Owners were normally given 30 days after repossession to reclaim vehicles. Taxi organisations have expressed concern at the frightening rate of repossessions countrywide.

The black taxi industry, one of the fastest growing enterprises, is worth more than R1 000 million and has about 80 000 members affiliated to different organisations, according to a study by the executive consultant of Toyota Taxi Business Service, Mr Paul Browning.

He said a taxi owner today usually got less income than he or she received in the past. The survey had shown that an owner was presently earning between R1 500 and R2 000 a month compared to about R3 200 the previous year.

He attributed the plunge to the increase in the price of minibuses.

"The community cannot afford to pay higher fares as a result of unemployment, poverty and the escalating cost of living," Browning said.

Ntlatleng said in an attempt to solve the problems Sabta was employing people to advise clients.

They were also negotiating with local-regional associations and the management of banks to see if arrears could not be settled.

Taxi wars and boycotts would have to be stopped in the future because they were detrimental to the industry.

Referring to bad management by taxi owners, Ntlatleng said it was important that drivers be taught how to run a business.

"Taxi owners must learn to pay their employees a living wage so that they will stop pilfering. Some drivers do many trips to make what their employers expect and then put the rest in their pockets," he said.

Rabali said that the industry was "overtraded" as a result of deregulation and that caused feuds on the routes.

Representatives of taxi organisations would ask the Minister of Transport, Mr Piet Welgemoed, to subsidise the taxi industry. They were due to meet the minister on Wednesday.

Maqwayi said taxi wars in the Western and Eastern Cape had a serious effect on the industry. Many vehicles were burnt out, resulting in owners not being able to pay instalments.

He said: "We managed to talk to financial institutions about our plight.

"The war is over and many vehicles are back on the road. We are just praying that no further wars take place."

— TAURUS —

BARGAINS GALORE

PORK HEADS ..... R2,75 each incl.

PORK TROTTERS..... R1,65 kg incl.

PORK SPINE BONES .. R1,00 kg incl.

PHONE 835-2177

to collect your order 24 hours later

STRICTLY CASH

17 3rd Avenue, Booysens Reserve

R 9355

Taximen declare dispute

PRETORIA. — The SA Taxi Drivers' Union has declared a dispute with Pretoria's traffic department and has threatened to stage marches and pickets. (332) CT 26/1/93

multi-vehicle accident between Harrismith and Van Reenen's Pass at 2.40am.

The names of the two dead men have not yet been released and the injured are being treated in hospitals in Bloemfontein, Harrismith and Bethlehem.

R60 000 donation

Sowetan 28/1/93

THE DEPARTMENT of National Health and Population Development has boosted the coffers of the Churches Aids Programme with a donation of R60 000.

The money is a contribution towards the work by the 1 000 churches in South Africa which are responding to the challenge and crisis posed by Aids, a statement from the department said.

Trial is postponed

THE FRAUD trial of a Pretoria businessman, Mr Albert Vermaas, was again postponed yesterday.

The hearing will resume in the Pretoria Supreme Court on March 1.

Vermaas is facing 154 charges of fraud in connection with an alleged illegal investment scheme that led to members of the public losing millions of rands.

Mr Justice S Kirk-Cohen yesterday warned Vermaas the case had been postponed several times already and he would have to defend himself if his advocate, Mr Piet Oosthuizen, withdrew from the case. - *Sowetan Reporters and Sapa.*

Blockade of Bloed Street

Sowetan 28/1/93

■ Taximen give vent to their feelings:

332

By Josias Charle

THREE taxi drivers were arrested yesterday in Pretoria during a picket by scores of taximen protesting against high traffic fines and the lack of sufficient ranking facilities.

Pretoria's chief magistrate had earlier given permission for the blockade to take place. He gave the drivers up to 1.30pm to disperse.

Taxi drivers blocked Bloed Street in front of the taxi rank between Van der Walt and Prinsloo streets, while scores of other taxis were cramped into the rank in an attempt to prove that the Bloed Street rank was too small to accommodate all taxis.

Taxi drivers organised by the South African Taxi Drivers Union started to block the street just after 10am.

Police and traffic officers came out in force to monitor the situation. Also present were a group of United Nations observers.

At about 11.15am scuffles broke out at the corner of Bloed and Prinsloo streets when a group of taxi drivers who were part of the protectors tried to enforce the open "keys down" action. Police moved in and arrested three drivers for intimidation.

A spokesman for the SATDU said their action was prompted by "exorbitant" fines imposed by the Pretoria Traffic Department.

He said repeated requests for more stopping places had been ignored by the traffic authorities. Shortly before 1pm drivers started to move their vehicles and went about their business. No further incidents were reported.

Commuters killed at stations as new train's tests delayed

B/DAY 28/1/93

RAY HARTLEY

THE testing of a new experimental 14-coach train aimed at minimising incidents of violence against commuters had been delayed until next week due to faulty video equipment, an SA Rail Commuter Corporation spokesman said yesterday.

SARCC development engineer Brian Carver said faults in the transmission of video images from coach to coach had delayed the train, but he was confident it would be tested next week. Tests were scheduled for the first week of January, but the quality of video images would be improved first, he said.

The SARCC is expected to make an announcement on the progress made with setting up a 4 000-strong rail guard next week.

Meanwhile, at least six people have been killed and nine injured in renewed train violence this year, according to police and Sapa reports.

The deaths, mainly on the Germiston-Katlehong line, have dimmed hopes of peace on commuter lines following a lull in the violence over the festive season.

In the latest incident two people were killed and three injured in an attack on a train travelling between Lindela and Katlehong Stations.

Police found a dead man and four injured men during a search at the Katlehong Station. One of the injured died later in the day.

Inkatha said all the men were Inkatha members.

Police said about 2 080 police were guarding PWV commuter trains. A major problem remained the unwillingness of witnesses to come forward with information.

In another development, police said they suspected that the three men shot dead in Alexandra on Tuesday were victims of the taxi war.

Protesting taxi drivers block street

B/DAY 28/1/93

PRETORIA — About 500 minibus taxis converged on downtown Pretoria yesterday after the SA Taxi Drivers' Union declared a "dispute" with the city's traffic department.

Two people were arrested for intimidation but were released.

There were no major disruptions and by 1pm most of the taxis which blocked Bloed Street had dispersed.

Union representatives handed a letter of protest to city traffic chief Jimmy Allison.

Regional secretary Morris Bokaba said the council had failed to meet the union's demands, which included that SAP and traffic police stop harassing its 800 Pretoria members.

The council had also failed to respond satisfactorily to demands that more taxi pickup points be established in Pretoria, and that the "unnecessarily high ticketing" of its members be stopped, he said. — Sapa.

(332)

Spotlight on Natal violence

EMPANGENI — The ANC and Cosatu yesterday claimed that the KwaZulu Police and the SAP were involved in attacks on ANC-supporting communities in Natal/KwaZulu, particularly in Esikhawini township.

A Goldstone commission subcommittee is holding preliminary inquiries into political violence on the Natal North and South Coasts.

In its submission, the SAP said much of the violence was criminal but the force experienced difficulties in apprehending the perpetrators. This was because of a perception of bias, community distrust and a campaign of non-co-operation with the police.

Natal unrest monitor Mary de Haas alleged that KwaZulu Police and hit squads were responsible for at least 45 deaths in Esikhawini in the past five months.

Meanwhile, in Imbali outside Maritzburg, a woman was killed and four houses burnt down in continuing violence yesterday.

The ANC's Natal Midlands leadership met police and the Natal Provincial Administration this week to demand action against alleged Inkatha "invaders" in the township.

In Inanda, north of Durban, police yesterday arrested three people and confiscated arms and ammunition during a weapons search at Amawoti. B/DAY 28/1/93

Peace accord representatives and UN observers accompanied police to the area. — Sapa.

Council stalls on taxi rank location

(332)

29/1/93

Municipal Reporter

THE Grand Parade may be a more suitable location for a minibus taxi terminus than the station deck, according to the council's utilities and works committee.

Instead of passing the executive committee's recommendation that over R1 million be spent on a temporary terminus above the station, the council referred the matter back to the utilities team.

Mr Gordon Oliver said his main concern was that there was no guarantee that ordinary members of taxi associations would move from Strand Street to the station deck.

Mr Peter Muller said taxi operators and passengers appeared to find Strand Street convenient.

Utilities and works committee chairman Mr Kenneth Penkin said representatives of the major taxi organisation had individually accepted the proposed move to the station deck.

STAR 29/1/93

Grincor lifts profits 25 pc

Finance Staff (332)

Transport group Grindrod Unicorn (Grincor) lifted attributable profits by a satisfactory 25 percent to R25,1 million (R20 million) in financial 1992.

Earnings per share, however, fell by five percent to 75,3c (78,9c) as a result of the increased number of shares in issue after the R50 million rights offer.

The total dividend has been maintained at 30c.

Despite closing two shipping lines, at a cost of R10 million, Grincor raised turnover 16 percent to R654,6 million (R563,9 million) and operating profit to R57,2 million (R50 million).

Chairman Murray Grindrod says the group has taken steps to eliminate further loss-making activities, but a real recovery depends on an upturn in SA's major trading partners.

The group's capital expenditure in 1992 was R113 million, which lifted interest-bearing debt to R190,4 million. Gearing was, however, reduced from 107 to 65 percent by the rights offer.

Taxis are returned

Sowetan 29/1/93.

By Joshua Raboroko (332)

■ Lawyers for taxi owners reclaim illegally seized minibuses:

LAWYERS representing taxi owners have been able to recover many repossesed minibus taxis costing thousands of rands because no court orders were issued against clients.

East Rand lawyer Mr Simon Haskins said his clients were not given court orders before their vehicles were taken away by bank officials and policemen.

Haskins, who represents about 32 taxi owners on the East Rand, said many minibus taxis were repossesed by officials claiming they were in arrears with their instalments.

A Cape Town lawyer said he helped more than 30 taxi operators get their vehicles back after they had been repossessed.

The lawyers said they were able to secure the release of the vehicles and warned: "No court order, no reposession."

Their warnings come in the wake of reports that about 800 minibus taxis have been repossessed by in the past six months.

Mr April Madihlaba of Benoni said three white officials and policemen came to his house and took his minibus after claiming he was in arrears. The vehicle was worth R67 000.

He said: "I was not given a chance to explain. I was not in arrears. I decided to see my lawyer. I got my vehicle back after two days."

Grincor retains dividend despite depressed trading

B/DAY 29/1/93. (332)

EDWARD WEST

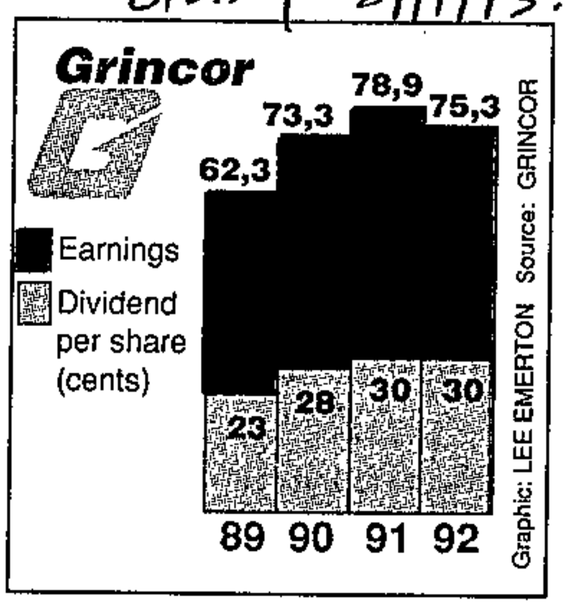
GRINDROD Unicorn (Grincor) increased attributable income by a quarter to R25,1m in the year to end-December 1992 from R20m in 1991 and maintained its year-end dividend at 30c, today's published results show.

The storage, handling, land, sea and air goods transport group's turnover climbed 16% to R654,6m (1991: R564m) and operating profit was 15% up at R57,2m (R50m). Interest paid was higher at R14,2m (R11,4m) leaving pre-tax profit 12% higher at R43m (R38,5m).

Tax was slightly higher at R3,2m (R2,5m) and associated companies reported income of R1,5m compared with a R85 000 loss the year before. The number of shares in issue increased to 33,3-million from 25,3-million because of a R49,9m rights issue early last year.

As a result earnings a share was 5% lower at 75,3c over 1991's 78,9c.

MD Michael Grove said funds from the rights issue was being used to lower debt and the interest-bearing debt to equity ratio had fallen from 107% to 65% at year-end.



Nevertheless interest-bearing debt at R190,4m at year-end was higher than the R181,8m at 1991 year-end because of capital expenditure and other investments. Cash deposits climbed to R50m (R38,1m).

Grove said operating profit included the sale of two vessels in the international fleet and depreciation adjustments on two roll-on roll-off vessels sold after year-end at substantially higher than original cost.

Extraordinary losses of R10m were incurred on two discontinued liner trades, but the loss was offset by foreign exchange related profits and a profit on the sale of an associate company totalling R9,5m.

Trading conditions remained depressed in 1992 which adversely affected the profitability of the group's core activities, the directors reported. Grove said the sale of the roll-on roll-off vessels would realise a satisfactory profit in 1993.

Capital expenditure in 1992 was R112,9m and included the acquisition of two 15 000 ton multipurpose vessels and progress payments on two ships being built in Poland for delivery at the end of 1993, bringing the total fleet to about 20 ships.

Directors said although there were signs of a gradual improvement in the economy, this would largely depend on a recovery of the economies of SA's major trading partners.

However, the group had taken steps to eliminate loss-making activities and was positioned to take advantage from any upswing.

Airlink to challenge Comair on Rand-Richards Bay route

(332)

STEPHANE BOTHMA

AIRLINK is to challenge for dominance on the route between the Reef and Richards Bay by introducing a newer aircraft and lower fares on the service which is currently operated only by Comair.

The airline announced it would start operating the busy route with its new R33m, 47-seater ATR42 turboprop from February 15. The aircraft's flying time of 75 minutes would also be shorter than that of Comair, which operates a F27 Fokker on the route.

The current return fare of R704 on Comair would be cut to R610, Airlink joint MD Rodger Foster said.

Air traffic between Johannesburg and Richards Bay is expected to increase substantially with the current expansion of the R6,5bn Alusaf smelter, which will start full production in November 1995.

Alusaf will create 1 400 permanent jobs and about 4 800 temporary jobs during construction of the 466 000 ton-a-year smelter.

Airlink would fly from Jan Smuts to Richards Bay every weekday morning, except Thursdays, and on Sundays. Return flights from the northern Natal town would be on weekday afternoons, except Wednesdays, and on Sundays.

Foster said with delivery of a second ATR42 from Toulouse, France, later this year, Airlink hoped to expand the service.

"We regard Richards Bay and northern Natal as one of the most important areas in the SA economy and feel the region deserves to be serviced by modern aircraft with top-notch service on board," he said.

Two air hostesses would serve light meals, snacks and free refreshments, including wine or beer, to passengers on the route.

Comair commercial director Bert van der Linden said yesterday it was too early to comment on Airlink's entry to the route.

Another new Airlink service to benefit Natal will be short-hop flights between Richards Bay and Durban, also starting on February 15.

"This service is aimed particularly at Richards Bay businessmen who have commitments in Durban. The air connection between Richards Bay and Durban will take 30 minutes and cost R110 single fare," Foster said.

B/Day 29/1/93

Inquiry into taxi-violence

332

PRETORIA. — The Goldstone Commission will hold an inquiry into violence in the taxi industry in Groblersdal and surrounding areas, starting on Monday. CT 29/1/92

Commission members, advocates Mr N Rossouw SC and Mr S Sithole, will conduct the inquiry.

"The terms of reference will be the same as those of the committee already inquiring into violence in the taxi industry to establish the causes of the violence," said Mr Justice R J Goldstone. — Sapa

TAXI INDUSTRY: *Facing dark days unless assistance is given*

Plea for slice of pie before wheels fall off

STAR 30/1/93.

FORMULA FOR CUT-THROAT COMPETITION: COLLEEN McCAUL, a transportation planner at Stanway Edwards Associates and the author of *No Easy Ride: The Rise and Future of the Black Taxi Industry.*

(332)

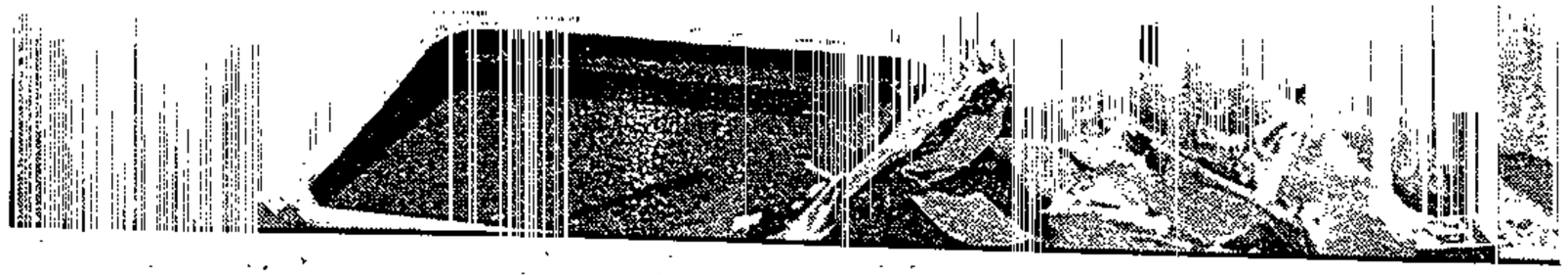
VARIOUS recent reports have suggested that the black taxi industry is in a state of collapse and economic crisis. The National African Federated Transport Organisation and the Southern African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) concluded recently that the taxi industry was "fast moving to demise" and have asked the Department of Transport for an immediate revision of its subsidy policy.

Should the taxis be subsidised? Over the past 15 years our combi taxis have captured the single largest share of the commuter market: as the main mode of travel for an estimated 44 percent of black commuters, they

are the biggest single player in the passenger transport business.

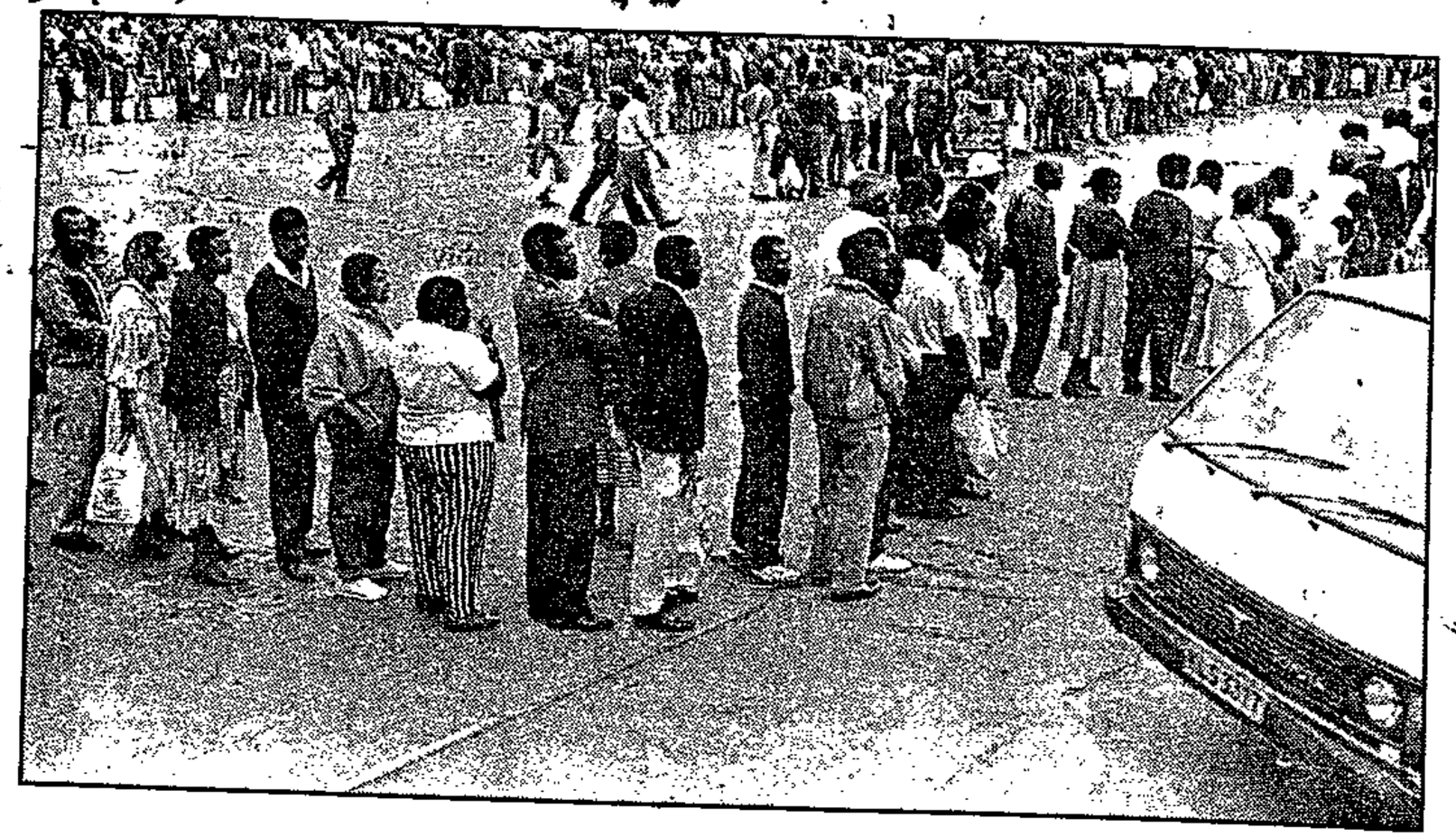
The alternative modes, buses and trains — the primary means of travel for 40 percent of commuters — receive roughly R1,5 billion a year in State subsidies.

The fact that combi taxis are not subsidised is not new. They never have been. Nor did this appear to have prejudiced their success; in fact the industry was believed to be so lucrative in the late 1980s that Sabta claimed that white entrepreneurs were attempting to take it over. So what has changed, and are subsidies the answer?



Violence, sudden death and frustration

STAR 30/1/93



OUT OF CONTROL?: The combi taxi industry is now an integral part of South Africa's commercial infrastructure, with all its positive and negative side effects.

□ ABOVE RIGHT: Angry residents burnt this taxi in Katlehong on the East Rand.

□ ABOVE: Poor wages, poor training, speeding and overloading — and another fatal crash.

□ RIGHT: Now the poorer section of the community has come to rely on the taxis.

FOR one thing, there have been huge real increases in vehicle prices over the period in which the combi taxi industry has existed. For example, a typically operated new 16-seater Toyota Hi-Ace cost R9 000 in 1980; the respective price today is R80 000.

Taxi operators have identified high vehicle prices as one of their big problems. Added to this is the high cost of financing vehicle purchases: taxi operators are being charged interest rates of prime plus 10 to 12 percentage points in conventional bank financing schemes. In the special schemes negotiated by the taxi associations, interests rates are still high — prime plus 7 percentage points.

What this amounts to, with extremely high insurance premiums, is repayments over 42 months of between R3 200 and R3 700 a month. A taxi operator plying a route between Soweto and Johannesburg, for example, with full loads on six peak-hour trips a day at current fees, would make roughly R5 000 in fares. That leaves little to pay the driver and to maintain the vehicle, let alone make a profit or replace the vehicle. Operators whose vehicles leave the ranks without full loads — on the more overtraded routes — are in an even more precarious situation.

What about the pricing of taxi fares? It has been estimated that they are costed at only 40 percent of what they should be. Many have blamed the problem on the lack of business skills in the industry and an inability to price fares correctly. The reasons seem more complex.

In the mid-1980s, when the industry appears to have been more lucrative, studies showed that combi taxis were used chiefly by relatively wealthier commuters with higher incomes than bus users. Taxi fares could be pitched at market-related levels because taxis served a particular market — commuters who were prepared to travel unsubsidised in return for convenience and comfort.

In capturing the market share, however, the combi taxi industry (and other factors such as bus boycotts or labour disputes) have caused a huge scaling-down of bus operations.

Putco, which operated 3 500 buses in 1987, now runs fewer than 2 000. Bus service frequencies have been scaled down on many routes. Some bus companies have ceased operation on some routes altogether — those from Alexandra and Mdantsane (Ciskei) being only two examples.

WHAT this means is that entire communities in some areas have no choice but to use combi taxis. In such situations, the combi taxis are transporting not only those with higher incomes who can afford market-related fares, but also passengers who are accustomed to subsidised transport and who cannot afford its true cost. This situation is likely to worsen with growing unemployment and the possible closure of some important rail commuter services as well as further bus services.

Furthermore, the growing popularity of the industry as a means of earning a living for those without formal jobs has created a substantial group running what can only be described as survival operations.

A Central Statistical Services survey in 1990 indicated that 40 percent of black transport operators earned less than R1 000 a month. A further fifth earned less than R2 000. This situation has created further downward pressures on fares and sharpened the daily struggle for passengers.

Given that the combi taxis have assumed responsibility for previously subsidised bus or train users, and that this is making it difficult for them to cost their fares appropriately, the taxi organisations have a strong case for demanding a slice of the subsidy cake.

There is also an urgency in the situation. The squeeze on profits caused by high vehicle prices, low fares, cut-throat competition and high finance charges contributes to the endemic violence between rival operators and, importantly, to the extremely poor working conditions in the industry.

Poor wages — of about R180 a week — encourage drivers to supplement their earnings on the side. (Sabta officials have estimated a loss of between 30 and 40 percent of takings through pilfering.) This is a major reason for the speeding and overloading that characterise combi taxi operations, as drivers squeeze in extra trips to enhance their earnings.

This, coupled with driver fatigue caused by long hours and seven-day weeks, contributes substantially to the severity and frequency (relative to other public transport modes) of combi taxi accidents. Drivers' vulnerability makes unionisation difficult, although the Transport and General Workers' Union has had some success in organising taxi drivers in the Vaal Triangle.

While the taxi industry was hailed, by those who romanticised it, as a major creator of jobs, the *quid pro quo* has been the loss of less harsh jobs in the formal transport sector. Putco alone cut its labour force from 10 400 to 6 000 between 1988 and 1991.

Apart from cutting costs by paying poor wages, taxi operators have insufficient revenue to maintain their vehicles properly, compromising their safety. Given all this, there is an urgent need for solutions to the profitability problems of the combi taxi industry.

THE administering of a combi taxi subsidy system, if agreed to, poses practical difficulties, however, in the absence of formal fare collection systems. One breakthrough in this regard is encouraging. Combi taxis operating in Bloemfontein and between Botshabelo and Bloemfontein have installed electronic fare collection equipment in their vehicles as part of a pilot project.

Commuters pay for their trips using "smart cards" loaded with pre-paid value. Already, about half of Bloemfontein's taxi commuters carry smart cards. They enable collection of the type of data the authorities would need to administer a system of operator subsidies.

Whatever policy choices are made, the violence in the industry, its appalling working conditions, its poor safety record in relation to other public transport modes and the deterioration of the taxi fleet make some intervention necessary and urgent.

Satdu threaten more protests

THE Pretoria City Council and the Traffic Department have been given two weeks to accede to demands of the South African Taxi Drivers Union (Satdu) or face protest marches, sit-ins and more traffic jams. (332) C/Press 31/1/93

"We need pick-up and off-loading points for our commuters, and if these are not agreed to we will see more protests," said Satdu regional secretary Morris Bokaba.

Shippers' rivalry cuts costs

S/Times (Buss) 31/1/93

(332) By DON ROBERTSON

THE lifting of sanctions against SA has spawned new rivalry in the shipping lanes between SA and Europe.

A large number of competitors, particularly from former Eastern bloc countries, including Russia, have entered the market on the north-south route and are slashing freight rates by as much as 20%.

About 6-million tons are shipped in two-way trade between Europe and SA, worth more than R14-billion a year in shipping costs.

They are putting increased pressure on local freight companies which have traditionally operated between the two continents, say local shippers.

Buddy Hawton, CE of Safmarine and Rennies Holdings (Safren), says its has been necessary to cut shipping rates by between 10% and 15% and sometimes even more to match their reduced tariffs and there is no doubt that it is posing a problem.

He says it is impossible to say to what extent they have cut prices as this depends on the cargo mix and which routes are used. It involves the break bulk and container service.

"They are using older ships and we believe we still offer a better service and delivery. We also have a reputation built up over a long period of time."

Mike Middleton, export sales manager of Mediterranean Shipping (Medite), says any form of competition is worrying, "but it has not really affected us yet".

"New players in the market such as Besta Shipping from Russia generally offer only one or perhaps two sailings a month, whereas we sail every week."

He says that during the past 10 years when sanctions were in place, SA's three major shipping companies did SA proud and they have remained loyal in spite of the new entries into the market. Nevertheless it is impossible to say what might happen in the future.

"It is possible that exporters or importers who have no time constraints on cargoes might use the other services."

"New shipping companies are trying to buy their way into the market by reducing rates," says Buddy Woodborne, owner representative in Cape Town for Maritime Carrier Services (Macs), a member of the SA Europe Shipping Lines Conference (Saecs).

In contrast, Unicorn Lines has seen an increase in business by offering a "feeder" service from the new lines.

Tollgate's Askin apparently in UK

332

CT 11/3/93

MR Julian Askin, the Cape-based chairman of Tollgate Holdings which collapsed recently because of debts amounting to R370 million, has apparently fled to the UK.

Mr Askin is being investigated by the Office for Serious Economic Offences for his role in the demise of the conglomerate.

Speaking from his London home, Mr Askin told yesterday's Sunday Telegraph he was advised by his lawyers to "stay in Britain".

He said he was convinced the reason for the raid on his (Cape Town) home early last month and the investigation "lay deep within Absa".

"Tollgate is not the issue. It was kicked into touch by a much larger affair. It is about the last days of white South Africa and a last stand by the Afrikaners. If an Afrikaner was running Tollgate, we would still be in business," he said.

16 127 taxi prosecutions

Municipal Reporter

THERE were 16 127 prosecutions against minibus taxi drivers in the Cape Town municipality last year, said traffic manager Mr Wouter Smit. CT 2/3/93

This includes all fines issued, which are usually notices to appear in court, with an option of paying an admission of guilt fine. 332

Actual warrants issued for the arrest of minibus drivers numbered 598 from June to November last year.

Star 2/3/93

Durban not safe, say Japanese

332

DURBAN — Three Japanese fishing vessels left Durban Harbour yesterday after it was decided that the city was unsafe, following the muggings of 14 crewmen.

Three other Japanese trawlers due to call at Durban today have been rerouted to Cape Town.

The owners of a fleet of some 60 Japanese fishing trawlers have vowed not to use Durban for their bunker fuel and supplies until they are guaranteed safety. The Japanese Embassy in Pretoria is taking up the matter.

A Japan Tuna (SA) spokesman said the ships would fish off Durban, but would offload their catch and take supplies in Cape Town. — Own Correspondent.

Star 2/3/93

Taxi red tape cut, court told

(332)

By Philip Zolo

A senior Johannesburg Department of Transport official, charged with fraudulently approving taxi permit applications, altered 45 written Local Road Transport Board decisions because he wanted to cut red tape, his lawyer claimed in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Board secretary Gustav Vorster (28) has pleaded not guilty to 105 charges, including fraud, corruption and contravening the Road Traffic Ordinance.

His lawyer, Thys Kotze, told the court that Vorster admitted changing the board's decisions on applications for taxi permits.

But Vorster, who is charged with receiving money, burglar bars and groceries for the alterations, would deny in his evidence that anything had "passed under the table", Kotze said.

He said Vorster's actions, between September 1990 and August 1991, had been in line with the policy of the board and the department.

Irregularities

"It is clear that the practice of *laissez-faire* issue of permits had become culture in the department. Permits were being issued left, right and centre," Kotze said.

Cornelia Wilsenach, a senior administration official in the department, said she discovered irregularities in the issue of taxi permits after being appointed to investigate the matter in December 1991.

She said applications for taxi permits were granted or rejected by the Local Road Transport Board. As secretary, Vorster would send a letter of approval or rejection to the applicant. A letter of approval would then be used to obtain the permit.

She said Vorster changed 45 of the letters, some to allow the applicants to collect permits for more taxis than approved, and others to allow the applicants to obtain permits when their applications had been rejected outright.

Kotze said 96 percent of rejected applications succeeded on appeal to the National Transport Commission, and that Vorster knew that his actions would cut red tape.

The hearing continues tomorrow.

Puddle jumpers . . . soft rains soaked most of the PWV area yesterday, forcing these commuters to tread carefully along a temporary footpath outside Bank City in Pritchard Street, Johannesburg. Picture: Ken Oosterbroek

More rain to come for PWV tomorrow

Staff Reporter

Continuous widespread rain over the eastern parts of the Transvaal since 8 am yesterday is soaking deep into the parched earth and more showers are predicted over the PWV late tomorrow after a break in the morning.

According to the Weather Bureau "everything is happening" in the Transvaal, northern Natal and Mozambique. The remainder of the country is mainly dry.

Graskop had 191 mm from 8 am to 8 pm yesterday, Pretoria reported 17 mm and 27 mm at the Willows, and in Johannesburg, Parkhurst reported 40 mm up to this morning. Greymont had 17 mm, Bryanston 18 mm and the southern suburbs 24 mm.

A bureau spokesman said although the widespread soaking rain had not broken the drought, it had brought down temperatures.

Records show rainfall in February over the PWV was lower than the 102,5 mm long term average for the month, but slightly above the 67,5 mm measured in February last year.

March is the last rainy month of the summer season with the long term average on 106 mm, the Weather Bureau said.

Bureau climatologist Mike Lang said while farm dams could benefit from the latest downpour, major dams would only start filling up once their catchment areas reached saturation point which allowed run-off to the reservoirs.

16 000 minibus taxi summonses

(332)

Municipal Reporter

MORE than 16 000 prosecutions were initiated against minibus taxi drivers by the Cape Town traffic department last year.

A random selection of 50 taxis in the municipal area showed the following offence record: prosecutions pending 225, admission of guilt paid 237, cases struck from the court roll 77, cases withdrawn 75, and warrants outstanding 458.

Eight of these minibus taxis had between 21 and 42 warrants outstanding against them.

Between June and November, 8 705 notices to appear in court were issued to minibus taxi drivers. ARG 2/3/93

Askin denies fleeing

CT 2/3/93

From JOHN CAVILL

LONDON. — Mr Julian Askin, chairman of Tollgate Holdings in Cape Town, has denied he fled South Africa in the wake of the company's collapse and investigation by the Office for Serious Economic Offences.

The conglomerate collapsed recently because of debts of R370 million.

"I am here on a normal trip," Mr Askin said from his home here yesterday. "I have certainly not fled South Africa nor have I had any advice on the subject from my lawyers.

"I have no reason or wish not to return and will be going back after a business trip to the US and a short skiing holiday."

Mr Askin's palatial Cape-Dutch Constantia Nek home was raided by police early last month as part of a nationwide swoop on the homes of top Tollgate directors.

He did not wish to comment on possible action by Tollgate.

Star 3/3/93

Cheaper insurance for taxis

Three major taxi associations have entered into a scheme with Future Bank and a number of insurance companies to supply insurance at cheap rates to their members.

(332)

Road accident deaths: minibuses/other vehicles

*24. Mr J CHIOLÉ asked the Minister of Transport:†

How many persons died in motor vehicle accidents in 1992 (a) in the Republic as a whole and (b) in which minibus taxis with Black drivers were involved? B273E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(a) In 1992 there were 428 751 collisions in which 10 103 people were killed;

(b) According to statistics provided by the Central Statistical Services no distinction is made between a minibus and/or minibus-taxi, as there is only one category, namely minibus/combi. Statistics as requested by the hon member are not kept in that format by the Central Statistical Services.

Reply substituting reply to Oral Question No 18 on 24 February 1993, put by Mr D H M Gibson (col 215):

Death sentences for killing policemen

*18. Mr D H M GIBSON asked the Minister of Law and Order:

Whether he intends recommending to the State President that death sentences be carried out upon persons convicted of killing members of the South African Police; if not, why not? B175E

The MINISTER OF LAW AND ORDER:

No, but I would like to draw your attention to the opening speech of the State President on 29 January 1993, in which he stated the following point of view:

The Government is also reviewing its position on the carrying out of the death penalty. At present a moratorium on carrying out death sentences is in force with a view to the negotiation of a bill of fundamental rights.

However, the wave of cruel murders and manslaughter, the prevailing disrespect for human lives and the delays in negotiation make it very difficult for the Government to allow the moratorium to continue indefinitely. Parliament will be consulted in the process of reconsideration.

It is also my point of view that the death penalty must not be imposed and carried out on a select group of persons, but that the death penalty should be applicable to the entire spectrum of society.

INTERPELLATION

The sign * indicates a translation. The sign †, used subsequently in the same interpellation, indicates the original language.

Own Affairs:

Local government negotiating forum

1. Mr J J WALSH asked the Minister of Local Government:

(1) Whether a local government negotiating forum is to be established; if so, what are the details of this forum;

(2) how is it envisaged existing local bodies, including Black local authorities and management committees, will be dealt with once local government ceases to fall under own affairs departments?

B349E.INT

The MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Mr Chairman, it is envisaged that a local government negotiating forum will be established on 22 March in terms of the rules and regulations with which I have furnished the hon interpellant and which I have also given to the CP.

As far as dealing with local authorities is concerned, there are two aspects to be distinguished: firstly, the administration of local government as a general affair as from 1 April and, secondly, how it will be dealt with politically as of that date.

With reference to the administration, the Commission for Administration has already reached an advanced stage in its investigation into the allocation of functions and the administrative capacity to deal with those functions. It should be borne in mind that the definition of local government as a general affair will affect the administration of the relevant legislation. It will not affect the contents of the legislation in question. The latter must be addressed politically, and should result in legislative amendments.

I am of the opinion that we must find an acceptable formula to achieve newly constituted local government, through negotiations, so as to allow for elections which will designate the legitimate leaders. This should be achieved through a package approach as part of an inclusive process of reform.

On the Government side we will, in the near future, table, for the purposes of negotiation, a package containing a series of reform measures. It speaks for itself that the elimination of racial references regarding voters and candidates would be the first step and, indeed, a cornerstone of such reform measures.

Mr J J WALSH: Mr Chairman, the DP obviously welcomes the creation of this local government negotiating forum which has the prime function of thrashing out a system of local government acceptable to the majority of our citizens.

We have also stressed that local government is of vital interest to the people, as it brings government down closer to the level of the people. Therefore it is a matter that has to be dealt with very sensitively.

We are concerned about the process that has been outlined by the hon the Minister. We do not believe that the way in which the new forum is to be constituted, in terms of which one half of the members will be from statutory organisations and the other half from non-statutory organisations, is sufficiently going to represent the vast majority of our people.

When reading the press statement made by the hon the Minister, it becomes clear that central and provincial Government officials, over which the NP has control, have been involved. From the non-statutory side the prime organisation involved was Sanco, in which the ANC has a major influence. We believe that this forum is not setting out to deal with local government matters as such, but to define and draw up a constitution for local government.

Political parties should have an input, which they do not at the moment because of the way in which this forum is to be constituted. The forum will be responsible to the national negotiating forum, which we believe to be right, and on that national body will be represented all the major political actors in the country. However, that will not be so, as I understand the make-up of the local government negotiating forum.

The DP believes there should be a third component leg. It should comprise local authorities and people drawn from a political source. It must, for obvious reasons, comprise people who have been excluded in the past. Thirdly, it must also comprise the political actors who will be charged with drawing up a constitution for our country. We believe it does not do that, and therefore we are concerned.

In dealing with the transition, the hon the Minister has not totally answered my question. He has constantly used the phrase "reconstituted local authorities". We would like to ask what he means by that. Before we get to our new constitution, clearly an interim step has to be taken during which other people have to be brought into local government.

*Mr A P OOSTHUIZEN: Mr Chairman, the first part of this interpellation deals with the establishment of a central local government negotiating forum. The hon the Minister has indicated here this afternoon that this forum is to be established on 22 March. There are only two reasons why the Government is establishing this negotiating forum. The first reason is that the ANC has insisted on this and that the Government has once again, as in the past, given way to the demands of the ANC.

The second reason is that negotiation at local

cont →

Taxi unity on the cards

Sowetan 4/3/93

By Mzimkulu Malunga

THE long-awaited unity among organisations representing the taxi industry is on the cards.

At a Press conference yesterday, where three major players unveiled their plans to recoup profitability, unity was highlighted as long-term objective.

Presidents of the Southern African Black Taxi Association, the National African Federated Transport Organisation and the South African Long Distance Association said gone were the days of divide-and-rule tactics.

"I believe one day we will have a single organisation representing the industry," said Mr Peter Rabali, who leads both Nafto and Saldta.

■ Big Three unveil plans for profit and unity:

(332)

A new scheme called Excell has been established to benefit operators belonging to the three organisations across the industry. The new scheme, according to Ntise Matlhoko, secretary general of the "Presidents Committee's working group", a joint Sabta-Nafto-Saldta leadership body, will be different from the old one which was basically a loan finance system.

The scheme will be administered by Future Bank. Sabta president Mr James Ngcoya said the organisations were negotiating with manufactures for better vehicle prices and with petroleum companies in an attempt to get a better deal for the once mighty taxi industry.

Working group for taxi industry

CT 4/3/93

JOHANNESBURG. — The presidents of the South African Black Taxi Association and the South African Long Distance Taxi Association, Mr James Ngcoya and Mr Peter Rabali, yesterday announced the formation of a working group to officially represent the taxi industry at the Department of Transport. — Sapa

(332)

The joint heads of the taxi industry's working group at yesterday's news conference in Johannesburg, from left, Nafto secretary Ntise Matlhoko, Sabta president James Ngcoya and Nafto president Peter Rabali. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

Cars' show debut

GAVIN DUVENAGE

THE as-yet-unreleased models of a local motor manufacturer will be on display for the first time at this year's Rand Easter Show, National Exhibition Centre MD Anton Post said yesterday.

He said the new vehicle models would be one of the highlights of the show, along with such attractions as the appearance of international groups Duran Duran and Bad Boys Blue.

A park with trees, shrubs, and flowers will be another popular feature, said Post.

More than 850 000 visitors were expected at this year's show, to be held between 2-18 April, he said.

Post denied reports on Tuesday that the show would be held twice during the year; once over the traditional Easter holiday period, and again during October.

Post said the exhibition centre was indeed planning a trade fair later in the year, but it would have nothing to do with the Rand Easter Show.

Wine festival at Kyalami this year

Business Day Reporter

THE Business Day Wine Festival will be held again this year, and the venue will be the most spacious so far — the Kyalami Exhibition Centre, within the motor racing circuit.

The festival — the premier event of its kind in SA — will be held from Thursday, April 22, to Friday, April 30, excluding Saturday and Sunday.

"Experience has shown that wine festivals are not well patronised on a Saturday night, so we have decided to have two Fridays instead," said a spokesman for the organisers.

Sixty SA estates will offer their wines for tasting. There will also be wines from Australia and Portugal.

As in the past, the event is designed as an ideal evening out, with dining facilities and other attractions, including a Carnaby Street Market.

The R33 entrance fee includes a commemorative glass, wine guide and unlimited tastings. Groups of 10 or more can arrange discounts.

For more information, phone Faith Vermeulen, Marcia Minnaar or Barbara Dunn at (011) 497-2130/1/2/3.

1993 Wine Festival

Sabta in warning to erstwhile adviser

B/DAY 4/3/93 (332)

THEO RAWANA

THE SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) yesterday rejected offers of co-operation from its former national adviser James Chapman, and warned him not to try to compete with it.

A news conference in Johannesburg yesterday was told that the public should be wary of consultants, "revivalists who say they want to improve the image of the industry" and who claim to represent it.

A taxi industry working group was introduced, comprising members of Sabta, the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) and the National Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto).

As Sabta national adviser in the '80s, Chapman played a significant role in turning Sabta from a small organisation into a national giant viewed as an "economic miracle".

After he resigned last March, there were reports of a conflict developing with Sabta. Some Sabta members began using a programme Chapman had designed to help taxi operators improve their businesses.

Sabta marketing arm Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam) told the conference that Chapman had approached it with offers of working together.

Sabta public affairs director Mike Ntlatleng said the organisation had rejected Chapman's offer, and he warned that if Chapman tried to lure Sabta members away he would find he was no match for the organisation.

Chapman said yesterday he did not intend taking members away from Sabta. But he pointed out that because of the success of programmes he engaged in "the people are deciding for themselves".

"I have had as many as 15 associations from all over the country coming to ask for similar services to those I provided for the Pretoria United Taxi Association. I had offered the concept to Sabta but they turned it down," Chapman said.

He had never sought to compete with his former organisation.

He added that if he was seen as competition, then it was good for the industry.

At the news conference hosted by Sabta and the Saldta/Nafto camp, journalists were told that a working group of the three associations had resolved that it should be recognised as the sole mouthpiece of the taxi industry.

"... In spite of repeated claims by certain consultants that they have a blessing from Sabta, the working group states categorically that nobody speaks on behalf of the taxi industry except representatives of the working group," a statement read at the conference said.

Rains rescue crops and save R2,5bn in forex

B/Day 4/3/93

GERALD REILLY

PRETORIA — The rains in January and February rescued the country from another disastrous agricultural year and saved it at least R2,5bn in foreign exchange, say agricultural economists.

Much of the more than R3,5bn invested in summer crops by farmers had also been saved. Hundreds of farmers had pulled back from the brink of imminent bankruptcy, they said.

Last year, because of the drought, SA imported 4,4-million tons of maize at a cost of R2,5bn.

Economists said the prospect of a "reasonable to good" agricultural year was the only bright spot in an otherwise grim economic outlook for 1993/94.

Although to keep the maize pipeline to the trade supplied, a relatively small quantity of maize might have to be imported as a bridge until the 1992/93 crop was harvested, the foreign exchange involved would be minimal.

According to a Wheat Board spokesman, the rains have improved planting prospects for the 1993/94 winter wheat crop in the Free State and Transvaal.

Last year's drought necessitated the importation of 1-million tons of wheat at a cost of about R500m.

Pretoria University meteorologist Prof Johan van Heerden said although El Nino weather symptoms still lingered in the central Pacific, the system's influence on SA's weather had waned. He agreed that the good rains of the past two months would mean several billions of rand to the national economy.

Absa economist Adam Jacobs said the likely good agricultural season could lift the economy from what was a certain negative growth rate to a marginal plus-rate of up to 0,5%.

Economists warned that one good season was not a panacea for farmers' financial troubles.

However, it would set many of them up for another season, which would have been impossible for hundreds of them otherwise.

Star 4/3/93 (332)

Court told of cash for permits

Court Reporter

A transport consultant yesterday told the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court that he paid thousands of rands in cash to a senior Department of Transport official for "granting" taxi permits.

Sunny Doorsamy told the court that he gave Gustav Vorster, then secretary of the Local Road Transport Board, R3 300 for the "authorisation" of 11 taxi permits.

The Local Road Transport Board, the body that officially approves or rejects local taxi permit applications, had granted permits for only two of these taxis.

Cornelia Wilsenach, a senior administration official of the Department of Transport, told the court on Monday that before November 1991 the total cost of obtaining a permit was R110.

Doorsamy said he also paid Vorster R600 for "granting" another two taxi permits. Neither of these permits was authorised during an earlier board hearing.

Doorsamy said he felt bad about paying Vorster for granting the permits, but he wanted to keep his clients happy and stay in business.

He did not use the option of appealing to the National Transport Commission in Pretoria because this would have taken too long, Doorsamy said.

Vorster has pleaded not guilty to 105 charges, including fraud, corruption and contraventions of the Road Traffic Ordinance.

He allegedly committed the crimes between September 1990 and August 1991.

The trial continues.

Taxi drivers threaten pullout

B/DAY 5/3/93 GAVIN DU VENAGE (332)

THE SA Taxi Driver's Union (Satdu) may pull out of the newly established Johannesburg taxi forum set up to deal with problems in the industry highlighted by last month's street blockade and boycott in Johannesburg.

Satdu chairman Norman Prince said last night that unless Johannesburg's chief traffic officer Mike Davis and attorney-general Klaus von Lieres und Wilkau agreed to proposals put forward by the union "we will have to reconsider our position in the forum".

He declined to specify what the proposals were but said drivers felt they were being sidelined by both the traffic authorities and taxi owners. "We are tired of bilateral talks taking place between Sabta and the traffic department. We should be included in all the talks."

Prince said although most of the agreements made with the traffic department last month were holding up, there were still incidents of harassment.

Sabta could not be reached for comment.

MOVING IN AND MOVING OUT

FM 5/3/93 (332)

Even in the prosaic world of property letting, it seems, there are moments of light relief. Certainly, it's hard not to see the irony in the recent deal struck by the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) to lease the former Harrison Street premises of the Johannesburg Traffic Department.

Only a few weeks ago, the two groups were the main adversaries in a protracted taxi blockade of the streets of the Johannesburg CBD which almost brought the city to a halt. With the incident now well behind them, Sabta is planning to take occupation of its new premises on April 1.

Interestingly, the deal comes not too long after the conversion of Johannesburg's former Downtown (Holiday) Inn into — of all things — a police barracks.

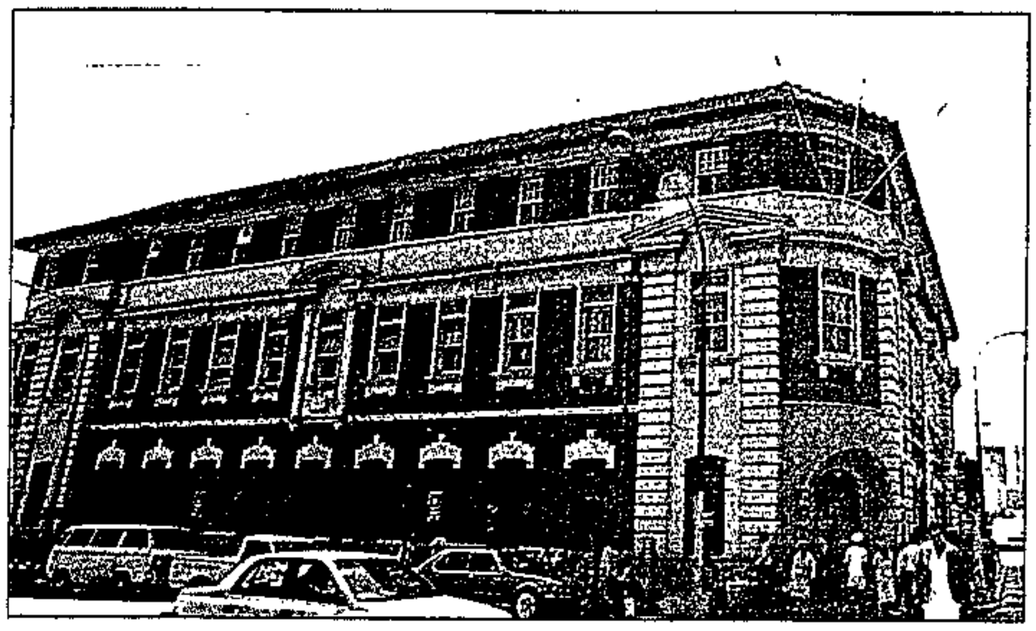
Taking space in the building along with Sabta will be its umbrella body, the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services (Fabcos) and its "sister" organisations, the Afro Hair & Beauty Association (Abhasa), Southern Africa Taverners Association (Sata), the Black Travel Agents Association of SA (Batasa) and the National Associations of SA (Nasasa).

Fabcos, which has been housed in Fabcos House in Pretoria West since 1986, says the move will bring it "closer to our core membership as well as to our fellow organisations like Affsure, Afgen and FutureBank."

Together they will take up the 2 500 m² of the lettable space vacated by the Traffic Department, which moved six months ago into offices in Loveday Street, between Kay and Thorpe streets, Village Main. In the meantime, the Harrison Street offices have been undergoing minor alterations.

Fabcos property manager Kevin Williams says the move to the Municipal Pension Fund-owned building was facilitated by developer Gordon Schachat. Schachat is in the process of securing the finance for his proposed R173m MetroMall development on an adjoining site (See *Property* May 29, 1992). Though not yet finalised, the scheme is to be a co-operative venture involving Shachat, Fabcos/Sabta, Ampros and the Johannesburg City Council.

Fabcos' lease over the Harrison Street property will run for three years, after which it will move to MetroMall. The multinodal transport, retail and entertainment centre should occupy 3,6 ha bounded by Bree, West, Pim and Simmonds streets. It will include the Newtown and Kazerne bus and taxi termini.



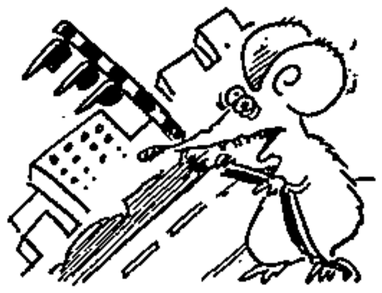
Of those, 14 had serious injuries. — Sapa-Reuter

Star 6/3/93

Taxi hijackings: two die

TWO people were killed in separate taxi hijackings at the corner of Eiselen and Seisor streets, Davyton, yesterday. Police said taxi-owner Clemens Themba Marwa fired back at his attackers but was fatally wounded. In the second hijacking, a passenger was fatally shot. — Sapa (332)

Kamikaze Irish mice



DUBLIN — An army of kamikaze Irish mice brought the town of Tralee to a standstill and burnt themselves out. The mice chewed their way through the cables operating the traffic lights. A council worker reported finding dead mice everywhere in the control box. — Sapa-Reuter

Transvaal man drowns

DURBAN — A Heidelberg holidaymaker, Graham Barry Scott, has drowned at Ballito, on the Natal north coast. Livesavers recovered his body. — Sapa

Star 6/3/93

Raid on Ratanda township

SIXTEEN people were arrested in connection with charges of murder, attempted murder and attacks on police yesterday, after an operation through the East Rand's Ratanda township. — Sapa

Shot husband, acquitted

A WOMAN who shot her husband several times was acquitted yesterday. Pretoria Supreme Court judge Mr Justice L F Weyers said he thought Roda-Marie Gernandt (45) had lied, but there was a reasonable possibility her story could be true. Gernandt said she had fired at husband Leonard in self-defence. He had been drinking all day. — Sapa

Death of top businessman

ONE of South Africa's top scientists and businessmen, Dr Henry Dyer (65), has died in Johannesburg. — Sapa

Teachers not to be charged

Star 6/3/93

CAPE TOWN — Charges are to be withdrawn against 24 teachers arrested after a sit-in at the DET offices in Johannesburg. Education and Training Minister Sam de Beer announced this yesterday, after a meeting with the South African Democratic Teachers Union. — Sapa

Advertorial

Market Toyota helps keep the taxi industry going right

South 6/3-10/3/93. 332

MARKET Toyota, part of the Malbak Group conglomerate, is offering taxi drivers free training in communication and basic driving skills to reduce accidents and deaths on the roads.

Company spokesperson, Mr Theo McDuling, said the programme was introduced to train drivers from big companies which were Market Toyota customers.

This had helped companies' drivers drive more safely when delivering goods and enabled employers to save money and avoid unnecessary expenditure.

McDuling said the company was approached by the Convention for Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) six weeks ago for assistance in training.

"We had to re-plan the course because the industry was different from the delivery trucks we had been catering for."

About 60 taxi drivers had been awarded certificates for the four-hour course.

McDuling said one and a half hours of the course was spent on the attitude taxi drivers should adopt to-wards commuters. The rest was spent on how to use the vehicle safely.

McDuling said Market Toyota mainly trained drivers how to apply brakes and clutch — the basic items in driving.

"This would help reduce the death rate and accidents on the roads," he said.

Codeta spokesperson, Mr Kidwell Magwayi, said the taxi industry was perceived as a contributing factor in the increasing death toll in the country.

He said Codeta was trying to restore confidence in the industry by training its drivers.

Call for taxi fares to be standard

332

ARG 6/7/93

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

TOURIST gripes have led to agreement that standard tariffs should be charged by metered sedan taxis.

The metered sedan taxi liasion committee, representing taxi companies, the city council and traffic department, met yesterday to tackle issues facing the industry.

Chairman Mr Kenny Penkin said there had been several complaints, mainly from tourists, about inconsistent fares.

He said the meeting was attended by Captour chief executive Mr Gordon Oliver, who put the case for preventing rip-offs.

"Tourists have told Captour about being charged different fares for exactly the same route on the same day by the same company," Mr Penkin said.

Taxi companies agreed in principle to charge a standard tariff, which would be a maximum. "There will be room for taxis to charge lower fares if they want," Mr Penkin said.

Ideas put forward at the meeting inluded drivers having to put up in their cars tables of fares, as was done in some countries overseas.

Mr Penkin said the matter was to be referred to a subcommittee to decide what the standard maximum tariff should be.

How the tariff would be enforced was an unanswered question.

Other issues raised at the meeting were problems about access to ranks and operating permits. These could be resolved only when the Goldstone Commission had finished its investigations, he said.

In the meantime the utilities and works committee and the executive committee would be asked to approach the government for help in controlling operating permits.

"We must get order into this industry," Mr Penkin said.

Wits TV offers commercial service

KELVIN BROWN

WITS University's Central Television Service (CTVS) is to offer its services to the business community for the production of training videos and corporate and promotional material.

As part of the university's rationalisation process it was decided to market the services of CTVS because it had the potential to capture a substantial share of the television and video production market, CTVS director Kate Turkington said.

Although CTVS had undertaken projects for businesses before, this was the first time it was marketing its services. Pat Summers, previously of De Villiers Hetherington production house, has been recruited to help market CTVS.

Turkington said CTVS had a very marketable product. "Not only do we have a lot of experience from producing programmes on everthing under the sun, but as part of Wits we can call on any of the academic departments for their expertise."

CTVS was a full service department of the university, staffed by 15 full-time staffers experienced in film and video production. It had a complete TV and broadcast facility enabling it to write, film, produce, edit and mix programmes.

In the past the television service specialised in producing educational material to support the academic programmes of the university's various departments. One of its better known achievements was the video of the Siamese twins' operation at Baragwanath Hospital.

It has produced several series on community development for the SABC.

Deregulation 'has not helped small business'

B/DAY 8/3/93.

JOHN DLUDLU

BLACK businessmen have criticised government's deregulation policies for failing to attend to the needs of small business.

Sabta marketing manager Mike Ntlatleng said his association supported deregulation and a free market economy, but did not think government's deregulation measures were addressing the needs of small business.

"When we called for deregulation in the past we wanted not only the removal of discriminatory laws, we also called for the levelling of the playing field.

"We wanted small business — such as the taxi industry — to be on par with organised business before there could be competition. For that reason we asked for subsidies as the government had done with the bus industry," he said.

Instead, government had implemented de facto deregulation measures by removing only the discriminatory laws but failed to pass laws to makesmall business competitive.

"Government should also have legislated for the formation of professional bodies to ensure high standards of customer service were maintained as in other sectors."

After deregulation the small business was pitted against well-established companies.

"That is why we are calling for subsidies and regulatory bodies," Ntlatleng said.

National Association of Co-operative Societies of SA (Nacssa) CE Sam Muofhe said any future deregulation measures aimed at enabling blacks to participate in the economy should be accompanied by training programmes.

"These training programmes will convert them from being mere entrepreneurs to business persons ready to exploit their market.

"Deregulation is a sophisticated mechanism that benefits business people who have a vision of the future. Unfortunately, hawkers and taxi operators had not benefited from deregulation," he said.

A Small Business Development Corporation spokesman said the SBDC fully supported deregulation as it felt that overregulation tended to stiffle businesses.

"However, we do need minimum regulation to ensure efficiency of free markets."

Swing to buses noted after taxi strike

B/DAY 8/3/93.

WILSON ZWANE

THE minibus taxi drivers' protest against the Johannesburg Traffic Department, which disrupted traffic in the city and left thousands of township residents stranded, has given Putco a shot in the arm.

The bus company said passenger volumes had increased noticeably after the protest, sparked by dissatisfication of taxi drivers with treatment from Johannesburg traffic officials.

Putco MD Jack Visser said his company's Boksburg depot had requested four additional buses as its present fleet could hardly cope with the increase in passenger volumes.

Increase in passenger volumes was also noticeable in Soweto, the Vaal and Pretoria, he said.

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng said he could not confirm or deny that patronage of minibus taxis was decreasing as he had not consulted members about effects the protest had on their operations.

If there was a shrinkage in passenger volumes, the industry had to come up with "innovative" ways to win back the passengers, he said.

Residents of Vosloorus on the East Rand said they had returned to buses because they were not certain whether the minibus taxis would not "let us down again".

No comment could be obtained from the SA Rail Commuter Corporation on whether its passenger volumes had been boosted by the taxi protest.

Wits TV offers commercial service

KELVIN BROWN

WITS University's Central Television Service (CTVS) is to offer its services to the business community for the production of training videos and corporate and promotional material.

As part of the university's rationalisation process it was decided to market the services of CTVS because it had the potential to capture a substantial share of the television and video production market, CTVS director Kate Turkington said.

Although CTVS had undertaken projects for businesses before, this was the first time it was marketing its services. Pat Summers, previously of De Villiers Hetherington production house, has been recruited to help market CTVS.

Turkington said CTVS had a very marketable product. "Not only do we have a lot of experience from producing programmes on everthing under the sun, but as part of Wits we can call on any of the academic departments for their expertise."

CTVS was a full service department of the university, staffed by 15 full-time staffers experienced in film and video production. It had a complete TV and broadcast facility enabling it to write, film, produce, edit and mix programmes.

In the past the television service specialised in producing educational material to support the academic programmes of the university's various departments. One of its better known achievements was the video of the Siamese twins' operation at Baragwanath Hospital.

It has produced several series on community development for the SABC.

Deregulation 'has not helped small business'

B/DAY 8/3/93. (232)

JOHN DLUDLU

BLACK businessmen have criticised government's deregulation policies for failing to attend to the needs of small business.

Sabta marketing manager Mike Ntlatleng said his association supported deregulation and a free market economy, but did not think government's deregulation measures were addressing the needs of small business.

"When we called for deregulation in the past we wanted not only the removal of discriminatory laws, we also called for the levelling of the playing field.

"We wanted small business — such as the taxi industry — to be on par with organised business before there could be competition. For that reason we asked for subsidies as the government had done with the bus industry," he said.

Instead, government had implemented de facto deregulation measures by removing only the discriminatory laws but failed to pass laws to makesmall business competitive.

"Government should also have legislated for the formation of professional bodies to ensure high standards of customer service were maintained as in other sectors."

After deregulation the small business was pitted against well-established companies.

"That is why we are calling for subsidies and regulatory bodies," Ntlatleng said.

National Association of Co-operative Societies of SA (Nacssa) CE Sam Muofhe said any future deregulation measures aimed at enabling blacks to participate in the economy should be accompanied by training programmes.

"These training programmes will convert them from being mere entrepreneurs to business persons ready to exploit their market.

"Deregulation is a sophisticated mechanism that benefits business people who have a vision of the future. Unfortunately, hawkers and taxi operators had not benefited from deregulation," he said.

A Small Business Development Corporation spokesman said the SBDC fully supported deregulation as it felt that overregulation tended to stifle businesses.

"However, we do need minimum regulation to ensure efficiency of free markets."

Swing to buses noted after taxi strike

B/DAY 8/3/93.

WILSON ZWANE

THE minibus taxi drivers' protest against the Johannesburg Traffic Department, which disrupted traffic in the city and left thousands of township residents stranded, has given Putco a shot in the arm.

The bus company said passenger volumes had increased noticeably after the protest, sparked by dissatisfication of taxi drivers with treatment from Johannesburg traffic officials.

Putco MD Jack Visser said his company's Boksburg depot had requested four additional buses as its present fleet could hardly cope with the increase in passenger volumes.

Increase in passenger volumes was also noticeable in Soweto, the Vaal and Pretoria, he said.

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng said he could not confirm or deny that patronage of minibus taxis was decreasing as he had not consulted members about effects the protest had on their operations.

If there was a shrinkage in passenger volumes, the industry had to come up with "innovative" ways to win back the passengers, he said.

Residents of Vosloorus on the East Rand said they had returned to buses because they were not certain whether the minibus taxis would not "let us down again".

No comment could be obtained from the SA Rail Commuter Corporation on whether its passenger volumes had been boosted by the taxi protest.

Dr Piet Welgemoed . . . ready to talk in Zambia.

Urgent bid to release trucks

Star 11/3/93

Political Staff 332

CAPE TOWN — Government officials flew to Lusaka yesterday for urgent discussions over the release of a large number of South African freight trucks on their way to central Africa — many of them loaded with perishables — which have been delayed at the Zambian border for a week.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Renier Schoeman and senior Foreign Affairs and Department of Transport officials are in the Zambian capital trying to resolve the deadlock.

The trucks were headed for Zaire, Burundi and Malawi.

Department of Transport officials were baffled by the Zambian action as no official reason has yet been given.

Invited

They said Transport Minister Dr Piet Welgemoed had invited his Zambian counterpart, Andrew Kashita, to visit South Africa as soon as possible and Welgemoed had offered to go to Zambia if necessary.

South African carriers are required to pay about R380 to enter Zambia and a further R380 if they are passing through to Zaire and Malawi.

Zambian carriers do not pay to go in and out of South Africa.

South African carriers pay R150 to cross the Zambezi River on the ferry betweeh Botswana and Zambia at Kazangulu, while Zambian carriers pay R12,50.

Zambian visas cost R30 but South African visas are free.

South African carriers are also pressured to form partnerships.

MARITIME POLICY FM 12/3/93 (332)

Diving into murky waters

A plethora of confusing rules and regulations controls SA's 10 000 km coastline, and the industries that make their living off the sea have long wanted the situation changed. For the past year, a five-member committee has been navigating this legal morass to develop a comprehensive maritime policy.

The committee, appointed by government, is not due to make recommendations to Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed until June. But the proposals will be discussed at the third National Maritime Conference, to be held in Durban on March 24 and 25.

It was at the first conference, in Cape Town in 1989, that an overall policy was first mooted.

The policy will cover issues as diverse as the extent of territorial waters, pollution, fishing, promoting exports, shipbuilding, harbour operations, salvage and search and rescue missions, maritime fraud and piracy and the protection of historical shipwrecks.

It would reframe legislation in a more logical form rather than rewrite laws.

Committee chairman, former Stellenbosch University academic Bernal Floor, says current legislation has developed on an ad hoc basis over the years. "Maritime administration has grown like Topsy without a coherent policy." The private sector now wants coherence.

There is particular concern over the status of the ports and Transnet's ambiguous role as both administrator of the ports and a profit-motivated carrier — using the ports and competing with other transporters. "The feeling is that port administrators cannot pursue the same aim as a profit-orientated company and serve the interests of the country at the same time," Floor says.

A maritime policy, he adds, would clearly define the line between the two roles.

Another important aspect of the policy is that it would clearly state SA's rights and obligations under international maritime law, ahead of the long-awaited ratification — possibly by the end of next year — of the Law of the Sea Convention. The convention will cover such contentious issues as territorial limits and fishing rights.

The policy is expected to deal with several other issues:

- ☐ Establishing a coastguard to take over the now-diffused responsibilities for coastal policing, safety and rescue operations;
- ☐ Providing tax concessions and other assistance to shippers in acquiring vessels, including replacements for the antiquated fishing fleet;
- ☐ Whether SA should actively promote its own carriers — coupled with the training of sailors;
- ☐ The financing, use and administration of minor harbours; and
- ☐ The co-ordination of navigation and communications facilities (there is no single navigation authority).

Floor won't give a hint of the committee's recommendations, but he is adamant that the aim is not to carve out a bigger role for government in maritime affairs.

Streamlining, reorganising and rationalising a hodgepodge of laws is fine, but if the result is more interference in one of the country's biggest industries, the exercise will be self-defeating. ■

NEWS Year-long taxi probe by special police unit ends ● Pupils attack strike teachers

Top official held over false taxi permits

Sowetan 12/3/93

A HIGH-RANKING Government official has been arrested on suspicion of allowing false minibus taxi permits to be issued.

Mr Izak Landman, chairman of the Local Road Transportation Board in Johannesburg and acting chairman of Pretoria's Transportation Board, appeared in a Johannesburg magistrate's court yesterday afternoon.

Perjury charges

He will face charges of defeating the ends of justice and perjury, according to Witwatersrand police spokesman W/O Andy Pieke.

The Special Unit for Commercial Related

■ Transportation Board chairman in court:

Cases from the Attorney General's office had been investigating a case against Landman for the past year, W/O Pieke said.

Police viewed the allegations in a serious light, especially after last month's black taxi debacle in Johannesburg where it was claimed that false licences had been issued, he added.

A source at Landman's Pretoria office said all he knew was that the chairman had taken sick leave on Wednesday but would return to work today. - *Sapa.*

The cast of Mbongeni Ngema's new musical, *Magic at 4am*, strutting their steps at a rehearsal at the Civic Theatre in Johannesburg. The play opens there on April 21. PIC: PAT SEBOKO

Taxi trial witness gets bail

Star 12/8/93 (332)

The chairman of the Local Road Transportation Board appeared in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with charges of perjury and defeating the ends of justice, after allegedly giving contradictory evidence in two taxi permit fraud trials.

Izak Landman (62) was released on bail of R100 and ordered to appear again on April 22. No charges were put to him.

The case against Landman follows his testimony in separate trials at which Department of Transport officials were accused of fraudulently altering taxi permit decisions made by the Local Road Transportation Board.

Two officials were convicted in the Germiston trial, in which Landman testified for the State.

Last week Landman testified in defence of Local Road Transportation Board secretary Gustav Vorster, who has been accused of 105 counts of fraud. — Court Reporter.

Wednesday March 10 quotations for unit trusts:

FUND NAME	BUY	SELL	YIELD	INCOME	HIGH	LOW
SELLING PRICE			DISTRIB			
General Equity Funds:						
ABSA:						
GE:	140,97	131,89	5,60	7,38	135,81	115,91
Industrial	129,88	121,51	4,35	4,03	125,68	108,50
BOE:						
Growth	154,36	144,22	3,52	5,07	157,98	128,93
Community Growth Fund	110,73	104,59	na	na	115,15	109,68
COMMERCIAL UNION:						
Growth	116,82	109,06	4,36	4,75	120,30	101,04
FEDLIFE:						
Fedgro GE	124,37	116,13	4,94	5,74	124,33	106,40
GUARDBANK:						
Growth	2472,01	2301,90	4,87	112,10	2361,95	2027,42
Resources	134,66	125,44	6,25	7,84	142,22	111,38
Industrial	126,48	118,68	5,76	5,11	120,78	98,42
Income	120,19	117,73	14,35	16,89	123,22	110,63
IGI Life:						
GE	126,54	118,43	3,62	4,29	128,22	109,87
METBOARD:						
Metfund GE	194,16	181,14	4,22	na	na	na
Income	110,97	109,81	12,66	na	na	na
METROPOLITAN:						
Metlife GE	115,10	107,52	6,52	6,97	123,53	104,53
MOMENTUM: GE	245,33	229,79	4,33	na	251,12	210,52
NBS:						
Hallmark	933,84	872,17	5,24	45,68	903,05	778,17
NORWICH:						
GE	346,53	323,60	4,14	13,40	336,56	294,45
OLD MUTUAL:						
Investors	2556,45	2383,70	3,75	89,46	2772,01	2097,71
Mining	220,87	205,61	4,59	9,43	242,47	172,17
Industrial	363,53	338,68	4,04	13,68	359,79	278,76
Gold	93,81	87,40	5,81	5,08	110,92	69,54
Top Companies	246,14	229,47	4,53	10,39	248,32	194,34
Income	112,19	110,97	12,33	13,68	112,97	104,26
SAGE:						
GE	2344,95	2188,75	4,13	90,50	2367,07	1959,99
Resources	99,15	92,73	6,15	5,70	112,94	81,83
SANLAM:						
GE	1606,87	1505,75	3,44	51,80	1633,10	1336,63
Index	1205,18	1129,79	4,01	45,30	1276,68	1022,44
Dividend	452,94	424,75	4,73	20,10	440,55	371,21
Industrial	1028,32	963,30	3,33	32,10	999,88	856,39
Mining	239,84	224,79	5,38	12,10	297,35	210,56
SOUTHERN:						
GE	200,58	187,71	4,04	7,59	208,21	172,71
Mining	118,06	110,75	4,60	5,09	147,84	101,71
Pure	121,83	114,06	na	1,71	126,40	100,00
Income	531,62	520,99	na	8,24	533,74	510,39
STANDARD BANK:						
GE	1164,64	1094,52	7,10	77,69	1119,77	995,23
Gold	147,65	138,21	7,11	9,82	166,97	115,45
Industrial	109,07	102,86	5,13	5,28	106,58	95,97
International	98,98	92,56	3,42	3,17	100,22	81,51
Income	94,81	93,82	13,25	12,43	94,53	90,25
SYFRETS:						
Growth	294,57	276,06	4,45	12,28	283,67	249,44
Trustee	117,28	109,94	4,52	4,97	124,67	103,79
Income	110,20	109,10	14,05	15,33	115,24	103,56
Gilt	1107,27	1096,20	na	na	1175,05	1009,42
UAL:						
GE	2044,50	1920,02	5,26	100,95	2145,15	1804,87
Mining	321,05	300,93	4,76	14,32	403,39	294,12
Selected	1932,59	1809,56	3,76	68,11	2029,22	1539,85
Gilt	1235,60	1223,25	12,67	155,00	1295,86	1080,32
Managed	1063,61	1004,88	na	na	na	na

Income/Gilt Funds:

Metboard Income	111,55	110,37	12,59	
Guardbank Income	119,73	117,28	14,40	
Old Mutual Income	111,28	110,06	12,43	
Southern Income Fund	522,28	511,83	n/a	
Standard Income	93,71	92,73	13,40	
Syfrets Income	109,74	108,64	14,11	
Syfrets Gilt	1107,07	1096,00	n/a	
UAL Gilt	1229,99	1217,69	12,73	

Metboard Income	111,55	110,37	12,59	
Guardbank Income	119,73	117,28	14,40	
Old Mutual Income	111,28	110,06	12,43	
Southern Income Fund	522,28	511,83	n/a	
Standard Income	93,71	92,73	13,40	
Syfrets Income	109,74	108,64	14,11	
Syfrets Gilt	1107,07	1096,00	n/a	
UAL Gilt	1229,99	1217,69	12,73	

Invest in Shares Through Unit Trusts

SOWTH 13/3-17/3/93. (232)

Most people spend a good deal of time thinking about their future.

This could mean planning for retirement, saving to buy a house or just putting aside money for a holiday.When choosing a suitable savings means one is faced with an array of different options.

These options range from bank savings accounts to retirement policies to the higher risk investments in shares. All these different investment means address different needs.

Investing in shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) has in the past, proved to be a most effective way of beating inflation. However, there is a high risk attached to investing in shares.

To combat this risk one needs to invest in a wide range of shares — if a company, listed on the JSE, performs badly the value of its shares will drop. But by investing in a range of different shares the risk is lowered — if one lot of shares performs badly the remaining shares can maintain the value of the investment.

Thus the value of the investment is able to increase.

But now a further problem arises — shares are very expensive and a single share in, for example, Tiger Oats could cost close on R50. To make the investment worthwhile the shares need to be bought in parcels of say, a 100.

So how could you afford to invest in a whole range of shares? This is where Old Mutual Unit Trusts can help.

Old Mutual Unit Trusts combines investors money and uses this lump sum to buy shares on the JSE. By combining everyone's money Old Mutual Unit Trusts is able to buy a wide range of top quality shares for their investors.

Each investor then becomes part owner of the shares in the portfolio. The portfolio is divided up into units and the amount of units each person owns depends on how much money they decide to invest.

Old Mutual Unit Trusts employs a team of experts, whose job it is to research all the shares that are for sale on the JSE. They choose the very best shares so that the investors' money has the potential for high, long term capital growth.

To invest in unit trusts as little as R50 a month, or R500 for a lump sum investment, is needed. Once investing in unit trusts, units can be sold whenever necessary. But because it is an investment in shares, it is advisable to leave investment for a period of at least five years.

This gives the investment a better chance to grow, thereby beating inflation.

To find out more about Unit Trusts call Old Mutual Unit Trusts' toll free number, 0800 — 234 234

OLD MUTUAL UNIT TRUSTS

Helping you make the most of the stock exchange

Licence forgery scam exposed

C/Press 14/3/93

(332)

By ELIAS MALULEKE and CP Correspondent

INVESTIGATIONS by City Press have uncovered a massive vehicle registration racket in the PWV area.

The racket involves issuing of vehicles with bogus clearance certificates and licences. Some of the rot uncovered by City Press includes:

- One Pretoria garage charges R450 for licence discs without seeing the car.
- The Bop government printers – whose paper is used for forging documents – are alleged to be riddled with members of the racket.
- Innocent buyers of vehicles sold with forged papers and licences find themselves in hot water when they try to go through the motions of renewing their licence.
- City Press was offered a forged licence for R850.

Many unsuspecting people eager to register their vehicles without going through the correct channels are flocking to the operators for help not knowing that the licences are not genuine. They pay up to R1 000 for the bogus papers.

The victims are issued with falsified clearance certificates, roadworthy certificates, certificate of fitness (CF) for taxis and licence disks.

The racket is being operated by blacks backed by Indians and touts. They are operating in city centres and townships in Pretoria and Bop.

Most of the people who have been duped by the operators have no Bop ID books and do not qualify

REBEL RIDERS ... How many taxis in the PWV area have false registration papers and licences? Our investigation suggests plenty.

Taximen spill amazing tale of graft and deceit

to have their vehicles registered in Bop. However, to add credibility to the forged papers, the conmen enters a false Bophuthatswana address.

The scam also involves stolen cars which the syndicate sells to unsuspecting victims and the motorists only discover that their vehicles have not been properly registered when they try to renew their licences.

The investigation by City Press followed complaints by several taxi operators in Pretoria who said unregistered minibus taxis were taking over their trade.

One of the victims of the scam showed City Press his fake documents and said the scam was almost "foolproof".

He said the "documents" were on genuine Bop forms and stationery. They included stamps and were hard to detect as forgeries.

The forms were filled-in in cursive handwriting and bore numbers identical to those of authentic documents. They bear forged Bop administration stamps and the vehicle registration authority stamps.

The forms also carry the trademark of Craft Press, the Bop government printer. Craft Press has plants in Hammanskraal and Mmabatho.

There are allegations that Craft Press employees are stealing the forms and assist the racket.

A production manager for Craft Press in Hammanskraal referred inquiries to a Glen Afrika at Craft Press in Mmabatho, who could not be reached for comment.

The documents are sold for R350 to R450 apiece. One of the operators in Bloed Street, Pretoria, who pretended the documents were genuine, promised to do "an A to Z" job on the registration of a vehicle for R850.

Most of the vehicles on the road with Bop registration numbers are allegedly not properly registered with the authorities, particularly those with GaRankuwa (YBB) and Mabopane (YBX) plates.

Bop Traffic Department head Maj AP Mangope confirmed the existence of the racket to City Press. He said the scam had been receiving intensive police investigation.

He said: "We have clamped down on thousands of such cases and criminal cases have been opened and a large number of people charged.

"However, we are also cracking down on cases involving licences issued by people operating from KwaNdebele and Pretoria using stationery of the SA Government and KwaNdebele.

City Press investigations found that it is still possible to obtain any of the documents for a price.

The operators are using street corners, backyard rooms and garages to ply their trade.

An office at a garage dealing in "*vootstoets*" vehicles in the Pretoria CBD has been dealing in bogus documents for more than a year.

Several people who applied for "licences" for their vehicles at the garage during the City Press investigation were white.

The leader of the group running the scam in Bloed Street placed the price of a licence disk at R450.

Applicants were requested to fill motor vehicle registration forms and told to come a day or two later for their licence disks after paying the fees.

The vehicles of applicants are not seen by the garage.

Violence under the spotlight

Sowetan 15/3/93 (332)

■ ANC, PAC to attend conference:

VIOLENCE will be under the spotlight at a conference to be held at Venda Sun starting this Friday.

Political leaders and trade unionists will speak at this two-day annual regional conference of the National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto).

The theme of the conference is "The road ahead — the role of transport in the development of the northern region". The speakers include the ANC's Mr Thabo Mbeki and Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, and the PAC's Mr Mark Shinners.

'Muti' mischief on taxi man

THE wife of a sangoma, or traditional healer, was caught red-handed sprinkling "muti" in the house of a former Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) member in Khayelitsha on Sunday morning.

Reports said the woman claimed she had been sent to the house by three executive members of the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association.

She alleged the three were clients of her husband's. (332)

The potion was apparently meant to kill people in the house.

Members of the former Webta have called for an urgent meeting of Codeta (Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations) to investigate the matter.

The woman was taken to the police. — Sapa

CT 15/3/93

Taxi groups move to head off appointment of adviser

B/DAY 15/3/93

THEO RAWANA

TAXI organisations had moved to bar former Sabta national adviser James Chapman from being appointed as a consultant by the Department of Transport, Sabta public affairs director Mike Ntlatleng confirmed.

Ntlatleng said at the weekend a working group of Sabta, Saldta and Nafto members, approved by government as the sole representative of the taxi industry, had obtained an undertaking that no taxi consultants would be awarded department contracts without its blessing.

Sabta is believed to have made its move ahead of Chapman trying to secure a Transport Department contract to advise it on a national taxi industry development policy.

Chapman, whose Taximax advisory scheme has drawn many Sabta affiliates, said he was conducting his business at a local level and on a private basis. It was not up to government or Sabta to decide which consultant should assist taximen.

"The reality is that, if it's the taxi or any other industry, the days of doing things on people's behalf without their input or consideration belong to the old era," Chapman said.

Ntlatleng said the meeting with the Transport Department in Pretoria had established that the working group — known as the SSN for Sabta/Saldta/Nafto — would be the only body to engage in talks on the taxi industry with government.

The agreement that the department would liaise with the group on the appointment of consultants would enable it to block Chapman being appointed.

332

On the question of subsidisation, Ntlatleng said parties at the meeting had agreed to a pilot scheme for an "integrated model approach" or "corridor system". Subsidies would be extended to transport modes other than buses and a "through ticket" bought by a commuter could be used on a train, bus or taxi.

The meeting had also resolved that local road transport boards responsible for issuing taxi permits would be phased out, and the new road transport quality system would be introduced.

"The (board) system was found to be fraught with corruption and maladministration," Ntlatleng said.

The meeting decided that a joint working committee should draw up policy guidlines on cross-border taxi operations with neighbouring states such as Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

Taxi war violence in several towns

PIETERSBURG. — A taxi marshal was in a serious condition last night after he was shot here yesterday morning, causing fears the town's taxi war was flaring up again.

In other taxi-related violence at the weekend:

- One man was shot dead and two others were seriously wounded in two blitz attacks on taxi drivers around Alexandra, near Johannesburg, on Saturday.
- A taxi driver was shot and killed in his vehicle in central Maritzburg early on Friday.
- In Umtata a national executive member of the Uncedo Taxi Association, Mr Joe Jeju, was shot and wounded by police outside the organisation's offices on Friday.
- In Newcastle, Natal, hundreds of taxis drove through Osizweni township accompanied by ululating women yesterday to celebrate a peace agreement reached by three rival taxi organisations. — Sapa

Bus subsidies 'approved by Cabinet'

LLOYD COUTTS 332

SEVERAL bus companies affected by passenger boycotts and violence had received financial assistance from government in terms of strict guidelines determined by the Cabinet, Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed said yesterday.

Welgemoed was responding to a newspaper report yesterday which said government had paid out R35,8m in compensation to Bophuthatswana Transport Holdings (BTH) — of which he is a former director — in the past three years.

He said the subsidy was aimed at keeping public bus transport operational during difficult trading conditions. B/DAY

He said the subsidies were determined by external auditors who made recommendations to the National Transport Commission. 17/3/93

Welgemoed said he was a director of BTH from June 1985 until September 1989.

The DP charged yesterday the R35,8m paid to BTH was further evidence of maladministration and corruption in the Transport Department, our political staff reports.

DP Transport spokesman Robin Carlisle called for an independent investigation into reports that public servants were serving on the board of Bophuthatswana Transport Investments which serves as the BTH parent company.

Sapa reports BTH yesterday declined to comment, saying the matter had been referred to its lawyers.

In a cautionary announcement, the a dividend.

Private hauliers 'now becoming more efficient'

TRACY SCHNEIDER (332)

PRIVATE sector hauliers were becoming more efficient in the face of a deepening recession in the transport industry, said Road Freight Association business development manager Hugh Sutherland.

Latest Central Statistical Service (CSS) figures for road and rail transport showed October 1992's tonnage for public goods transporters down 11% on October 1991. However, total earnings over this period increased 16,2% and total kilometres travelled increased 7,5%.

"Hauliers are becoming more efficient, carrying high-rated goods with less tonnage over longer distances", said Sutherland.

B/DAY 18/3/93

Tonnage levels had fallen consistently since 1989.

CSS figures showed this trend persisting, with tonnage falling 13,8% for the third quarter of 1992, compared with the corresponding quarter in 1991. Seasonally adjusted figures showed performance in the third quarter down 8,2% on the preceeding quarter.

Transet performed better than private hauliers, recording a 0,5% increase in tonnage for the third quarter of 1992 over the preceeding quarter.

Metropolitan Life tops industry charts

B/DAY 18/3/93

ANDREW KRUMM

METROPOLITAN Life's managed pension portfolio topped industry performance charts, posting a 20,1% return for the five years to end December 1992, an Absa Consultants & Actuaries (Absa C & A) survey showed.

UAL Merchant Bank came in a close second, giving pension fund investors a 20% return on equal monthly investments over the period, while Liberty Life was placed third with a 19,3% return.

Metropolitan portfolio manager Phillip Morrall said the portfolio's performance stemmed from getting the market risk element right in a generally dismal, low yield, share market. "Last year we took the stance that equities were not the place to be."

At end December 1992 the Metropolitan portfolio was 45% (1991: 50%) invested in equities, 18% (17%) of its assets held in property, 14% (20%) in cash with a 23% (13%) investment in fixed interest instruments.

Absa C & A operations manager Johann Grobler said it was "remarkable" how higher returns from fixed interest instruments had generally stabilised returns over the period, while the normally volatile equity market was at a low ebb.

This phenomenon could be seen in the small difference between actual yields and risk-adjusted yields for each portfolio, he said. (After adjusting for risk Metropolitan offered pension fund investors a 21,2% return, UAL gave 19,7%, while Sage Life — which moved into third spot — offered a 19,6% return.)

Meanwhile, the survey put the inflation rate over the five year period at 13,3%, which all portfolios, with the exception of Momentum Life, managed to beat. However, over the three years to December 1992, a larger number of managed portfolios — including the two biggest — had not outperformed the inflation rate.

"This is worrying, although it must be remembered that this resulted in part from the market being down on the day the index prices used in the survey were calculated," Grobler said. The equities market had picked up slightly since December.

The three top performers in the three-year period were Rand Merchant Bank with a 21,9% return, Metropolitan Life (16,5%) and Liberty Life (15,6%).

Noting it was preferable to look to retirement funds' longer term performances, Grobler said all funds had beaten the 14,3% inflation figure over the ten years to end December 1992.

RACY FM 19/3/93. (332)

A curious agenda

A small hurricane is blowing around Racy Group Holdings. Two months ago the controlling shareholders rammed through a resolution under S 228 of the Companies Act, which in effect stripped Racy of its assets and turned it into a cash shell.

Disaffected minorities led by Syd Gervis ("Gervis for Service" — the Edenvale Toyota dealer) gave notice they intended

FM 19/3/93 (332)

employing countermeasures. And they have. Last month they petitioned the Minister of Trade & Industries to appoint inspectors under S 257 of the Act to investigate the affairs of Racy. The Minister has asked controlling shareholders either to respond by providing essential information, or to postpone a special general meeting scheduled for today. A Racy spokesman says the company is endeavouring to meet the Minister's request.

The special meeting was called by Racy's controlling shareholders with a curious agenda, the effect of which, if all the proposals are approved, will be to constitute sole control of Racy in the hands of one shareholder — Ivor Jacobson, a member of one of the controlling families.

As the proposals for consideration by the meeting are special, they require approval by 75% of shareholders present and voting to become effective. They are unusual in that they propose conversion of all ordinary shares into redeemable prefs, the issue of new ordinary shares to Ivor Jacobson only, and the immediate redemption of the newly created redeemable prefs.

The proposals would remove all minority shareholders on terms and conditions set down to the satisfaction of the controlling families (the Jacobsons and Hendlers).

Gervis confirms he intends to keep fighting. It all goes to show that in the world of minority shareholders every day brings another surprise.

David Gleason

Consumers face bleak future

Sowetan 19/3/93 (332)

By Joe Mdhlela
Consumer Reporter

■ Petrol price hike leaves taxi industry reeling:

TAXI operators yesterday predicted a gloomy future for the industry following a decision by Minister of Finance Mr Derek Keys to increase the petrol by 16 cents a litre.

Keys also increased Value-Added Tax from 10 percent to 14 percent when he presented his Budget in Parliament on Wednesday.

Soweto taxi driver Mr Matthews Mabula said the industry was already reeling from declining business.

"We are no longer a viable business. We have lost some of our business to other modes of transport.

"The increase will make matters worse," Mabula said. He said their daily takings had been greatly reduced.

Mr Caiphus Kevin, manager of a filling station in Highgate, said business in its entirety would be affected.

"With the increase of petrol price, few motorists will be utilising the filling stations and business is likely to suffer," Kevin said.

An employee of the Soweto City Health Deparment, Mrs Nonkozo Chirwa, said the increases were "bad news for consumers".

Street hawker Mr Thomas Mnisi said his business did not give him any meaningful returns. The increase in petrol and VAT would exacerbate matters, he said. "As it is, there is very little business for hawkers. I just don't know how I will cope," he said.

Imperial pays R88,5m for Tanker Services

(232)

CT 19/3/93

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — Fast-growing Imperial Group today announced the R88,5m acquisition of tank truck transport company Tanker Services.

The purchase price included R55,6m for shareholder interests and R32,9m for the company's loan account.

Imperial CE Bill Lynch said Tanker Services would diversify and strengthen Imperial's Truck Systems division.

"Tanker Services runs a fleet of several hundred tank trucks and trailers, has good refurbishment facilities and depot premises, an impressive customer list and depth of management."

New shares

Imperial funded the acquisition by issueing 8,86m new Imphold shares at a price equal to yesterday's untraded share price on the JSE of R10. Management vendors retained 1,3m of these shares and the balance was placed with institutions, said Lynch.

The acquisition would have boosted Imperial Holdings' earnings a share by 14% to 57c from 50,1c and net asset value by 34% to 303,7c from 226,8c had it been in place for the 12 months to end-December 1992.

Included in the deal were Tanker Services' companies Sani-Tech which supplied portable chemical toilets for hire and Fiberform Plastics which manufactured glass reinforced plastic products and fibreglass modular buildings, Lynch said.

Springbok Atlas

The deal followed Imperial's R7,25m acquisition in December of tour operators Springbok Atlas Safaris from the Tollgate liquidators, the merger of Garden Route Tours with Springbok Atlas at a cost of R4,7m and the taking out of the minority shareholders in Imperial's trucks division for R24,5m.

Three months earlier, Imperial bought out Prime Car Leasing from Nedfin Bank in a R30m deal. Other acquisitions in 1992 included Tempest Car Hire, Quattro Carriers, Mercurius Motors and Van Zyl Springworks.

A group spokesman said the acquisition did not overextend resources.

At the interim stage in December Imperial was confident that growth — after seven years of 37% annual compound earnings growth — would remain intact.

Tanker Services was bought from Darling & Hodgson in 1986 by its management, supported and funded by FirstCorp and Standard Merchant bank.

Micor's asset management bears fruit

B/DAY 19/3/93

EDWARD WEST

MICOR Industrial Corporation (Micind) has improved earnings a share by nearly a quarter to 3,1c in the six months to end-December 1992 from 2,5c in 1991 as a result of asset management and cost controls, today's published results show.

(332)

Micind's interim results show turnover up 38% to R290m (1991:R210,5m). Pretax profit was 26% up at R711 000 (R563 000). Directors said there was pressure on freight division margins during the year.

Attributable profit was 24% higher at R719 000 (R580 000). A R95 000 extraordinary loss related to the closure of the technology division.

It was anticipated earnings a share would be maintained in the second half.

The listed local and offshore freight and travel company is a 92% subsidiary of Micor Holdings. A consortium headed by Micor chairman Cecil Kaplan and his son Mark made a successful R23,15m or 140c a share bid for the group's assets in January after minorities rejected an offer.

Greed, intolerance spark taxi wars

ADRIAN HADLAND (332)

PRETORIA — The intolerance, selfishness and greed of minibus taxi operators are partly responsible for outbreaks of violence in the industry, the Goldstone commission has found.

In its fourth interim report on violence in the industry, the commission said a variety of factors had contributed to the serious loss of life, injury and damage in the Groblersdal area since 1988.

These included the existence of too many taxis, a power struggle between operators, economic pressure as a result of high vehicle and maintenance costs, and a culture of lawlessness.

"There is a high degree of intolerance, selfishness and greed which militates against co-operation and bedevils attempts at mediation," the report said.

Among recommendations made by the commission were the appointment of neutral taxi rank marshalls operating under a code of conduct agreed upon by all taxi companies. Fair, consistent but sympathetic law enforcement from the authorities and a more accessible town council were also required, the commission's report said. B/DAY 19/3/93.

Taxi operators and drivers should obtain further business and driving skills, while those involved in the industry needed greater empathy, less selfishness and more respect for the rights of other operators, the report recommended.

The commission stressed that all participants in the industry should be committed to the peaceful resolution of grievances.

"Unless every person in the minibus industry wants peace and works towards it, all efforts to combat violence are doomed to failure."

ANC and Inkatha plan rallies

RAY HARTLEY

MORE moves were made yesterday to prevent violence on the East Rand, where Inkatha and the ANC are scheduled to hold rallies and marches in Katlehong and Vosloosrus townships on Sunday.

Johannesburg hostel residents' peace initiative committee official the Rev Mvume Dandala said his organisation had called on 500 Vosloorus hostel dwellers to mark Inkatha's rally in the township with "peaceful behaviour".

Inkatha and the ANC have agreed to a joint marshalling arrangement for the two rallies, which will be addressed by Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi and ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa.

Dandala said the committee had been invited to address the hostel residents "on the need for peace in these difficult days. A special call was made to those who will be travelling long distances to get there, to ensure that they observe the efforts for peace and do not disturb the community in any way," he said.

"A plea was made to the township residents of Vosloorus not to be surprised or overcome with panic when they see people in traditional dress on this day, for people have been alerted to observe peace," Dandala said.

International observers and regional dispute resolution committee officials will monitor Sunday's marches and rallies.

Meanwhile, ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said the ANC and the Transvaal Hostel Residents' Association would meet shortly to strengthen an accord signed in October last year.

Mamoepa said the bilateral agreement had substantially reduced violence and not a single incident of political violence between hostel dwellers and surrounding communities had been recorded this year.

He said the meeting would look at ways of putting pressure on government to make funds available through the National Housing Forum for the upgrading of hostels and surrounding areas.

The two organisations would also discuss ways of involving businesses and churches in the upgrading process.

"Business can play a role in providing technical and financial resources for upgrading and development," Dandala said.

● Comment: Page 8

Picture: George Mashiane

Star 19/3/93

Taxi drivers selfish, greedy – Goldstone

By Bronwyn Wilkinson

Groblersdal taxi drivers' lawlessness and greed were at least partly responsible for taxi wars in the eastern Transvaal town, a committee of the Goldstone Commission has found.

The committee investigating taxi wars said in its fourth interim report yesterday that minibus taxi operators in the area were selfish, greedy and involved in a power struggle.

The committee found that some of the causes of the taxi war in Groblersdal were particular to that area, but some were common to the taxi industry throughout South Africa.

The Groblersdal taxi war exploded over routes and taxi ranks in 1991, resulting in several deaths.

The Groblersdal Town Council had provided a taxi rank and had tried to negotiate for peace, but some of its moves, made with the best intentions, had only exacerbated the problem.

The council had withdrawn from negotiations after they proved fruitless.

The Groblersdal war had several causes, the committee said.

There was an overpopulation of minibus taxis and "poaching" (where drivers operate on routes for which their permits do not apply) was common.

Taxi operators showed a general reluctance to abide by the rules and the prevalence of firearm attacks showed a culture of taking the law into their own hands.

The high degree of greed, intolerance nd selfishness bedevilled attempts at mediation.

Taxi operators were charged up to R5 000 in some cases to belong to taxi associations and this increased economic pressure and competition.

The committee recommended that fair but firm and consistent law enforcement that was sensitive to the situation was needed to combat the culture of lawlessness.

"Minibus operators are subject to the law just like every other citizen," the report stated.

Mediation had to be encouraged between the warring taxi associations.

Imperial buys Tanker Services for R88,5m

B/Day 19/3/93

EDWARD WEST (332)

FAST-growing Imperial Group today announced the R88,5m acquisition of tank truck transport company Tanker Services.

The purchase price included R55,6m for shareholder interests and R32,9m for the company's loan account.

Imperial CE Bill Lynch said Tanker Services would diversify and strengthen Imperial's Truck Systems division.

"Tanker Services runs a fleet of several hundred tank trucks and trailers, has good refurbishment facilities and depot premises, an impressive customer list and depth of management."

Imperial funded the acquisition by issuing 8,86-million new Imphold shares at a price equal to yesterday's untraded share price on the JSE of R10. Management vendors retained 1,3-million of these. The balance was placed with institutions.

The acquisition would have boosted Im-

☐ To Page 2

Imperial

B/Day 19/3/93

(332)

☐ From Page 1

perial Holdings' earnings a share by 14% to 57c from 50,1c and net asset value by 34% to 303,7c from 226,8c had it been in place for the 12 months to end-December 1992.

Included in the deal were Tanker Services' companies Sani-Tech which supplied portable chemical toilets for hire and Fiberform Plastics which manufactured glass reinforced plastic products and fibreglass modular buildings, Lynch said.

The deal followed Imperial's R7,25m acquisition in December of tour operators Springbok Atlas Safaris from the Tollgate liquidators, the merger of Garden Route Tours with Springbok Atlas at a cost of R4,7m and the taking out of the minority shareholders in Imperial's trucks division for R24,5m. Three months earlier, Imperial bought out Prime Car Leasing from Nedfin Bank in a R30m deal. Other acquisitions in 1992 included Tempest Car Hire, Quattro Carriers, Mercurius Motors and Van Zyl Springworks.

A group spokesman said the acquisition did not overextend resources.

At the interim stage in December Imperial was confident that growth — after seven years of 37% annual compound earnings growth — would remain intact.

Tanker Services was bought from Darling & Hodgson in 1986 by its management, supported and funded by FirstCorp and Standard Merchant bank.

Talks ease the Jo'burg taxi crisis

Forum puts the wheels back on

Star 20/3/93

(332)

NEGOTIATIONS have produced agreements that might bring about a 'taxi accord' within a month, Chief Reporter JOHN PERLMAN writes.

BITTER differences between Johannesburg Traffic Department officers and the city's black taxi drivers are steadily being eased through negotiations, despite the arrest this week of the drivers' union president, Norman Prince, on charges of obstructing a traffic officer in the course of duty.

Since the blockade that brought the city centre to a standstill last month, continuing talks have produced concessions and agreements that might bring about a "taxi accord" within a month.

"There is sufficient goodwill and advances are being made," says Taxi Forum chairman Piroshaw Camay.

"We had another meeting this week and issues were raised on which we need to consult the SAP, the Department of Justice and the Department of Transport. I believe we will be able to reach a formal agreement by the end of April."

Tackle

Prince, president of the South African Taxi Drivers' Union (SATDU), was arrested on Thursday after traffic officers stopped a taxi in which he was a passenger. He was charged with interfering with an officer, released on R500 bail and ordered to appear in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court yesterday. However, the charges were dropped.

Prince and SATDU are key players in the Taxi Forum, a regular gathering convened under the National Peace Accord to tackle the problems that led to the three-day minibus blockade of Johannesburg. Others involved include the Johannesburg Traffic Department, the city council, the Southern African Black Taxi Association, community organisations and the police. The council, the taxi owners and the drivers' union have all drawn up proposals which have been tabled and discussed in the forum.

Prince said the Taxi Forum had already produced visible results. "Some things have already changed. Traffic cops are no longer stopping many taxis at the same time. During peak hours, they can still be stopped for traffic offences, but they are not being pulled over for outstanding summonses or documents. Traffic officers can follow the driver into town for these things and do the business when the commuters have been attended to."

Prince says a number of "temporary stopping and offloading places have been allocated. The Booysens bus lane has been made available for taxis. Some metered parking places have also been allocated to taxis — about 20 — between six and nine in the morning and three and six in the afternoon."

For Prince and SATDU general-secretary Mphikeleli Sibanyoni, these were important milestones, but there was a much longer road ahead. Says Sibanyoni: "Our priority is to see all taxi drivers registered with the Department of Manpower."

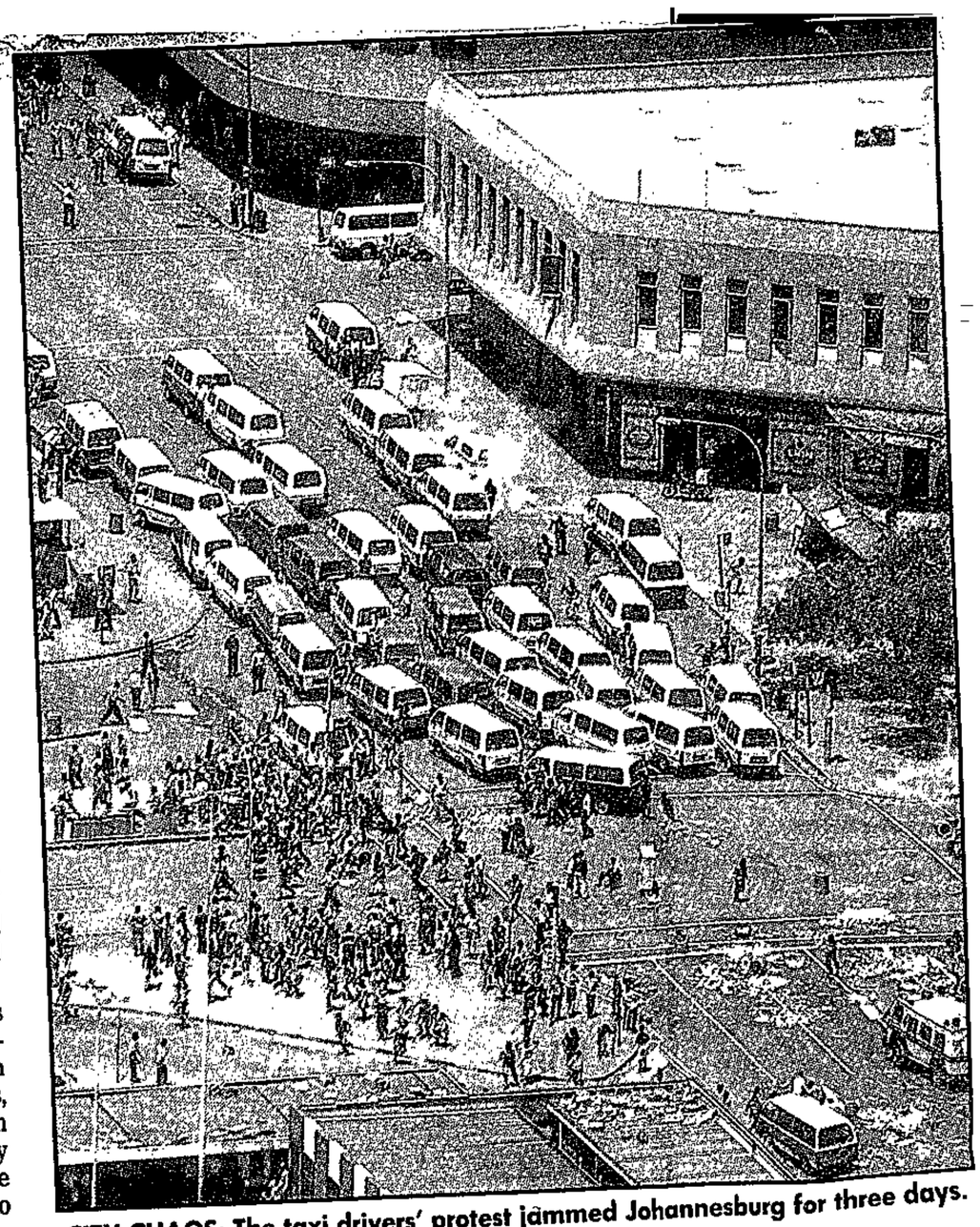
This, he says, would be the first step towards regulating working conditions — unemployment benefits, working hours and leave, hiring and firing procedures and so on.

Says Prince: "Since the blockade, our membership has risen dramatically."

Sibanyoni adds: "In Springs, 135 new members filled in forms this week. Our membership in Johannesburg stands at around 1 000."

Prince says: "I believe the blockade was the right thing strategically at the time, but now that we are talking in the same terms, there will be consultation. Now our union has recognition and everybody knows who they should talk to. It has been opened up for everyone.

"It will help all sectors of the industry if we intervene in disputes. We can liaise with traffic officers, with the owners and with our members. And if they don't want to speak to the union now, they'll have to deal with us later."



CITY CHAOS: The taxi drivers' protest jammed Johannesburg for three days.

Taxi burnt at Ceres in 'revenge'

CT 22/3/93 (332)

By EUNICE RIDER

HUNDREDS of residents of Nduli township outside Ceres set fire to a minibus taxi yesterday in what they said was as a "revenge attack" for the alleged murder of a taxi driver last Sunday.

Nduli resident Ms Nomtu Ncumeza said the torched taxi belonged to Mr Joseph Kruger of Bellavista, Ceres, who last Sunday allegedly shot dead one of his drivers, Mr Jan Diyasi, 35, after an argument.

'Don't come back'

Ms Ncumeza said although the taxi was marked with the name of a Mr Hanekom, residents believed it belonged to Mr Kruger.

"The people told him not to come back here, and when he did, they set fire to his taxi," she said.

Ceres police station commander Lieutenant Daniel Uys said: "We have a sworn statement that the taxi belonged to a Mr Hanekom and not to Mr Kruger, against whom we have opened a murder docket."

He said the driver of the minibus that was set alight had run away when his life was threatened by angry residents.

Malicious damage

"We will be calling a meeting between Nduli residents and minibus taxi owners and drivers later this week to clarify the matter," he said.

Lt Uys said the death of Mr Diyasi was still being investigated, and a charge of malicious damage to property would be opened against some of the Nduli residents following yesterday's taxi burning.

3 held in fiery attack on taxi

Crime Reporter

THREE people were detained after residents from Nduli township, Ceres, set fire to a minibus taxi at the weekend.

The residents allegedly set fire to the taxi on Sunday to avenge the murder of bus driver Mr Dan Dyasi, 35, last weekend — but damaged the wrong man's taxi.

Mr Dyasi was shot during an argument with his employer.

Mr Joseph Kruger, 63, of Bellavista, appeared in court briefly in connection with the murder and will re-appear soon.

CT 23/3/93

(332)

Taxi operators formalise bid to oust Sabta executive

(332)

THEO RAWANA

THE feud between the Sabta executive and taxi regions supporting former Sabta national adviser James Chapman spilled into the open at the weekend when the regions formed a 22-member Save Our Sabta (SOS) committee — "to take Sabta back to the members".

Chapman has been the target of accusations and warnings from Sabta and its marketing arm, Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam), since he launched schemes designed to help taxi operators into profitability.

The SOS committee has asked Chapman to help it save the taxi industry.

The Sabta executive claimed Chapman was posing as a representative of the taxi industry. This month it took steps to bar him from being appointed as a consultant by the Transport Department and warned him against trying to rival them for membership.

The SOS committee said its membership included several high-ranking Sabta executives including the chairmen of 16 Sabta regional associations.

The SOS group accused the Sabta executive of sidelining those who had solutions to the industry's problems and of "putting their own interests before those of the taxi operator on the ground".

It called on the Sabta executive to resign.

The SOS committee said problems stemmed from Taxsam — operating with Sabta parent body Fabcos Marketing — being a law unto itself and making policy which should be the Sabta executive's responsibility.

Fabcos Marketing CEO and FutureBank chairman Jabu Mabuza was accused of describing himself as Sabta CEO. "No such position exists in the Sabta constitution," SOS said.

"Our information is that the remuneration packages of most of the senior managers of Taxsam are completely out of line with market considerations; and we challenge Taxsam to make public the package of salary and benefits paid to the CEO and others."

It said Sabta was warning off consultants such as Chapman because it saw them as a threat.

Sabta public affairs director Mike Ntlatleng said he would react today, and Mabuza was said to be out of town.

23/3/93 BDay

New funding leeway for local airlines

(332)

CT 23/3/93

By TIM COHEN

INDEPENDENT airlines will soon be able to mortgage their aircraft, a practice which will substantially expedite the purchase of new planes.

Legislation tabled in Parliament yesterday noted that new, independent airlines in SA needed to be assisted in obtaining funding from abroad for the purchase of aircraft for domestic and international flights.

The memorandum on the Convention on the International Recognition of Rights in Aircraft Bill said in order to obtain such funding it was necessary to enable owners of aircraft to mortgage them.

The legislation effectively places local carriers in the same situation as the shipping industry.

The legislation became necessary with the deregulation of the industry.

In the past there were not many independent airlines requiring finance for the purchase of aircraft.

To effect the change, the Bill provides for the ratification of the Convention on the International Recognition of Rights in Aircraft, first inaugurated in Geneva in 1948.

The Bill makes the Geneva convention applicable in SA.

It also authorises the President to add to the Bill any other convention relating to the recognition of rights in aircraft and ratified on behalf of SA.

Jo'burg plans supergrid for buses, taxis

Star 23/3/93

332

Staff Reporter

The Johannesburg City Council is planning a Central Business District (CBD) public transport supergrid to separate public and private vehicles.

Planning executive director Ian Symon said this was one of the council's projects to ensure that the minibus taxi industry "operates smoothly side-by-side with other commuter transport".

A light rail system in the CBD is also being planned to improve inner-city mobility.

An outer-box road network will be exclusively for public transport, using Plein, Delvers and Main streets and the south-west busway, linking major termini on the outskirts of the central area.

The box will link up with north-south and east-west streets in a one-way coupling system, using Pritchard-President and Joubert-Von Brandis streets.

"Private vehicles will be confined to a network of streets not used by public transport, and will only be able to exit this network to use parking facilities," said Symon.

SA Taxi Drivers' Union president Norman Prince said his organisation had not yet been consulted about the plan.

"It is imperative that all parties be involved in the discussions, otherwise it will create a volatile situation as we had in the past," said Prince.

● Applications for an extra 18 ranks for minibus taxis were being processed to supplement the 51 in the city, said Symon. Several projects had also been launched to provide more off-street minibus facilities, and reconstruction of the Noord Street terminus, due for completion this month, would provide parking for 80 minibuses.

"The council is drawing up a development brief to interest the private sector in redeveloping the area around the Jack Mincer parking garage which will become a taxi terminus," Symon said.

There were also plans to redevelop Westgate terminus. Building was expected to start before the end of the year.

He said traffic engineering projects recently completed had sharply reduced the accident rate on the Pat Mbatha public transportway to Soweto.

The transportway was a key part of the Soweto-CBD link which would feed into the proposed R173 million transport and commercial centre at the intersection of Sauer and Bree streets, Symon said.

The centre would serve about 100 000 commuters, 8 000 minibuses and 1 600 buses daily.

HAPPY TO BE OUT . . . The 28 Brown's Farm men who briefly appeared in the Mitchells Plain Magistrate's Court yesterday raise clenched fists to demonstrate their joy at securing reduced bail. Picture: HAROLD KING

CT 24/3/93 (332)

Bail reduced after protest

By RAMOTENA MABOTE

A PROTEST by more than 200 people at the Mitchells Plain Magistrate's Court yesterday led to the reduction of bail for 28 men who had appeared on charges of public violence.

Police and supporters of the accused clashed after Magistrate Mr J C Claasen granted each of the accused bail of R150 and postponed the hearing to March 31 for further investigation.

Court 16 came to a stop when protesters refused to leave the room, while others blocked the corridors. The accused, all from violence-torn Brown's Farm, appeared briefly and were not asked to plead.

The protesters earlier demanded the accused be released without bail, but after lengthy talks between senior public prosecutor Mr D J Oosthuizen, Brown's Farm community leaders and prosecutor Mr J van Schalkwyk, bail was reduced to R40 per person.

This was paid with contributions from pensioners and small business people from Brown's Farm.

The men were arrested while on Neighbourhood Watch patrol, minutes after three houses were burnt down. The houses belonged to members of the farm's ANC leader Mr Christopher Toise's faction. After their release, Mr Oosthuizen said: "The bail was reduced on both humanitarian grounds and their financial situation."

Pedestrians in the front line

ARGUS 24/3/93

PEDESTRIANS comprise the single biggest contributing factor to all collisions in South Africa, and almost 5 000 people lose their lives annually because they were on foot on a road surface.

There are many reasons for this alarmingly high figure.

Human error on the part of the pedestrian is the culprit in most cases.

Taking the shortest route is human nature, and a pedestrian running across a busy route with a safe crossing or bridge only a few metres away is a common sight.

Pedestrians have various limitations which they are not always aware of, and which are often exacerbated by the intake of liquor.

Among these is an inability to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.

Drivers of vehicles are not without blame either.

Drivers often don't decrease their speed when they enter urban areas, and many are imbued with a total disregard for pedestrian crossings. When a car does stop at a "zebra" crossing to allow pedestrians to cross the road, other cars will often try to overtake it.

Good news

The only solution is to keep pedestrians and vehicles out of each other's way.

The good news is that the Directorate Traffic Safety, in conjunction with the four Provincial Administrations, last year launched a comprehensive pedestrian safety project, in addition to existing programmes which include the Pedestrian Safety Campaign, Scholar Patrol, and Child in Traffic, among others.

The new project publicises pedestrian danger points in South Africa.

Danger areas are determined according to the number of pedestrian deaths in a particular area, the pedestrian population in such an area and the lack of basic facilities for safe pedestrian behaviour.

Extensive communication projects with pedestrians and drivers, law enforcement actions and educational programmes were launched in these areas, and the mass media has been instrumental in spreading the pedestrian safety message to millions of people across South Africa.

The success of the project cannot be determined as final statistics on last year's pedestrian death toll are not yet known, but initial reports point to a heartening decrease compared to the previous year.

A firm that will always deliver the goods

STAR 24/3/93. (332)

"We'll move anything from elephants in crates to steam turbines," says Paul Humphrys, general manager Rent-A-Rig.

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO Rent-A-Rig made its debut on the South African transport scene. Today the company has an unrivalled reputation for literally "delivering the goods".

Going on the premise that specialisation is the route to maximum efficiency, Rent-A-Rig has remained focused strictly on its core business.

Consequently, the degree of expertise built up by its riggers and the manpower otherwise involved in the company is without doubt among the best in the industry. There is, in fact, no alternative to experience!

This is recognised by the market at large and Rent-A-Rig includes among its clients, such blue chip companies as Metal Box/Nampak and Eskom.

The company's capability extends even to such delicate items as medical equipment and computers. In terms of the latter, Rent-A-Rig has come up with a unique innovation — a specialised insulated computer container with a sprung floor.

The company operates its own transport fleet —unlike much of the opposition —, thus ensuring rapid reaction to orders, thoroughly reliable deliveries and a degree of flexibility that is hard to match.

A particular speciality is complete turnkey factory removals — an aspect of the rigging market that can clearly only be handled by the leaders in the field.

The company thrives on challenges. A recent project that presented more than its fair share of challenges involved off-loading, transportation and manoeuvring an extremely fragile, expensive and heavy piece of medical equipment through a small opening into a copper shielded room.

***Specialisation** is the name of the game for Rent-a-Rig and the company's tight focus has seen it grow into one of the major players in the transport industry.*

The magnetic resonance imaging unit, imported from Holland, contained liquid helium at 270 deg C. This made the metal incredibly sensitive and meant it could not be jolted or shocked.

Weighing nearly three tons, it was a difficult job to off-load and give this piece of equipment a totally smooth ride from Cape Town harbour to Louis Liepoldt Hospital in Bellville.

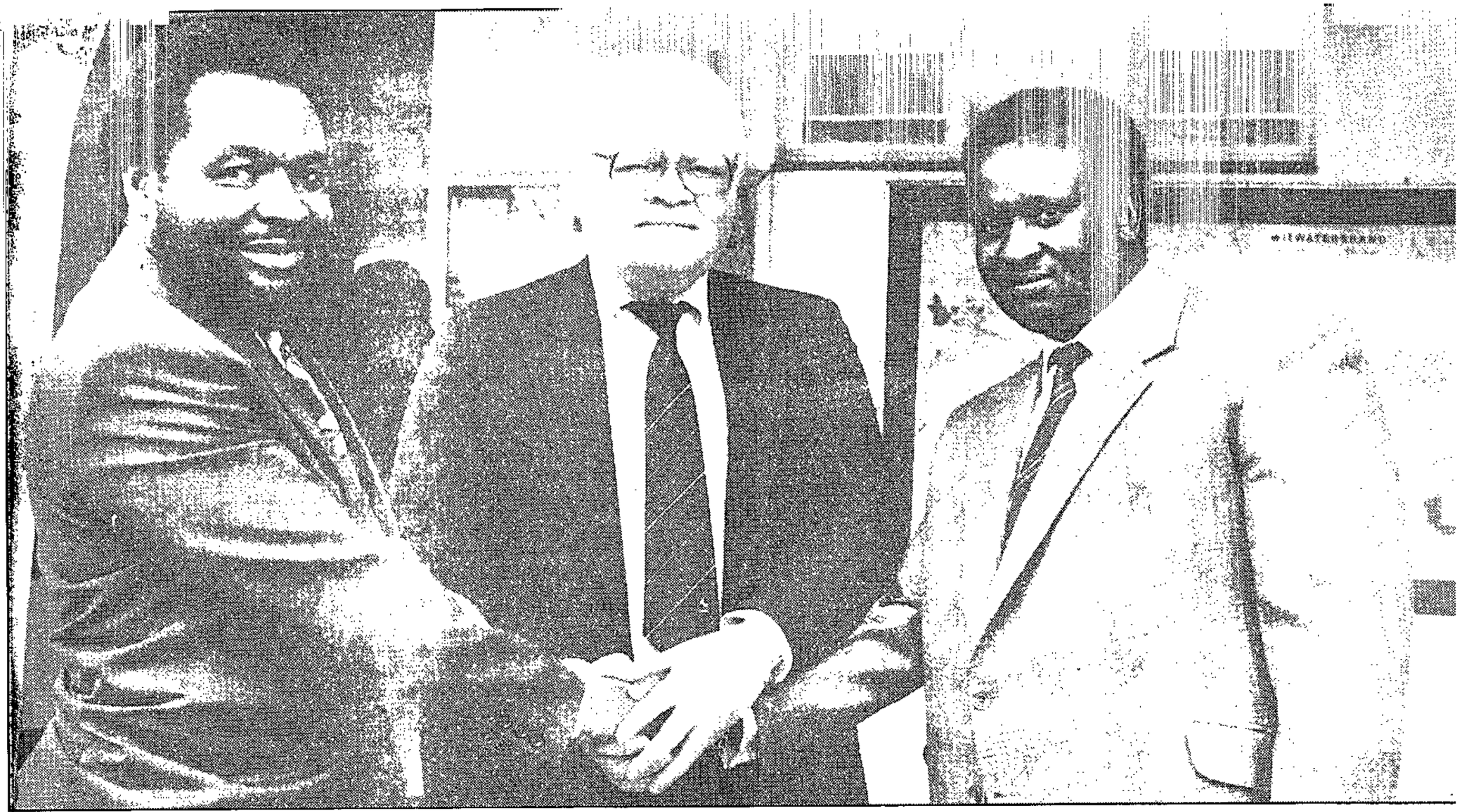
There were some nail-biting moments, said general manager Paul Humphrys. "Firstly we had to get permission to off-load the consignment directly from the ship on to our vehicle. Then a window and wall had to be removed from the first floor of the hospital to provide access.

"Clearance was extremely tight, and the window ledge had to be specifically reinforced to take the weight. To give a really smooth ride we reconstructed a special sleeper cage and manoeuvred the equipment on steel runners.

"The room in which the MRI was to be installed also presented problems because it was fully lined with copper to exclude any radio waves. To move the heavy equipment across the copper finished floor, a construction of boards and steel runners was used to distribute the mass evenly and minimise the chance of damage.

"The operation took a team of four of our riggers, two of whom have more than 14 years' experience in the business — 12 hours to complete, but it all went off without a hitch."

For further information, kindly telephone (011) 397-2243.



Shake on it . . . James Ngoya (SABTA). Lennox Magwaza (FENTO) and Peter Rabali (NAFTO) have committed their organisations to road safety.

Taxi organisations unite on road safety

ARG 24/3/93 (332)

SOUTH Africa's three major taxi associations — SABTA, NAFTO and FENTO — have united under the banner of National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) Transport Safety Committee in order to conduct a joint traffic safety campaign.

The Taxi Safety Committee is concerned about the increasing rate of collisions taking place in the taxi industry, especially during holiday seasons.

A NTPF spokesman says: "We need to work together to make South Africa conscious of traffic safety, not only during Easter but every day. Being a responsible road user needs to become a socially acceptable norm.

"The NTPF is committed to a campaign of combating the war on the roads and the resulting carnage."

The NTPF campaign — which will be coordinated from the Shell Ultra City on the N1 to Pretoria — includes a plan to have a patrol of 20 minibuses on all the major taxi routes.

These routes are:

- Pretoria — Pietersburg
- Johannesburg — Newcastle/Estcourt
- Johannesburg — Bloemfontein/Welkom
- Queenstown — Sterkspruit
- Pietersburg — Beit Bridge/Venda
- Port Elizabeth — King William's Town
- Middelburg — Nelspruit
- Pietermaritzburg — Kokstad

The patrollers will be accompanied by qualified motor mechanics at all times and the function of the patrol vehicles will be:

- To attend to the problems of drivers and passengers in the event of breakdowns.
- To transport passengers to the nearest convenient place to wait for an alternate vehicle.
- To utilise the service of the patrol vehicle mechanics for minor breakdowns.
- To enlist the assistance of breakdown service companies in the event of major mechanical problems.
- To assist in whatever manner possible in collisions and any emergencies.
- To work in close liaison with road traffic officials and members of the SAP and the Southern African Holiday Traffic Planning Committee.

Mayor slates wildcat taxis

(332)

ARG 24/3/93

Staff Reporters

WILDCAT action by taxi operators was "completely unacceptable" because special communication channels to sort out grievances had been set up by the taxi liaison committee, Mayor Frank van der Velde said today.

Asked to comment on yesterday's peak-hour blockade in Strand Street, he said he had not been briefed but understood "the group responsible was not Codeta (Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association) but som one else".

"The taxi liasion committee is still active and there is no need for wildcat action. There

● See page 23

are communication links to get an instantaneous response to a grievance.

"The action by the taxi drivers was totally unacceptable and served only to annoy everyone," said Mr Van der Velde.

Attorney-General Frank Kahn said today he wished to speak to traffic officials before commenting on the blockade.

After a similar blockade last November, Mr Kahn said there could be "very scant sympathy" for such demonstrations.

Ordinary citizens of Cape Town were entitled to go about their business undisturbed and taxi drivers who took the law into their own hands would not be tolerated, Mr Kahn said then.

Sabta's skills drive 'a failure'

(332)

CT 24/3/93

SABTA was given R504 000 for a campaign to improve the business and driving skills of taxi-drivers but the training school has failed to produce any graduates, the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into taxi violence heard yesterday.

This was said by the commission's legal officer, Mr Johan Slabbert, who said the taxi war violence in the Western Cape, which took a toll of 66 lives, was initially a commercial battle.

Mr Slabbert said that of the R504 000 donated to Sabta for Project Spear, their training campaign for better business and driving skills, R220 000 was spent on a commercial but no graduates had been produced.

In the Western Cape taxi-drivers fell into arrears of R9,9 million on their hire purchase payments during the 1991 taxi boycott. No further finance is available, with owners facing monthly HP instalments of R3 300 to R3 800 and 90 to 100 minibus taxis being repossessed each month, Mr Slabbert said.

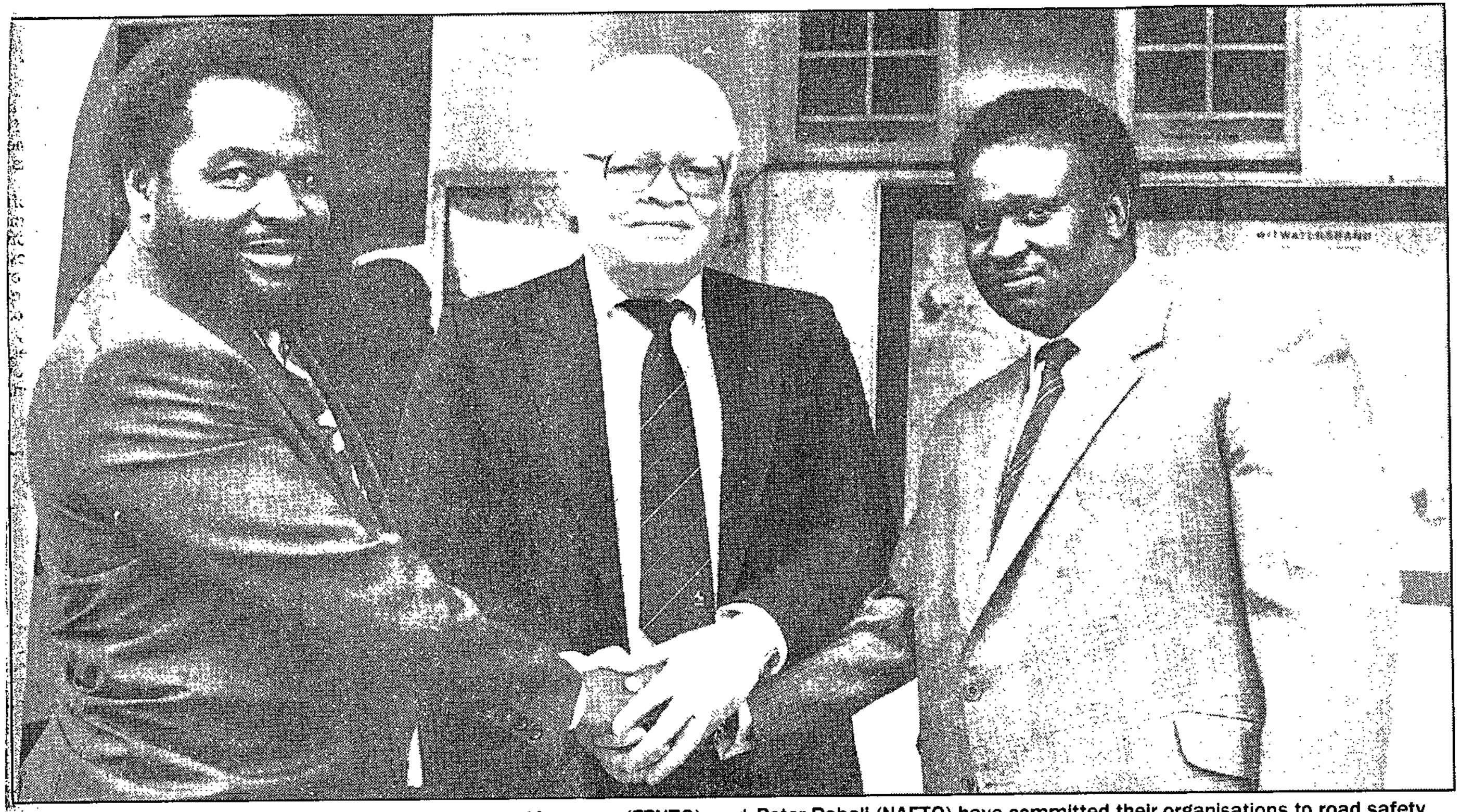
"Ownership of a taxi seemed to be an instant answer to unemployment and poverty. This rush to own a taxi, however, was not accompanied by an appreciation of the economic realities of such ownership," Mr Slabbert said.

Owing to competition from buses and trains and pressure from the civics' associations, the low fare structure was the "starting point of the economic treadmill to disaster" and the industry was perceived to be "chaotic and unmanageable" through sheer weight of numbers, Mr Slabbert said.

He recited evidence that in 1984/85 a taxi-driver's profit could amount to R3 500 per month, but that figure had now dwindled to R700.

It was impossible to estimate the number of minibus taxis in South Africa and estimates varied from 80 000 to 120 000.

Operators, with or without permits, operated wherever they pleased, which was virtually impossible to stop with only 60 inspectors available in South Africa and it was "imperative for 300 more inspectors to be appointed as a matter of urgency", he said.



Shake on it . . . James Ngoya (SABTA), Lennox Magwaza (FENTO) and Peter Rabali (NAFTO) have committed their organisations to road safety.

Pedestrians in the front line

PEDESTRIANS comprise the single biggest contributing factor to all collisions in South Africa, and almost 5 000 people lose their lives annually because they were on foot on a road surface.

There are many reasons for this alarmingly high figure.

Human error on the part of the pedestrian is the culprit in most cases.

Taking the shortest route is human nature, and a pedestrian running across a busy route with a safe crossing or bridge only a few metres away is a common sight.

Pedestrians have various limitations which they are not always aware of, and which are often exacerbated by the intake of liquor.

Among these is an inability to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.

Drivers of vehicles are not without blame either.

Drivers often don't decrease their speed when they enter urban areas, and many are imbued with a total disregard for pedestrian crossings. When a car does stop at a "zebra" crossing to allow pedestrians to cross the road, other cars will often try to overtake it.

Good news

The only solution is to keep pedestrians and vehicles out of each other's way.

The good news is that the Directorate Traffic Safety, in conjunction with the four Provincial Administrations, last year launched a comprehensive pedestrian safety project, in addition to existing programmes which include the Pedestrian Safety Campaign, Scholar Patrol, and Child in Traffic, among others.

The new project publicises pedestrian danger points in South Africa.

Danger areas are determined according to the number of pedestrian deaths in a particular area, the pedestrian population in such an area and the lack of basic facilities for safe pedestrian behaviour.

Extensive communication projects with pedestrians and drivers, law enforcement actions and educational programmes were launched in these areas, and the mass media has been instrumental in spreading the pedestrian safety message to millions of people across South Africa.

The success of the project cannot be determined as final statistics on last year's pedestrian death toll are not yet known, but initial reports point to a heartening decrease compared to the previous year.

Taxi organisations unite on road safety

STAR 24/3/93 (332)

SOUTH Africa's three major taxi associations — SABTA, NAFTO and FENTO — have united under the banner of National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) Transport Safety Committee in order to conduct a joint traffic safety campaign.

The Taxi Safety Committee is concerned about the increasing rate of collisions taking place in the taxi industry, especially during holiday seasons.

A NTPF spokesman says: "We need to work together to make South Africa conscious of traffic safety, not only during Easter but every day. Being a responsible road user needs to become a socially acceptable norm.

"The NTPF is committed to a campaign of combating the war on the roads and the resulting carnage."

The NTPF campaign — which will be coordinated from the Shell Ultra City on the N1 to Pretoria — includes a plan to have a patrol of 20 minibuses on all the major taxi routes.

These routes are:

- Pretoria — Pietersburg
- Johannesburg — Newcastle/Estcourt
- Johannesburg — Bloemfontein/Welkom
- Queenstown — Sterkspruit
- Pietersburg — Beit Bridge/Venda
- Port Elizabeth — King William's Town
- Middelburg — Nelspruit
- Pietermaritzburg — Kokstad

The patrollers will be accompanied by qualified motor mechanics at all times and the function of the patrol vehicles will be:

- To attend to the problems of drivers and passengers in the event of breakdowns.
- To transport passengers to the nearest convenient place to wait for an alternate vehicle.
- To utilise the service of the patrol vehicle mechanics for minor breakdowns.
- To enlist the assistance of breakdown service companies in the event of major mechanical problems.
- To assist in whatever manner possible in collisions and any emergencies.
- To work in close liaison with road traffic officials and members of the SAP and the Southern African Holiday Traffic Planning Committee.

Police involvement in taxi violence 'unproved'

332

ARG 24/3/93

Staff Reporter

EVIDENCE to the committee of the Goldstone Commission probing taxi violence had not established a connection between the police and the conflict, the commission's legal officer, Mr J Slabbert, has submitted.

Addressing the committee in Cape Town yesterday, Mr Slabbert said: "Attempts have been made to connect elements of the SA Police to the taxi violence. So far no connection has been established."

Mr Slabbert said "no individual has been identified among the police or rival taxi associations as being perpetrators of murder or arson, and the police have been heavily criticised for their alleged inaction and ineptitude".

He said it was reasonable to conclude that members of the taxi associations conspired during the conflict to attack members of rival organisations, often as acts of reprisal.

Traffic chaos

(332)
CT 24/3/93

By EUGENE PARAMOER
ANDRE KOOPMAN
and EUNICE RIDER

TAXI-drivers for the third time in five months blockaded city streets yesterday, disrupting traffic and delaying thousands of irate motorists during peak hour.

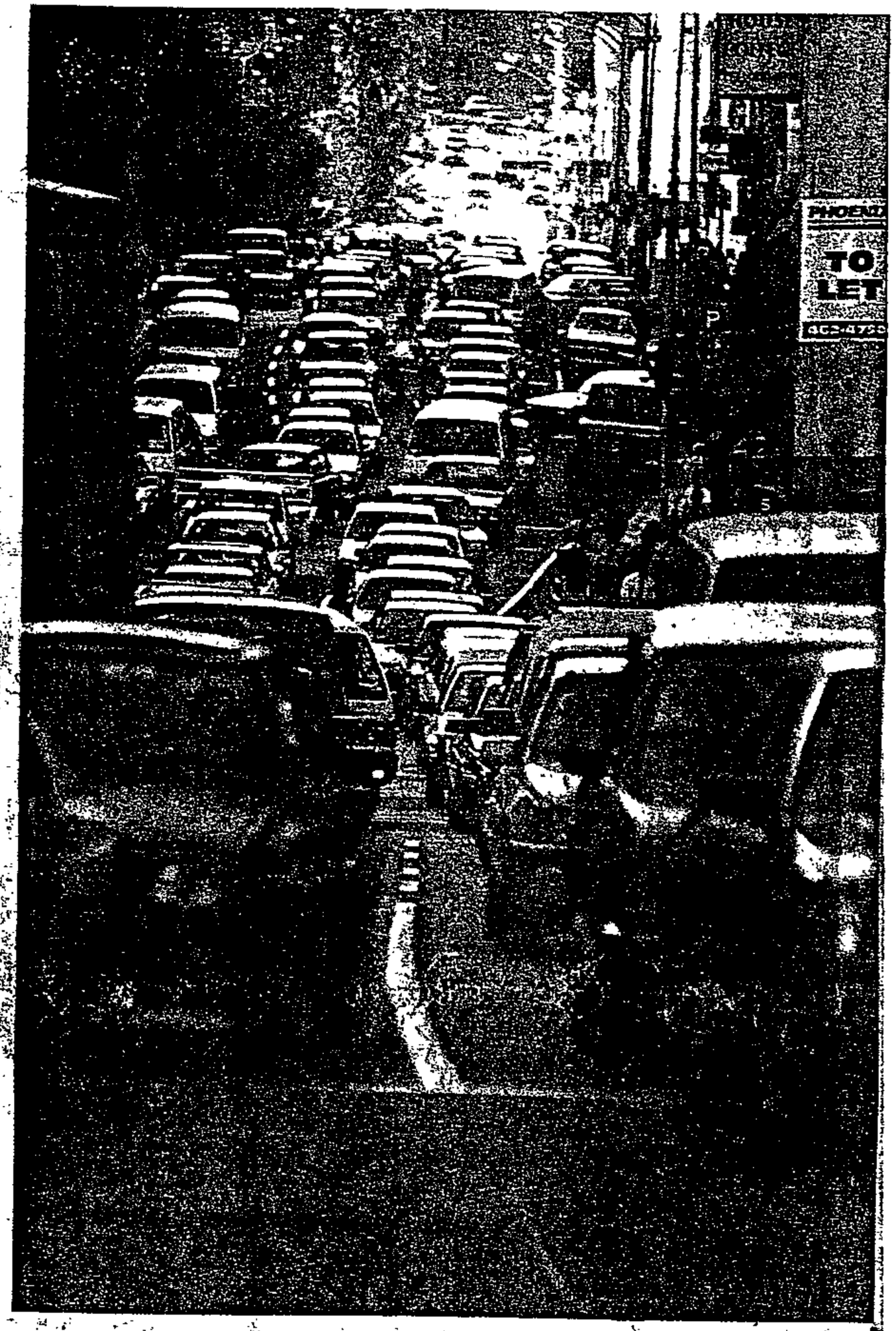
About 20 drivers blocked off a section of Strand Street at 2pm and after 4pm, lifting the blockade an hour later after one of their colleagues, arrested in Sea Point, was released.

The problem was compounded when more than 40 000 commuters were stranded as trains ground to a halt about 4.20pm after a rail signal cable was allegedly sabotaged between Cape Town and Woodstock stations, a Metro spokesman said.

Mr Piet Lootz, Metro operations manager, said last night the signal cables had been "set alight" but police said they they did not suspect foul play.

Fuming motorists on the scene and in telephone calls to the Cape Times demanded that action be taken against taxi-drivers who disrupted the city "every time" they had a grievance.

It was the third time city streets had been blockaded in five months.



TAXI JAM DELAY . . . Taxi-drivers negotiate with traffic officials during a blockade of Strand Street yesterday. About 15 angry taxi-drivers blocked both sides of the road for more than an hour to protest against the arrest of a driver. **RIGHT:** Irate city motorists were delayed for more than an hour because of the blockade. Picture: BENNY GOOL

Taxi blockade causes chaos in Cape Town

Star 24/3/93

CAPE TOWN — Taxi drivers blockaded Cape Town central city streets yesterday for the third time in five months, disrupting traffic and delaying thousands of irate motorists during peak hour.

(332)

About 20 drivers blocked off a section of Strand Street at 2 pm and after 4 pm, lifting the blockade an hour later after one of their colleagues, arrested in Sea Point, was released.

The transport problem was compounded when more than 40 000 commuters were left stranded as trains ground to a halt at about 4.20 pm after a rail signal cable was allegedly sabotaged between Cape Town and Woodstock stations.

Metro operations manager Piet Lootz said the signal cables had been set alight, but police said they did not suspect foul play.

Fuming motorists on the scene and in telephone calls to newspapers and the traffic department demanded that action be taken against taxi drivers who disrupted the city at will every time they had a grievance.

Mayor Frank van der Velde said last night that he would not comment until he had been fully briefed. — Sapa.

'Tow away the taxis' — Kahn

CT 25/3/93 (332)

Staff Reporters

THE attorney-general Mr Frank Kahn said yesterday that the authorities should have towed away the taxis that blockaded Strand Street this week.

Blockades would continue to plague the city unless swift and effective action was taken — and that meant towing the vehicles away, he said.

"It is unacceptable that law and order is held up by this kind of extortion. From our side, legal steps have been taken, heavy fines will be fixed."

This would be done on an "admission of guilt" basis unless circumstances demanded that no admission of guilt fines were acceptable.

By the time the prosecutor came into the picture, it was like closing the stable door after the horse has bolted, as often the taxi drivers were difficult to locate after the event.

A spokesman said yesterday that police would take a hard line against taxi drivers who brought the city to a standstill.

Major Attie Laubscher said a docket, together with information compiled from video footage of the protest, would be sent to the attorney-general.

"We took a relatively soft line as far as the last two blockades were concerned, but this kind of action is becoming intolerable."

He said the regional commissioner of police, General Nic Acker, and other senior policemen had met with "various organisations" to discuss the matter, and a "hard line" would be taken.

Legal proceedings were still underway against a different set of drivers, who had been involved in the previous Strand Street blockade.

Mr Alan Dolby, the city council's spokesman on taxis, said the traffic department had not towed away vehicles because the SAP felt they had the matter under control.

"But if it becomes necessary to tow away, we will do so," he said.

The most recent blockade had apparently been sparked off by a non-traffic matter in Sea Point, when the police arrested someone there.

● The taxi driver arrested in Sea Point, Mr Timothy Nyesi, pleaded not guilty in the Cape Town Magistrate's Court to hindering the free flow of traffic, failing to comply with the directions of a police officer and resisting arrest.

He was warned to appear in court next month.

● See Leader Page

'Not sabotage'

Staff Reporter

METRO and police yesterday ruled out the possibility that sabotage caused the rail signal cables fire that led to commuters being stranded on Tuesday.

The fire followed a taxi blockade of city streets.

Metro operations manager Mr Piet Lootz said there was no evidence of sabotage. Police said they did not suspect foul play.

Taxi war: 'Pirate' licensing blamed

CT 25/3/93 Staff Reporter

THE taxi war would probably have been avoided had the Local Road Transport Board and the Department of Transport been more sensitive to problems in the taxi industry over the licensing of pirate taxis, the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry heard yesterday.

This was the submission of Mr Johan van der Berg, counsel for the ANC and others, at an inquiry into the taxi war.

Mr Van der Berg said that while it "was obvious that blame must be apportioned to taxi-drivers and operators for their general lawlessness and intolerance" and a "lack of commercial experience and reluctance to accept healthy competiton", the devasation could have been avoided had the board and the department been "more aware and sensitive" to problems in the industry.

The abolition of influx control in 1986 resulted in the industry opportunistically growing beyond any profitable capacity and, in effect, out of control, resulting in pirate drivers monopolising some lucrative routes which concretised the potential for violence, Mr Van der Berg said.

He said the problem of law enforcement and a deficiency of manpower in the local inspectorate, consisting of only 13 men, had still not been rectified.

Sabta's consistent view was that the underlying cause of the conflict was the over-issuing of permits, Mr Van der Berg said.

● Tow away the taxis — Kahn — Page 5

Codeta chairman shot dead

332

CT 26/4/93

Staff Reporter

THE chairman of Codeta, Mr Eric Mjoi, who played a major role in brokering peace in Cape Town's taxi conflicts, died at the weekend of gunshot wounds he suffered in an attack on Friday night.

Yesterday the mayor, Mr Frank van der Velde, expressed shock at the killing.

"He was one of the main leaders in the formation of Codeta and was a unifying force in bringing both Lagunya and Webta together," Mr Van der Velde said.

Mr Mjoi was an executive member of the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) before it merged with Lagunya.

Police said Mr Mjoi was shot in the head and arms by an unknown gunman on Friday night. He died on Saturday morning.

Taximen incensed with commission

THEO RAWANA (332)

THE SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) has lashed out at the Goldstone commission, accusing it of making "irresponsible statements" about the taxi industry.

Sabta warned the commission that such statements could trigger reactions the intensity of which "dwarfs those of the Mau Mau warriors". B/DAY 26/3/93

Sabta PRO Paradise Mahlangu was reacting yesterday to commission legal officer Johan Slabbert saying Sabta had failed to train any drivers with the R504 000 it had received in donations for improving drivers' business and driving skills.

"We now start to understand why some national liberation movements regarded the Goldstone commission as a discredited institution — a mouth that eats itself," Mahlangu said in a letter to Business Day.

He said the funds received from sources such as Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund, Toyota SA, the Department of Transport and the Energy Council were not given to Sabta directly, but to professional institutions like the CSIR and Project Spear for research, promotions and business and driver training.

"If the commission continues making irresponsible statements that affect the taxi industry without consulting us, we will reconsider our willingness to participate in giving evidence.

"If this commission continues with such insensitivity then we will not be blamed if the intensity of our members' reactions dwarfs those of the Mau Mau warriors," he added.

Mahlangu said his organisation had in the past resisted the temptation to respond to "some impulsive statements" from the commission.

"Finally, if this commission wishes to discuss the taxi industry's affairs through the media, they will find us willing and equal to the task. This commission should not play with fire — it has a tendency to burn," Mahlangu said.

RACY
FM 26/3/93 (332)

No break in logjam

What will it take to break the logjam surrounding still suspended Racy?

Racy, listed in the transport sector, hit the news late last year when the directors announced their intention to sell the main assets to the three Hendler brothers, all of whom are directors. The sale was structured in terms of Section 228 of the Companies Act, which provides that votes from a simple majority of shares are adequate approval.

The deal met stubborn resistance from disaffected minorities, led by former motor dealer Syd Gervis. He submitted an alternative (and conditional) offer which effectively valued the share at 56c, compared with 51c in the deal with the Hendlers. The offer was rejected, significantly because the Hendlers made it clear to their controlling shareholder partners, the Jacobsons, that failure to proceed with a legally binding agreement would result in their seeking appropriate redress.

Gervis then petitioned Trade & Industry Minister Derek Keys to investigate Racy in terms of S257 of the Companies Act. Minorities hope such an investigation will lead to an application to the courts under S252, which protects minorities against oppression.

Chairman Ivor Jacobson agrees the situation has now reached a stand-off. He hopes Keys will decline to send in inspectors. However, he is faced with near certain defeat at a resumed general meeting on Friday, which he postponed for a week following a suggestion by the Registrar of Companies.

He is asking shareholders to agree to some novel steps, including converting the ordinary shares into prefs, redeeming the prefs at a rate which equals the R12,3m received for the sale of assets and subsequently issuing new ordinaries to a single shareholder — Ivor's brother (and MD) Allan Jacobson.

Any alteration in the structure of a company's capital requires a special resolution and 75% approval. Jacobson is unlikely to win this. That will leave Racy in a state of limbo, sitting on cash of R12,3m and facing delisting, probably in August.

The major matter separating the parties is the price at which Racy's assets were sold. Jacobson says the deal was at arm's length, at a price which Standard Merchant Bank (SMB) agreed was fair and reasonable. Minorities dispute SMB's conclusion.

Asked why — if the money value preventing resolution is as little as 5c a share — he

FM 26/3/93. (332)

FOX

does not arrange to close the gap, Jacobson retorts that it's distasteful to him to give some parties "huge" windfall profits.

David Gleason

VENTER LEISURE FM 26/3/93

Trailing price

(332)

Since March last year, Venter Leisure & Commercial Trailers (Ventel) stock has lost a third of its 150c listing price — supporting the *FM*'s sentiment that it was an expensive buy (*Fox* February 7 1992). Chairman Pienkes du Plessis is baffled by the unfavourable share performance. He says the market is "penalising the group for unknown sins."

The original brains behind the business, Jasper Venter, sold control of the enterprise to its directors for R34,3m before the listing in September 1991. Payment took the form of 5m Venter shares valued at R7,5m and R26,8m cash. Venter does, however, remain the second-largest shareholder, with 15%.

Unfortunately, for Ventel, credibility was lost in the pre-listing restructuring, owing to the perception held by some investors that the company listed was not the same as the original company with its solid record.

Ventel's pro forma earnings for the 12 months to end-December 1992 were in line with the listing forecasts. EPS were 0,1c up on the predicted 21,1c. However, while the turnover index increased 15% (actual figure undisclosed), pre-interest profit improved only 6%. Export development, with an increased advertising campaign, are offered as answers to the narrowing margins. And, referring to the failure to disclose turnover, Du Plessis simply says it is a sensitive issue and any release of units sold would affect the group's position in the market.

But what is the Venter name worth? The balance sheet includes intangibles (trademarks) valued at R15,6m. When these are deducted, tangible NAV is 36,9c a share — about half the published NAV of 68,1c. It's also well below the R1 share price.

Confidence in the share could return if Ventel's export market meets management expectations. Fewer than 60 trailers were exported in 1991 and 300 in 1992. Exports of 3 000 are targeted for this year.

Shareholders have received the forecast 9,2c a share dividend and, as an alternative, they can take up 9,2 Ventel shares for every 100 held. But the 4,7 p:e is a fraction of the 8,5 based on the listing price. Up to now, management has kept its part of the bargain and presented shareholders with the goods but the market continues to take a cautious view.

Kate Rushton

IMPHOLD FM 26/3/93 (332)

Expanding in tankers

As more stringent road transport quality regulations are being implemented, companies like Imphold, with large truck transport operations, may benefit from business lost by smaller operators hit by the additional costs of complying with the new requirements.

Imphold has completed another acquisition to extend its truck systems division, a significant part of the fast-growing motor-related group. The R88,5m purchase of Tanker Services, funded entirely by issuing

FM 26/3/93 (332)

8,86m new shares, includes R55,6m of net assets and a R32m loan account.

Tanker Services is SA's largest tanker transportation group, with a fleet of several hundred trucks and trailers. The trucks transport a variety of products including fuel, solvents, cyanide, food products, cement, fly ash and bitumen. Tanker Services has an impressive client list including about 30 large companies which contribute more than two-thirds of sales. They include Engen, Sasol, African Products, AECI and PPC.

Executive chairman Bill Lynch estimates Tanker Services has nearly a quarter of the tank truck market, the largest single share. Lynch expects the full earnings effect to come through in the year to June 1994. Tanker Services will contribute only six months of earnings to the 1993 results, and this is expected to be modest: the tanker business is seasonal, with the second half of the year tending to be busier than the first.

Imphold estimates the acquisition would have boosted EPS for the 12 months to December 1992 to 57c, on a total 74,8m post-acquisition weighted-average issued shares. This compares to 50,1c calculated on a pre-acquisition weighted average.

The pro forma contribution from the trucks division to group pre-tax profit was about 30% for the year to June 1992. This is not expected to change much in 1993, but Lynch estimates it may rise to about 40% by 1994. Margins on the trucks division were about 10% for the year to June 1992, though the absorption of Tanker Services is expected to narrow these slightly.

The effect of the acquisition on gearing is expected to be positive. Of the R88,6m paid for Tanker Services, R32m was used to repay its bank borrowings. The increase in net assets will reduce gearing from its current level: at December 1992 gearing was conservative at 0,36.

The acquisition fits in with Imphold's strategy and its business mix — examined in the *FM* last week. The share price has come off from R10 to R9,90 over the past few days, putting Imphold on a rating of 19,8. Don't be put off by the comparatively high rating — in this case it's confirmation that the market has high regard for this group.

Louise Randall

Growth expected soon at struggling Flitestar

(332) STEPHANE BOTHMA

DELAYS in the proper implementation of the domestic air transport policy had eroded the net worth of Flitestar — but not to the extent that operations could not be supported in the foreseeable future, Flitestar MD Jan Blake said at the weekend.

Implementation of the Competition Board recommendations regarding its main competitor SAA and continued growth in Flitestar's average passenger yield, indicated the carrier would be viable by the middle of this year, Blake said in an interview.

Last week's announcement by SAA of an increase of 7% in domestic air fares — which would be followed by Flitestar within the next few days — would contribute to Flitestar reaching at least a breakeven situation soon. B/DAY 29/3/93

In addition, the airline planned to introduce three new international services to Germany, India and the Seychelles this year. Currently its only international destination was Bahrain.

"It is a well known fact that Flitestar is operating at a loss and has showed no profit since starting operations in October 1991," Blake said.

Problems experienced by the airline since its inception were the extremely high costs of ground handling services and an ineffective reservations system, both supplied by SAA until recenty.

"It took considerable time to change the supplier of the (ground handling) services, but as from February 1 we have changed to Safair with a monthly saving to Flitestar of about R800 000," Blake said. In addition, from April Flitestar would use the KLM Corda reservation system.

The A

Cape AG snubbed over taxi chaos

(332)

ARG 29/3/93

Kahn told to keep out of law and order decisions

STEFAANS BRÜMMER
Staff Reporter

THE city council has told Cape Attorney-General Frank Kahn, who criticised authorities' "soft" response to the Tuesday Strand Street taxi blockade, to keep his nose out of law and order and traffic control decisions.

Chairman of the utilities and works committee Kenneth Penkin said in a statement that comments by Mr Kahn, "which take a strong line on irresponsible behaviour by minibus taxis, are fully supported".

But he said Mr Kahn should "correspondingly respect the decisions of those in charge of law and order and traffic control".

Mr Kahn was reported to have said he could not see why traffic authorities and police had not towed away taxis blocking Strand Street to protest against the arrest of a colleague and why drivers had not been charged immediately.

"It is unacceptable that law and order is held up by this kind of extortion," he was quoted as saying.

Mr Penkin reacted: "The officers... on the ground at the time of an incident have to take responsibility for the manner in which they restore order.

"It is not always in the interests of public safety to meet a confrontational or riotous situation with confrontational action, which might include towaways.

"In the past, the police and the traffic authorities have both handled mass protest actions in Cape Town firmly and responsibly and have prevented situations from developing into riots."

A similar war of words broke out between Witwatersrand Attorney-General Klaus von Lieres and Johannesburg City Council members during the bloody taxi chaos in early February in central Johannesburg.

Mr Von Lieres condemned the release of taxi drivers by traffic chief Mike Davis in an attempt to defuse the situation. City council officials were quoted later as saying Mr Von Lieres's intervention and the declaration of an unrest area by Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel had prolonged the crisis.

Mr Penkin said police had taken charge of the Strand Street situation.

"The senior police officer in charge at the scene, in consultation with the senior traffic officers, handled the situation in a manner that did not create a dangerous situation for members of the public approaching the railway station at peak afternoon travelling time."

He said two European community peace observers had been present and were satisfied with the way the situation had been handled.

Mr Penkin said taxi associations had been warned that if they did not use "channels of communication" to senior municipal or police officers and embarked on "wildcat public protest action", drivers would be prosecuted and face heavy fines.

Taxi permits could also be withdrawn by the Road Transportation Board and taxis could be towed away and impounded.

CT 30/3/93

Expert 'biased, reckless'

THE SA Police asked the Goldstone Commission yesterday to reject evidence given by city council consultant Ms Helen Zille saying she was biased, reckless and untrustworthy.

Addressing the committee probing taxi violence in Cape Town, Mr G D Griesel, SC, representing the police, said none of Ms Zille's evidence on what she was told by others, on the perceptions of the community or inferences she drew as a "so-called" expert should be accepted.

Ms Zille had built, on her interpretation of evidence, an elaborate edifice of the SAP helping Webta against Lagunya.

She would not accept that police had positioned themselves between the warring groups at the Nyanga bus terminus to keep the peace, rather she believed, it was to give advantage to Webta, Mr Griesel said. [redacted] (332)

Singapore Airlines may add city flight

CT 30/3/93

(352)

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

SINGAPORE Airlines — which will be calling at Durban from today — is considering the introduction of a Cape Town service in April next year, regional manager Tan Cheong Beng said yesterday.

"We have an office in Cape Town which is doing a lot of business at the moment.

"We are being allowed a fourth SA flight from April 1993 and will be looking at passenger numbers very carefully in the next six months to see if they justify a Cape Town service.

"But even if we do not come to Cape Town next April we expect to do so not later than 1995."

The airline now has three services a week between Johannesburg and Singapore. One is by way of Mauritius, one nonstop between Johannesburg and Singapore and one calling at Durban in addition to Johannesburg.

Tan said passenger numbers had grown by 94% since Singapore Airlines introduced two non-stop flights a week to SA in March last year. At present 60% of passengers on the route are tourists and 40% business people.

But he expects a big surge in business passengers after a trade fair organised by the SA Foreign Trade Organisation (Safto) in August.

The two SAA flights calling at Singapore were adequate at present and there was no plan for a third flight.

Directorate Traffic Safety

EASTER ROAD SAFETY

R 9919

Department of Transport

Taxi organisations unite on road safety

Sowetan 30/3/93 (332)

■ UNITED WE STAND Concern at rate of collisions a major concern:

SOUTH AFRICA'S THREE MAJOR taxi associations - Sabta, Nafto and Fento - have united under the banner of National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) Transport Safety Committee in order to conduct a joint traffic safety campaign.

The Taxi Safety Committee is concerned about the increasing rate of collisions in the taxi industry, especially during holiday seasons.

A NTPF spokesman says: "We need to work together to make South Africa conscious of traffic safety, not only during Easter but every day. Being a responsible road user needs to become a socially-acceptable norm.

"The NTPF is committed to a campaign of combating the war on the roads and the resulting carnage."

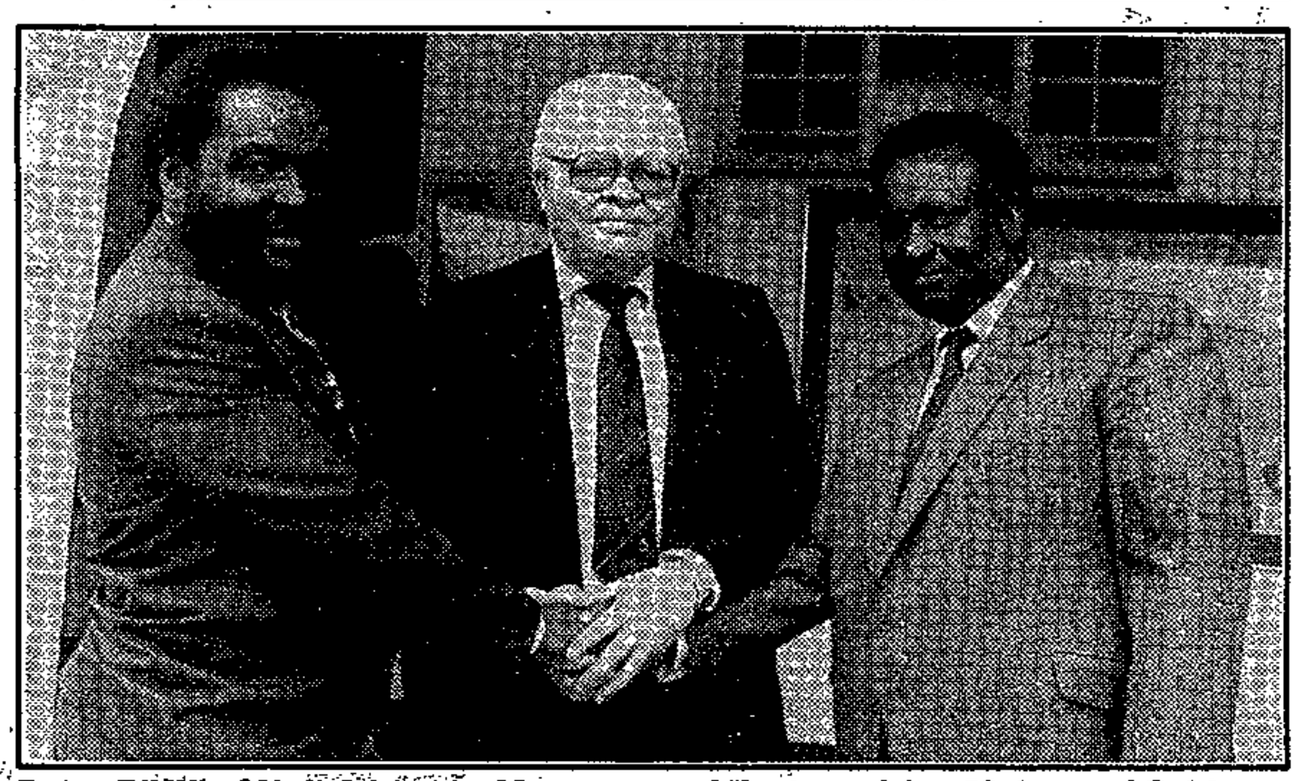
The NTPF campaign - which will be co-ordinated from the Shell Ultra City on the N1 to Pretoria - includes a plan to have a patrol of 20 minibuses on all the major taxi routes.

These routes are:

- Pretoria - Pietersburg
- Johannesburg - Newcastle/Estcourt
- Johannesburg - Bloemfontein/Welkom
- Queenstown - Sterkspruit
- Pietersburg - Beit Bridge/Venda
- Port Elizabeth - King William's Town
- Middelburg - Nelspruit
- Pietermaritzburg - Kokstad

The patrollers will be accompanied by qualified mechanics at all times and the function of patrol vehicles will be:

- To attend to the problems of drivers and passengers in the event of breakdowns.
- To transport passengers to the nearest convenient place to wait for an alternative vehicle.
- To utilise the service of the patrol vehicle mechanics for minor breakdowns.
- To enlist the assistance of breakdown service companies in case of a major mechanical problems.
- To assist in whatever manner possible in collisions and any emergencies.
- To work in close liaison with road traffic officials and members of the SAP and the Southern African Holiday Traffic Planning Committee.



Peter Riball of Nafto, Lennox Magwazwa of Fento and Joe Mabaso of Sabta join hands for safety.

'No finding on taxis possible'

CT 31/5/93 (332)

Staff Reporter

THE Department of Transport yesterday told the Goldstone Commission that it was not possible to make a finding on whether the issuing of too many permits caused the taxi violence in the Western Cape.

Representing the department, Mr Johan le Roux was responding to the accusation that the issuing of too many permits contributed to the violence.

He informed the committee that in the 1980s the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) called for the issuing of permits to illegal operators as long as those operators belonged to a recognised national taxi organisation.

However, in 1986 Sabta asked the government to limit the issuing of permits because "Sabta was afraid of competition".

Mr Le Roux said that with the scrapping of the Influx Control Act, huge numbers of people moved to cities which lead to a "dramatic" increase in the demand for transportation.

The phenomenon of pirate operators mushroomed in such proportions that any system in place would have had difficulty adjusting.

He said that criticism levelled at the department and Local Road Transportation Board could only be valid if based on the supposition that shortcomings could be improved upon by replacing the system with something better.

NEWS *Taxi body hit by new dispute with Taxsam*

Sabta rocked by internal struggle

332

Sowetan 31/3/93

By Mzimkulu Malunga

SERIOUS REVOLT *Taxsam accused of failing to keep promises to members:*

INTERNAL disputes are threatening to plunge one of South Africa's largest taxi organisations into disarray. The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association is faced with yet another internal revolt in less than six months — and this time it looks more serious than ever.

At the root of the dispute is the marketing arm of the organisation, Taxi SA Marketing.

Unlike on previous occasions, those opposed to Taxsam have now organised themselves into a structure called the Save Our Sabta committee with the aim of challenging both Sabta and the company.

They claim senior Sabta officials have lost touch with the membership.

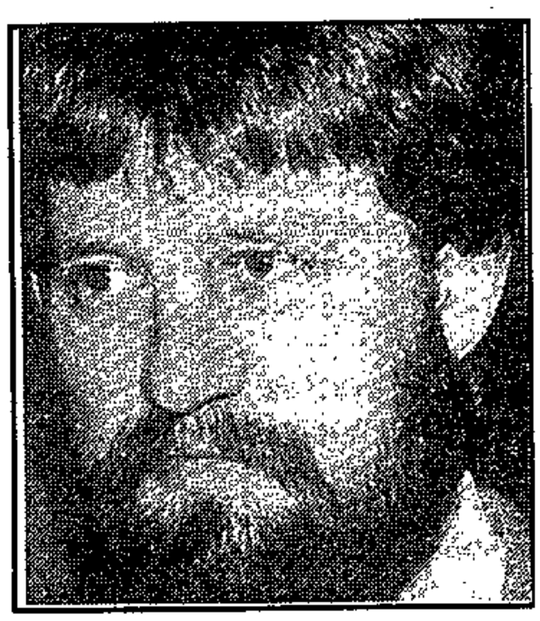
"What we are saying is, the money that Taxsam receives from corporate South Africa should benefit the members of Sabta, not the shareholders of the company," argues SOS representative Mr Gerald Ferror.

For instance, he says, the Taxsam representatives promised Sabta members in Natal in February that their monthly vehicle instalments would come down; instead they have stayed at R3 000 or more plus insurance.

"Taxsam always makes promises to Sabta members but these are never fulfilled," says Ferror.

Ferror is one of the six Natal Sabta executive committee members dismissed early this month by the organisation's national office and officials of Taxsam for working with a rival taxi marketing company — TaxiMax.

The six officials are challenging the sacking in court and an application to declare Sabta national office's action unlawful is due to be heard in court soon, says their lawyer, Mr Ian Cox of Durban.



James Chapman ... isolated.

There is a feeling among Sabta's grassroots that Taxsam runs the organisation and tells the elected leadership what to do.

The SOS says it has the support of eight out of Natal's 11 regions, the majority of regions in the Western Cape and three in the Transvaal.

"Sabta is our organisation. We fought countless battles to put it where it is today, so we will not just sit back and watch things go wrong," says Ferror.

Sabta has been at pains in recent months to isolate Mr James Chapman, the man behind TaxiMax and former joint MD of Taxsam.

Chapman fell out of favour with the organisation a year ago and became a consultant to TaxiMax.

So far Sabta has been uncompromising in dealing with members or affiliates who give business to marketing companies other than Taxsam.

Many have been expelled. Others are facing disciplinary action.

Though the campaign appears to be working with statutory bodies like the Department of Transport, it does not seem to be gaining support among the membership.

In response to media reports on the formation of SOS, Sabta's PRO, Paradise Mahlangu, dismissed the group as "faceless people" aiming to disrupt the smooth running of the organisation. He said those who were not satisfied with the management of Sabta were told in August last year to use constitutional channels to voice their protests. "We are not going to be intimidated by faceless people claiming to represent 16 regions. Some even have the audacity to call themselves high-ranking Sabta executive members," says Mahlangu.

On the complaint from the SOS that Taxsam officials are overpaid, Mahlangu said: "We can only suspect that a former senior employee of Taxsam — the only mandated company to do marketing for Sabta — used the information he got while in the employ of the company to discredit Taxsam."

Mahlangu said anybody who was not happy with organisation was free to disaffiliate.

Lufthansa beefs up service to city

By AUDREY D'ANGELO (332) CT 1/4/93

BOOKINGS to fly by Lufthansa from Cape Town have exceeded expectations by almost 50% since the German carrier introduced two services a week in November, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

Bookings for April, when a third — all-passenger — flight carrying no cargo will be introduced on Fridays show that 40% of passengers on planes calling at Cape Town will board here.

"Our Cape operation has yielded astounding figures," the spokeswoman commented. "Our January-February sales this year are up by almost 25% compared with the same period last year."

Load factors are currently averaging more than 67% and revenue from the SA route is above break-even point.

Some of the passengers are Cape Town people travelling on business. Germany is a major trading partner of SA, particularly for the clothing and textile trade, and cargo carried from this country by Lufthansa planes is mostly textiles and car components.

But many are German tourists returning home. Lufthansa's head office in Frankfurt is running a R2m campaign, in conjunction with Satour to promote awareness of SA as a tourist destination. The result has been satisfactory but, the spokeswoman said, Lufthansa expects "an explosion of tourism to SA" once political stability has been achieved.

This is why it will put on a seventh weekly flight between SA and Germany in November.

"The most successful airline is the one that can offer a daily flight, particularly for business passengers," the spokeswoman explained. "If an airline offers only two flights a week the passenger has to plan to fit in with this."

NEWS IN BRIEF

B/DAY 1/4/93

Miners resume work

NORMAL underground work has resumed at Genmin's Beatrix Gold Mine. All workers, except for 400 Zulu speakers whom management moved to the St Helena Hostel after they clashed with Pondos, reported for duty on Tuesday.

Gengold spokesman Albert de Beer said a peacekeeping committee of workers and management would monitor the hostels and mine main entrance..

B/DAY 1/4/93

Film subsidies returned

THE Home Affairs Department said in Pretoria yesterday film companies which misappropriated government subsidies had paid back more than R1m. Some companies, however, still faced criminal charges.

B/DAY 1/4/93

'Last post' sounds

THE SA Defence Force's first retrenchment parade took place at Cape Town Castle yesterday when about 400 Western Province Command members were bid farewell to the strains of Auld Lang Syne.

Nearly 6 000 SADF personnel have been retrenched recently. The SADF budget has been slashed by more than a third in the past five years..

B/DAY 1/4/93

'Call up jobless only'

THE unemployed should be called up for national service to combat crime and violence and unionists who instigated labour unrest should be held criminally responsible, SA Iron and Steel Union manager Nic Celliers said yesterday. The suggestions are part of a security and commerce plan the AWB and the union want to discuss with President F W de Klerk.

B/DAY 1/4/93

Employment Act

WE REPORTED incorrectly yesterday that: "As legislation now stands, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act will grant to farmworkers the right to strike." The Act does not deal with strikes. Business Day regrets the error.

REPORTS: Business Day Reporters, Own Correspondent, Sapa.

AHI wants ceiling on wages, prices

B/DAY 1/4/93

TIM MARSLAND

THE Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) has asked its members to hold wage and price increases to 5% or lower for the next two years in line with the declining trend in money supply growth and inflation.

AHI chief economist Nick Barnardt said yesterday his organisation had taken the decision in line with its support of Reserve Bank policies to combat inflation.

The decision was also aimed at trying to prevent further declines in business volumes.

"The AHI general management accepted a motion at its six-monthly meeting to encourage members to hold price and wage increases to below 5%. The message of discipline should be communicated to members and the broader business sector," he said.

Inflation would peak close to 11% as a result of the VAT, fuel price and other increases included in the Budget, Barnardt said.

However, he saw it falling sharply after that, possibly to 5% in 1994.

He said any temptation to raise interest rates to protect the balance of payments should be resisted in light of the decline in inflation and money supply growth as well as the deepening recession.

The pressure on the balance of payments should rather be managed by mainly continuing the fluid exchange rate policy and the "overall laudable monetary policy flexibility" of the past six months.

In the current recession, a moderate real depreciation of the rand would have a minimal negative effect on inflation, but would actively encourage exports.

He said the AHI continued to support the Reserve Bank's focus on disciplined monetary expansion, which implied that interest and exchange rates were largely determined by the markets.

Once the balance of payments stabilised, he expected a further cut in interest rates in response to low credit demand.

This would partially offset negative effects the hike in VAT and other taxes would have on the business cycle and could help prevent a deepening of the recession, he said.

Talk of VW layoffs 'premature'

B/DAY 1/4/93

ERICA JANKOWITZ and EDWARD WEST

VW SA said yesterday it was too early to say it would be retrenching more than 2 000 workers this year.

But up to 1 000 workers were in danger of being laid off in the near future. VW human resources director Brian Smith said 500-1 000 jobs at the Uitenhage plant were "currently under review" because of a sharp drop in exports and a declining local market.

Numsa national organiser Gavin Hartford said on Tuesday the car manufacturer had proposed rationalising 2 270 of its workforce this year.

VW said talks of staff reduction was "premature" and dependent "on the impact of the recent Budget on the local market, the outcome of various export orders currently under discussion and the success of the new Golf and Jetta range".

Smith stressed the company would try to "achieve reductions through voluntary packages offered to all employees, early retirements, outsourcing and natural attrition".

He said VW SA was renegotiating a contract to supply Jettas to China. The future of workers involved with exports to China would depend on the outcome of the negotiations and on local market conditions.

Putco, Sabta pledge not to raise fares

B/DAY 1/4/93

THEO RAWANA

PUTCO and the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) fares will not increase when fuel prices go up tomorrow.

Putco MD Jack Visser said yesterday the bus company would absorb the increase of 16c/l on diesel for three months. Sabta also said it would not increase its fares and was negotiating with the Mineral and Energy Affairs Department for a "special consideration" for taxis.

Visser refused to say how much it would cost Putco to absorb the increase. "We are so close to our annual increase on July 1 that we did not feel it necessary to raise fares now."

Sabta public affairs manager Cyprian Lebese said the organisation had given Mineral and Energy Affairs "a few options". The taxi organisation expected a reply today.

Postal tariffs and suburban train fares went up at midnight last night and petrol will cost 15c/l more at the coast, and 16c/l more in the interior.

Postal tariffs will cost an average of 30% more. A stamp for a standard letter will cost 45c from today.

Suburban train fares will cost an average of 9,75% more, but the SA Rail Commuter Corporation has assured its customers that there will be no further fare increases this year.

Sapa reports that cheaper dialling times for overseas telephone calls will be introduced today.

Telkom said the standard rate to more than 100 countries would drop by about 7% and the new off-peak rate would be up to 20% cheaper than the standard rate. But VAT on calls would increase to 14% on April 7.

Taximen face fuel hike dilemma

(332)

■ Sabta and Nafto seek Government intervention over costs

Sowetan 2/4/93

THE taxi industry is in a dilemma over fare increases after the petrol price went up last night.

The two taxi organisations found themselves caught in the middle yesterday while trying to formulate a position prior to a 16 cents a litre petrol hike that came into effect at midnight.

The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association resolved yesterday to leave the decision to its affiliates.

In the meantime, the organisation will continue to negotiate with the Government for relief.

The National African Federated Transport Organisation said it would not immediately increase fares. Instead, the organisation is seeking a meeting with the Government to discuss the petrol price issue.

Star 2/4/93

Some relief for bus and taxi commuters

(332)

Consumer Reporter

Petrol is now up 10 percent and while Reef motorists have been paying 16c more for a litre since midnight, commuters will be relieved to know that Putco and Sabta have not increased their fares.

Putco MD Jack Visser confirmed yesterday that Putco would absorb the increases until the end of June.

Putco's annual fare rises would be implemented only from July 1 as the company was still calculating overall cost increases in the industry, he said.

Asked if he expected the July increases to be fairly steep, Visser said he could not say at this stage as Putco was presently negotiating costs with the Department of Transport and the National Transport Commission regarding the increases.

Although Sabta spokesman Cyprian Lebese said the minibus taxi fares would not be increased today, he warned commuters the fares could go up "quite soon". The association was still awaiting the results of discussions among members countrywide.

Train commuters have not been so lucky. Suburban train fares went up by an average of 9,75 percent from Wednesday.

A spokesman for the SA Rail Commuters' Association said the fare increases were well below the inflation rate and were the first in 15 months.

QUICK HOLDINGS FM 2/4/93

Rapid returns (332)

Few investments yield a 1 200% return. But that is exactly what investors, who bought Quick Holdings (Quickco) shares at 1c last April and sold them for 13c this month, would have achieved. The development capital-listed group doubled EPS last year. Its core activity, freight custom clearing and forwarding, contributed R216 000 — or 82% — of pre-tax profit.

On March 18, Quickco issued a cautionary notifying shareholders that negotiations about an acquisition were in progress. An announcement published last week with preliminary results revealed the purchase was a property company — Cairnbrogie Estates (Pty). The price of R1,56m is to be met through issue of 26m new shares.

Though Hong Kong-based Yin Wo (30%) remains the main influence behind decisions, local management was responsible for the logic behind the diversification into an already strained property market. Financial director Malcolm Lucas says the freight business requires a huge working capital. Also, the property company was being offered in exchange for shares — far more feasible for Quickco than cash.

Two acquisitions were made in a similar manner at the beginning of the year. Property Hilltop Estates (Pty) was bought for 23m Quickco shares and shipping repair company Dusty Miller (Pty) for 27m shares.

Lucas says the acquisitions, payable through shares at 6c each, will further strengthen the balance sheet and improve gearing. But what is the effect on earnings and NAV? Lucas contends EPS would have

Cont

remained at 0,22c if the acquisition had been effective for the 1992 financial year-end and NAV would have increased from 3,4c to 3,8c. He says the three new subsidiaries will provide enough profit to leave earnings almost undiluted.

Liquidity is improving. Gearing eased slightly to 90% from 105%, but remains high. Long-term borrowings dropped 19% to R672 000, while interest- bearing short-term debt increased 60%. Lucas says the increased capital base, resulting from the acquisitions, could reduce gearing to 50% by the end of financial 1993.

Quickco is looking towards another acquisition. Its international sea freight division may be enlarged by a purchase of a transport company specialising in this field. If negotiations prove successful, a new CE will be appointed, earnings will again double and shareholders may see a maiden dividend. Taxed profit could even reach the JSE main board requirements. Quickco was and remains, a good, if speculative, buy. *Kate Rushton*

Threat accompanies taxi plea on petrol

THEO RAWANA (332)

GOVERNMENT's refusal to aid the taxi industry in the face of the latest fuel price rise could trigger action similar to recent city taxi blockades, National Federated Transport Organisation chairman Peter Rabali said yesterday. B/DAY 2/4/93.

Rabali said the Taxi Task Group, which was recognised as the sole representative of the industry, was spearheading moves to get Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett to come to the aid of the taxi industry. An application had been made to meet the Minister.

"It is unfair that farmers, who are not as big an industry as the taxis, should be granted a reduction by government, while taxis are not. We hope the Minister will give us a rebate as an industry.

"We are trying to avoid problems like the blockade of Johannesburg in February. Government knows that we are not making money in this business," Rabali said.

He added that his organisation would not increase fares in the wake of today's increase in fuel prices because it expected "good answers" from government.

Bus company Putco and taxi organisation Sabta this week said they would not increase their fares.

Uniserv delivers on improvement promise

B/DAY 24/93 (332)

MARCIA KLEIN

FREIGHT service group United Service Technologies (Uniserv) has reported a significant increase in earnings in the year to end-February, and has resumed its annual dividend payments.

Attributable income soared to R6,7m from only R16 000 previously. Fully diluted earnings (before the extraordinary item) were 22,8c (2,6c) a share, and a dividend of 7c a share was declared.

Turnover figures are not given, but operating income rose nearly fourfold to R16m from R4,3m, and pre-tax income was R12,6m from only R2,1m in the previous year. After lower taxation, income after tax was R12,4m against R1,4m previously.

Directors said the group had delivered what it had promised at the August interim stage. The improved performance in all the divisions was expected to continue.

They said Burlington Air Express and Burlington Ocean Express continued to show improvement on the previous year.

Express delivery company Sun Couriers had a better second half on the back of a reorganised infrastructure, and in-city messenger service Mounties made a more meaningful contribution to profits.

But the export division continued to present problems. Despite a downsizing exercise, its losses continued as the drought and limited foreign exchange led to poor trading conditions in Africa. The losses would continue but at a lower level.

Directors said results from Uniserv's international subsidiaries would be accounted for on a dividends received only basis "due to the uncertainty of currency remittances from some countries".

An extraordinary item of R4,8m reflected the write-down of investments in thse territories.

Overnight Express, acquired in financial 1992, traded poorly. Uniserv had begun more rationalisation. The investment in Overnight Express has been written off and shown as an extraordinary item.

An improved performance in all divisions was expected in the coming year.

Uniserv has twice cautioned shareholders that it was involved in negotiations. Last month it said the negotiations would be concluded within six months.

Natal taxis hit by Mafia terror

C/Press 4/4/93

Hijackers demand 'protection fees'

(332)

By FRED KHUMALO

THE hijacking of an Umlazi taxi has exposed a Mafia-style racket in which taxi operators in a part of the Durban township are being forced to pay protection fees to an armed gang.

A taxi travelling between the township and Engonyameni, a settlement outside Umlazi, was intercepted and the driver forced at gunpoint to drive to a secluded spot.

The hijackers, driving a maroon Nissan Sentra, then commandeered the driver to a disused building.

Although the driver was unwilling to talk, City Press learnt that the owner of the taxi had not been paying a "protection fee" to the hijackers, understood to belong to a gang called the "Bush Boys", which has Engonyameni in its stranglehold.

The "Bush Boys" have taken over the houses of people who fled the area at the height of a bloody conflict between two clans inhabiting the area.

One of the passengers told City Press how the gunmen spoke roughly to the driver so that when he came back to the taxi he was shaking, unable to even start the car, and unwilling to talk.

Taxi operators are paying amounts of between R200 and R300 a month as a "protection fee" to use the Engonyameni route.

Unwilling to pay the "protection fee" and afraid of getting caught in the crossfire between factions battling for the control of Engonyameni, many operators have stopped servicing the route.

Pupils attending the four schools in the area now have to foot it to and from school.

This has proven to be fraught with danger as one girl was this week raped by fellow pupils while walking home.

Engonyameni, ravaged by faction fights since last year, has been the scene of violent confrontations between a faction from Dulela and one from Mandleni.

However, a criminal element has crept into what has for a long time been a simple faction fight – hence the "protection fee" racket.

The office of Isipingo SA Police spokesman Maj Danny Pillay confirmed that the hijacking of the taxi had been reported and the police were investigating.

"We have since despatched some of our men to the area to look after the people there," said Pillay's spokesman.

The spokesman said the police were aware of criminal elements forcing people to pay "protection fees", but said it was difficult to investigate as the "so-called gang does not seem to have an organised structure" and witnesses are not forthcoming with evidence.

Chief Ndoda Cele, the reigning chief in Engonyameni, said although the warring factions had recently signed a peace pact, the situation in the area was now out of control as criminals were holding the area to ransom.

The criminals were making a mockery of the peace overtures as ordinary people have been given no respite – as if a peace settlement had not been reached, the chief said.

Uniserv ends the year with a bang

STAR 5/4/93

United Service Technologies (Uniserv) more than trebled operating income to R15,96 million, while taxed income rocketed from R1,44 million to R12,4 million in the year to February.

Attributable income before an extraordinary item of R4,78 million was R11,47 million, against only R16 000 the previous year.

Earnings a share on a fully diluted basis totalled 22,8c (2,7c). Annual dividends have been resumed with a 7c payment.

The directors expect the improved performance in all divisions to continue.

Burlington Air Express and Burlington Ocean Express having continued to show improvement, despite the poor economic climate.

332

Contribution

Sun Couriers, working off a reorganised infrastructure, had a better second half, while Mounties made a better contribution to profit.

The export division continues to present problems, though these have been eased after downsizing.

Losses nevertheless continue as a result of poor trading conditions in Africa, resulting primarily from the drought and limited foreign exchange.

Although improved results are expected, this division is budgeting for a loss in the current financial year.

Because of the uncertainty of currency remittances from some countries, Uniserv has decided to account for the results of these subsidiaries only on the basis of dividends received.

The extraordinary item is a reflection of the write-down of investments in these territories.

Overnight Express continued to trade poorly, despite the closure of certain operations.

Further rationalisation has begun and the investment in this company has been written off and shown as an extraordinary item.

Uniserv's balance sheet reflects the benefits of the improved earnings performance, with gearing reduced. — Sapa.

ing a World Health Organisation meeting in Brazzaville, Congo.

About 275-million Africans, or more than half the continent's 500-million people, were infected. The disease was responsible for 1-million deaths a year, he said.

Beit Bridge warning

ZIMBABWE could lose a substantial volume of tourist business over the Easter holidays if facilities at the Beit Bridge border post were not adequate for the large number of tourists expected from SA, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Zimbabwe president Charles Tawenga said.

He said problems at the border post during the December/January holidays caused much unfavourable comment about Zimbabwe in SA.

REPORTS: Business Reporter, Sapa-AFP.

of the year were 9% lower for clothing and 5% for textiles. On the other hand retail sales of clothing rose by 4% in real terms in the first 10 months of last year.

Werbeloff attributed this anomaly to the larger share of the market being taken up by second hand and imported clothing and the rise of the homeland and informal manufacturing sectors.

Foreign interest in investing in SA clothing and textile industries had surged in recent months, particularly among US, Belgian and British importers, Werbeloff said.

"The possibilities for exports of clothing and textiles from SA into the EC, eastern Europe, the North Atlantic Free Trade Area and even the Far East are very attractive and these opportunities are enhanced by a variety of export inquiries from these markets," Werbeloff said.

clothing and textile industries.

Van Zyl noted that SA labour costs were competitive with those of Far Eastern clothing manufacturers and the clothing industry also had a well developed infrastructure and a highly demanding retail sector.

Billionaire pledges riches for enrichment

LINDA ENSOR

CAPE TOWN — Since US billionaire and philanthropist George Soros made £1bn on the Black Wednesday sterling crisis last year he has been repeatedly questioned by the aspirant rich for tips as to how he did it.

"I have spent more time talking about Black Wednesday than I took to do it," Soros said in reply to questions at a Cape Town Press Club function yesterday. He was fairly nonchalant about the whole affair, saying that taking a substantial position on sterling was a reasonable risk assumed in the normal course of business.

Soros took substantial short positions in the anticipation of a decline in the value of sterling when it departed from the ERM — the currency was effectively devalued by 15% when this happened.

"It was an unusual bet with limited risk. If nothing happened we could have lost between 1% and 2%, or the difference between the buying and selling price."

Soros is more interested in talking about his philanthropic work. He has just donated $15m to the newly established Open Society Foundation of SA which will assist in building the institutions for an open society in SA. This amount would be increased if the foundation was successful.

Soros has established 19 foundations in eastern Europe since embarking on the open society project in 1979. Born a Jew in Hungary, he lived through the Nazi occupation and the beginnings of communism, experiences which inculcated the value he attaches to an open society.

Soros felt a need to intervene in the former Soviet Union as the West had not been willing to assist in the transition to an open society. He lauded US President Bill Clinton's recently announced aid package as a belated recognition of that need.

"The key contribution the West could make to the former Soviet Union would be to introduce a stable monetary system."

He felt the great lesson to be learnt from the collapse of eastern Europe was that after the breakdown of an oppressive system without constructive evolution the society was more likely to fall back into anarchy or another form of tyranny. It was this fate which SA had to avoid.

Minister.

Comair fares go up by 8%

STEPHANE BOTHMA

COMAIR has increased its air fares by 8% — making the carrier 33% cheaper on the popular Johannesburg-Cape Town route than competitors Flitestar and SAA.

The move followed earlier announcements by SAA and Flitestar of an 11% across the board increase on their domestic services effective from yesterday.

Comair commercial director Bert van der Linden said yesterday fares offered by the carrier on the Johannesburg-Cape Town route had always been substantially lower than on other carriers.

Since the start of operations on the route on August 3 last year Comair charged 25% less than its competitors, he said.

A Johannesburg-Cape Town return fare on Comair will now cost R768, compared to SAA's R1 130. Flitestar charges R1 118.

The domestic fare increases coincided with increases in VAT, passenger service charges, navigational charges and fuel, and followed a recent recommendation by the Competition Board that fares needed to be increased by all players.

Grindrod optimistic

B/Day 8/4/93 EDWARD WEST (332)

THE Grindrod Unicorn Group (Grincor) has forecast higher earnings in 1993 due to an improvement in operating results and the sale of two roll-on roll-off vessels, chairman Murray Grindrod said.

He said in the shipping and transport group's annual report prospects of an upturn in international shipping in the fourth quarter, cost controls and market share increases gave Grindrod a more favourable outlook.

As a result the group would continue seeking opportunities to acquire ships, Grindrod said. During 1992 two second-hand multi-purpose 15 000 ton vessels were bought and progress payments were made on two ships being built in Poland resulting in capex of R105m.

The strategic partnership created by the investment of French-based SDV in Grindrod Holdings had led to the group acquiring a 25% stake in SDV (UK).

A Botswana freight company was also purchased in a 50:50 venture with SDV. Further investment opportunities were being actively pursued with SDV.

Elimination of loss-making operations, reduced costs and increased market share in most divisions would boost trading profits.

Steps had been taken to reduce costs in transport and container depot operations.

FLITESTAR (332)

Hitting some turbulence

FM 9/4/93.

Is Flitestar up for sale? Rumours persist that a shareholder wants to shed all or part of the upstart airline, which is believed to have lost R30m in the second half of last year.

Safmarine has a 37,5% stake in the airline, the De Muelenaere family holds 18,75% and Rentmeesterbeleggings 43,75%. Last week, Rentbel posted a R12,9m loss for the six-month period, mainly attributable to Flitestar. These results gave impetus to speculation but there have been strong denials from several players. (332)

Flitestar MD Jan Blake says there is no point in selling "now that we have turned the corner and will start making profits. None of the shareholders is trying to sell shares. According to our articles of association, shareholders first have to offer their stake to the other shareholders." FM 9/4/93.

Piet van Aswegen, Safmarine's representative on Flitestar's board, says he has not heard of any of the shareholders trying to offload shares. Piet van Hoven, MD of Comair, which competes against Flitestar on the Johannesburg-Cape Town route, has heard the stories but "cannot establish if there's any truth in them."

True or false, the rumour mill has even identified a likely buyer, British Airways, and a merchant bank, Investec. British Airways SA manager Malcolm Freeman says he is "not at liberty to discuss that sort of thing. I may not even say whether negotiations are going on. We never discuss our mergers and acquisitions because they can affect our share price." Investec MD Stephen Koseff could not be contacted.

The rumours have reached SA Airways but there's not much chance of finding a buyer there. The Competition Board recently instructed SAA to increase its domestic fares because the board felt that SAA had adopted predatory pricing policies to force Flitestar out of business.

Taking market share

Flitestar began operating on the lucrative main domestic routes in October 1991 and quickly took 25% of the market from SAA. Blake claims it began to lose money because it could not pitch its fares higher than SAA's, which he believes were set low to keep Flitestar in the red.

Indeed, though SAA was in the process of losing R100m last year, it seemed less intent on getting into profit than on hurting Flitestar by keeping down its domestic fares.

Blake will not discuss losses but says: "They were significant for an operation of our size but not for one the size of SAA."

It is not clear why Flitestar was losing money. Comair, operating a leased aircraft with leased crew on only the Johannesburg-Cape Town route, undercut SAA and Flitestar on fares and operated profitably, according to Van Hoven.

The Competition Board ruling pleases Blake. SAA increased its domestic fares by 8% in August, 8% at the beginning of the year and 7% this month — an effective 25% — and Flitestar followed suit. "That puts us

FM 9/4/93. (332)

in the best position we have been in since we started," he says.

"The domestic price increase, though uncomfortable for consumers in the short term, is the first step in the right direction to ensure that competition survives in the medium term," says Rentbel MD Joachim Vermooten. "Should the board's further recommendations be implemented, and coupled with the granting of additional licences on our international routes, Rentbel should, in the medium term, be able to post positive returns to shareholders."

Domestically, the airline's load factor is 60%. The figure for its international operation to Bahrain is only 45%, but it was started with the intention of including Mombasa, Kenya, and/or Saudi Arabia in the service, says Blake. Negotiations are continuing with the two countries. "If we get a no from Kenya and Saudi Arabia, we will have to reconsider the service to Bahrain."

Flitestar plans to add Germany, India and the Seychelles to its list of international destinations in the second half of the year. It has also tendered for flights to Skukuza in the Kruger National Park, a service now offered by Comair. ■

SABS launches booklet in bid to increase minibus taxi safety

B/Day 13/4/93. (332)

THEO RAWANA

THE SA Bureau of Standards (SABS) has entered the campaign for minibus taxi safety with the compilation of a booklet on tyres for taxis.

The booklet, which the SABS compiled in conjunction with the Taxi Safety Action Group (Tsag), is called Taxi Tyres for 10 to 16 Seaters — Why 16 Seaters need Commercial Radial Ply Tyres.

SABS manager (motor vehicle liaison) Ian Charlton said yesterday the bureau became involved about 18 months ago when imported white-walled tyres designed for passenger cars were used for taxis.

It was found either that wrong tyres were used or the right tyres were used with wrong pressures.

He said a pilot print of 1 000 copies of the booklet had been made and 100 copies sent to taxi associations, oil companies, tyre retailers and manufacturers.

"We want the oil companies to promote the correct tyres and pressure and the retailers and manufacturers to give the right type of tyre," Charlton said.

The authors say the booklet's objective is to present vital facts on tyres in one publication "so that interested bodies can communicate these facts to taxi owners and operators, to passengers, rank marshalls, petrol station attendants and tyre retailers".

The booklet will be distributed free to taxi operators and owners through taxi associations, says National Transport Policy Forum co-ordinator Molefe Rapodile, who initiated the tyres study.

Low pressure causes a tyre to flex excessively and at points where it is not designed to flex. "This results in overheating, stress and early tyre failure and excessive wear rates, poor handling and instability," the booklet says.

It says the tyre pressure used by most operators is not nearly enough for a minibus taxi.

The book gives extensive information on types of tyre to use, what loads these can carry and the meaning of the markings on the tyre walls.

It gives advice on legislation regarding axle mass load, and also lists the tyre sizes for different vehicles.

Laser puts hold on dividends

B/Day 13/4/93

EDWARD WEST

LASER Transport would not pay a dividend for a number of years because its balance sheet needed strengthening and the average age of its fleet needed to be reduced, chairman Peter Thomas said in his 1992 annual report.

(332)

In spite of the capital expenditure needed for this, management was confident profitability would return to acceptable levels. Laser's net loss widened to R6,72m compared with R4,63m in 1991, he said.

The results included a non-recurring write-off of R3,4m which related to retrenchment costs, property rationalisation and the closure of unprofitable operations, Fodens Truck and Laser Truck Parts.

At the end of 1992 the Pocott Trust acquired 32,16% of Laser's equity, resulting in a change of control. Tony Cotterell was appointed MD and Robin McGregor joined the board. Management's primary task would be to restore profitability, said Thomas.

Carriers have hopes of increasing axle loading

B/Day 13/4/93

TRACY SCHNEIDER

SURVIVAL for small road transport carriers rested on whether government decided to allow increased axle loading, Road Freight Association business development manager Hugh Sutherland said yesterday.

He said the recent fuel price hike translated into a R126m increase in costs for smaller or common carriers, who were already suffering because of poor demand and intense market competition.

"The situation has highlighted the need for speedy government passing of task group recommendations allowing for increased axle loads," he said.

The recommendations would be put before government by Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed and, it was hoped, would be passed by June.

These recommendations included an increase in single axle tonnage from 8,2 tons to 9 tons and an increase in the tandem axle unit load to 18 000kg.

Common carriers operating on a hire or reward basis represented the majority of the industry in terms of numbers (332).

Unlike contract or private carriers, they could not pass on fuel hikes through escalation clauses or tariff increases.

"This results in a further erosion of already tight margins from about 4% to 3%, which will hasten the end of many struggling carriers", said Sutherland.

He said carriers were finding "ingenious" ways to survive since overloading by one or two tons covered the diesel price increase.

However, if the recommendations were passed, the law should be strict on any carrier exceeding the set requirements.

"Our recommendations have attempted to find the best compromise between vehicle capacity, road capacity and public safety," said Sutherland.

"Our information has shown that roads and bridges will accept increased tonnage, he said.

Star 16/4/93

Packing for Perth – once again

By John Miller

The country's two biggest furniture removal companies have been inundated with calls this week from people considering emigrating. Between them, Elliot International and Stuttafords hold almost 90 percent of the removals market share in South Africa.

Elliot managing director Tom Ansley said there had been a dramatic increase in the amount of inquiries this week, with the most popular destinations being England, North America and Australia. He said the last mass exodus took place in 1987 – but the reasons between then and now were different.

"There is now real anxiety. In 1987 people were not frightened. They are frightened now because of the violence. It is certainly not because of the current state of the economy because economies throughout the world are not good."

Ansley denied that removal companies were taking advantage of the situation and increasing their prices. He said prices were actually lower at the moment because of competition. "Sadly, more people are probably going to be stung because there are many fly-by-night operators who are not qualified to undertake removals overseas."

He said that while quotations could often be lower, customers could end up paying more by accepting the cheapest offer.

Louis le Roux, director of international operations at Stuttafords, also reported an increase in inquiries and said: "Many people are concerned about safety."

Le Roux firmly believed that most callers were not impulsive. "The pattern we have found is that relocation has already been given serious thought before the phone call is made."

He said the most popular destinations included those mentioned above as well as Singapore and New Zealand.

Taxi blow-out

THE WHEELS COME OFF AS OUSTED OFFICIALS TAKE ASSOCIATION TO COURT

S/Times 18/4/93

By CARMEL RICKARD

SOUTH AFRICA'S volatile taxi industry faces possibly the worst crisis in its history — with a real likelihood of disruption, renewed violence and even disintegration.

A Supreme Court case launched in Durban this week indicated that national officials of the Southern African Black Taxi Association have in effect ousted key Natal officials, locked them out of their offices, frozen their bank accounts and informed the media that the officials no longer speak for the organisation.

The ousted officials have asked the courts to reinstate them. In their court papers they said they feared the public would suffer through instability in the industry in Natal.

They were even more concerned about the possibility of violence erupting because of the ongoing feud.

A technical adviser to the ousted officials, Mr Frederick Otto, said in an affidavit that he was threatened during a meeting convened by the Durban Corporation (municipality).

Members on the other side of the dispute attended the meeting and one of them allegedly threatened that he would "cause the same problem in Durban as in the Cape" — where there has been prolonged taxi-related violence.

"He said there will be violence," Mr Otto claimed. "They were going to come with their guns and if we have guns we must use them."

Sabta has ousted a number of regional officials elsewhere in the country or pressurised them into quitting — and taxi sources said the legal action in Natal could be followed in many other centres.

"The Natal picture is being seen in many parts of the country. It has just developed further there because the problem has already gone to court," said one source.

The six ousted officials — Messrs CB Ngiba, ME Ndlozi, ZJ Radebe, Gerald Ferror, WE Magagula and MA Mazibuko — are all taxi operators in and around Durban. All were elected office bearers at the AGM of the Natal region of Sabta.

Early last month Sabta national executive members called a meeting in Durban at which Mr Ngiba and his five colleagues were ousted.

According to Mr Ngiba's affidavit, the constitution and structure of Sabta does not give national officials the right to take such action.

After the meeting, Radio Zulu reporters were informed that Mr Ngiba and his colleagues had lost their mandate. Since then they have been unable to broadcast on the radio — a severe blow as this is the most efficient way of contacting members.

Mr Ngiba said in his affidavit that their ousting had already "severely damaged the stability of the black taxi industry in Natal".

"As a result of (these) actions, Natal is now split into two factions," he said.

(332)

"If the question of who is entitled to manage (the Natal Sabta region) is not dealt with quickly, violent confrontations between the supporters of the factions will be inevitable."

He also predicts that if the situation is not resolved soon, it will lead to the disintegration of Sabta.

Sabta has had a complex, unstable and often violent history.

The government's allegedly erratic policies in relation to the industry have been blamed for some of the trouble. For example, its subsidy policy is seen as discrimination by some taxi owners.

Its permit-granting policy is also criticised as disastrous — in one year 400 district permits for taxis were granted; the following year the number inexplicably leapt to 16 000.

Taxis have also been hit by cost hikes and have to operate in the violence-charged townships.

A marketing company, Taxi SA Marketing — originally set up to help the industry overcome these problems and improve Sabta's image — has been criticised by members over its relationship with Sabta and its financial dealings.

Allegations of serious corruption have been made and there is a strong call from many members for new Sabta elections and for a full external audit of all the books of Sabta and Taxi SA Marketing.

Against this background a number of members created the TaxiMax concept: a new system aimed at helping taxi drivers and owners as well as the commuter.

It includes co-operative workshops, bulk buying of parts, purchasing of vehicles through deals which could save owners hundreds of rands in monthly HP repayments, and imaginative schemes for using taxis during off-peak periods.

Admission to the scheme depends on a point-scoring system. Taxis which offer safer, more pleasant transport for commuters score more highly and have access to more TaxiMax benefits.

However, some members believe the scheme — already successful in several parts of the country — threatens Taxi SA Marketing.

Sabta national office bearers, trying to protect the marketing company, have been targetting pro-TaxiMax regional officials, such as Mr Ngiba and his colleagues.

Members of Sabta, concerned about the tense situation, say allegations of corruption must be thoroughly investigated to stop unfair or unlawful "transport politics", protect commuters, prevent violence and halt what could be the imminent break-up of the country's largest and most powerful taxi body.

Tollgate: Absa will get some cash back

S/Times [C/Metro] 18/4/93

ABSA Bank will recover a substantial amount of money from collapsed Tollgate Holdings, says the bank's deputy chief executive Dr Danie Cronje.

He was commenting on a report that the Tollgate Group only had assets of R18-million against liabilities of over R400-million, of which some R300-million is owed to Absa.

The report submitted by the liquidator of Tollgate Holdings to the Master of the Supreme Court this week referred to TGH, and not to Tollgate Holdings.

Mr Cronje confirmed that the assets of Tollgate Holdings were of substantial value and worth much more than R18-million.

NEWS 900 buses help transport mourners to FNB stadium and home again

Transport grinds to a halt for Hani

■ **Trains take mourners back home:**

Sowetan 20/4/93

Sowetan Correspondent (332)

BUSES serving townships in the PWV ground to a total halt yesterday and trains ran 90 percent empty but no incidents were reported by officials from Putco or Spoornet.

The work stayaway was claimed to be almost 100 percent.

Putco director Dr Jack Visser said after extensive and fruitful negotiations with the ANC's tripartite alliance, Putco supplied more than 500 buses for transport to the FNB Stadium yesterday.

Every vehicle was accompanied by two ANC marshals and apart from a few minor hijackings all buses arrived at their destination.

Putco had been in constant contact with ANC headquarters in Johannesburg and any requests for additional buses were immediately attended to at Putco's Gallo Manor headquarters, he said.

A Spoornet spokesman said the normal train service supplied for workers was only 10 percent full but special trains from Johannesburg and New Canada stations to the Nasrec station had run without a hitch.

Trains were laid on to return mourners to their homes after the ceremony at the FNB Stadium, some to as far afield as Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London.

FINAL SALUTE ... Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda stand to attention in front of the coffin of slain SACP leader Chris Hani at the FNB Stadium.

BUSINESS

Tax burden 'will worsen debt'

B/DAY 23/4/93

ANDREW KRUMM

THE heavy tax burden would push people deeper into debt this year, Credit Guarantee senior economist Luke Doig said yesterday.

"Many individuals are incurring debt or running down their savings to meet daily living expenses. Yet, in its 1993/'94 budget, government requires the private consumer to provide some 42% of total tax revenues, up from 32% five years ago."

Company contributions to the fiscus had dropped from 23% in 1988 to less than 14% this fiscal year — more a result of a decline in profits during the recession than any beneficial tax structure.

Doig said four interest rate cuts in the past year had given the individual a measure of relief, but little additional respite could be expected in the near term.

In 1992 insolvencies rose 24% to more than 5 000. Default and consent judgments against individuals rose 25% to R2,8bn.

The high individual tax burden would depress consumer demand which, with protracted negotiations and labour unrest, would impair business confidence, investment plans and performance. Company liquidations and civil default judgments against firms were expected to remain at uncomfortably high levels in 1993.

In the first two months of this year liquidations were 16% higher than in the corresponding year-earlier period. Civil default and consent judgments against businesses were virtually static at R27m.

"There exists the real possibility of a fourth successive year of economic decline, unless a dramatic turnaround occurs in the next three months. Credit analysts will have to exercise extreme caution well into 1994," Doig said.

Unregistered hauliers face prosecution

B/DAY 23/4/93.

TRACY SCHNEIDER

ROAD transport operators not registered in terms of the Road Transport Quality System (RTQS) would be prosecuted after July 1993, NPA Road Traffic Inspectorate deputy chief John Schnell said yesterday.

Schnell told the Outlook for Trucks seminar in Johannesburg operator registration had been poor, reflecting a lack of awareness and urgency. Since July 1992, 11% of the 40 000 operators had registered. He blamed this on lack of information about requirements and the purpose of RTQS which was to create an environment of safety and quality in road transport deregulation.

Operator registration was a key element to ensure performance, compliance and safety were placed with proper officials.

Legislation required all operators to be registered by July 1993.

"Given the present tempo of registration, it is clear that many operators will not comply," said Schnell.

dividend declarations
March 1993

on and
ofit up

Elandsrand Gold Mining Company Limited
Registration number 74/01477/06

	Quarter ended Mar. 1993	Quarter ended Dec. 1992	Year ended Dec. 1992 (Audited)
on — kg	4 680	5 164	18 682

SA low on productivity

B/DAY 23/4/93

PRETORIA — SA's competitiveness and productivity were rated among the lowest of 14 newly industrialised countries, the Swiss-based International Institute for Management Development said recently.

Its report also found SA to be a forerunner in alcohol and drug abuse, divorce and road accidents. SA employees were not motivated and attitudes and values were not conducive to competitiveness and high productivity.

In the study SA was compared with 13 other newly industrialised countries, including Mexico, Singapore, Korea, Greece, Pakistan and Venezuela.

Factors looked at were science and technology, management quality, infrastructure, the role of government, human resource development and motivation. — Sapa.

TRUCKING INDUSTRY

FM 23/4/93

Tougher rules of the road

Managers of trucking firms and companies that have large fleets of trucks often neglect operational details of road transport once the truck leaves the loading dock. If the truck is overloaded or not roadworthy, the driver is blamed. And drivers who get too many tickets get fired.

332

Under the Road Traffic Act, passed in 1989 and effective from July 1, the Road Transport Quality System will be implemented at last. Managers and even directors will be held responsible for their drivers' competence and vehicles' roadworthiness.

Details on every truck and owner — or whomever the owner designates as the operator — will be entered into the computerised National Traffic Information System to ensure that vehicles comply with road regulations. As in the US, a police officer can gain access to the information system from the roadside. If a check turns up a violation, the owner or operator could be fined, jailed and even barred from the industry. The driver will be liable only for normal traffic violations.

"Owners were given a year to comply with the requirements so pleading ignorance won't wash," says Hugh Sutherland of the Road Freight Association. "Nor will blaming drivers or even firing them and claiming sweetly when the summonses arrive that they no longer work there. The aim is to move responsibility high enough in the corporate ladder to ensure the industry eventually becomes self-policing."

The new law applies to a much wider segment of the industry than does the current law. Only professional hauliers — hired to convey another company's goods — have had to carry current roadworthy certificates for their vehicles. But from July 1, all goods vehicles with a gross mass of 3,5 t or more will have to be certified as roadworthy. About 70% of these trucks are owned by private carriers, such as farmers and retail-

FM 23/4/93

332

ers who convey their own goods.

"The legislation has taken eight years to prepare but there is an appalling lack of knowledge of how serious the authorities are about implementing it," Sutherland says.

"Vehicles not displaying their operator cards (listing the owner or operator of the vehicle) on their windscreens will be taken off the road and their owners could be fined up to R24 000. For second offences, they could again be fined R24 000, have their vehicle and its load confiscated and face a term in jail. In addition, a traffic officer can impose a spot fine of R1 500 for unroadworthy and overloaded vehicles.

"And after November 1, operators won't be allowed to license their vehicles unless they produce roadworthy certificates."

Max Braun, a Johannesburg-based transport consultant who runs the annual Outlook For Trucks conferences, chose the Road Transport Quality System as the theme for this year's conference in Midrand on April 22-23. "There is a belief that because policing was placed on the back burner towards the end of the period of the old Act, no-one will be bothered to police the new Act. But the new Act will be vigorously policed." ■

FM 23/4/93 (332)

QUICK HOLDINGS FM

Not a quickstep 23/4/93

Activities: *Engaged in international and domestic air and sea freight and property development.* (332)
Control: *Yin Wo 30% (Hong Kong).*
Chairman: *J M Hamilton-Barnes.*
Capital structure: *118m ords. Market capitalisation: R14m.*
Share market: *Price: 12c. Yields: 1,7% on earnings; p:e ratio, 60,0. 12-month high, 16c; low, 2c. Trading volume last quarter, 16,8m shares.*

Year to Aug 31	'89*	'90	'91	'92
ST debt (Rm)	nil	3,5	1,6	2,6
LT debt (Rm)	nil	1,7	0,8	0,7
Debt:equity ratio	—	0,93	0,87	1,03
Shareholders' interest	0,64	0,27	0,24	0,21
Int & leasing cover	‡1,51	—	1,13	1,35
Return on cap (%)	5,8	—	7,0	6,0
Turnover (Rm)	‡3,9	25,5	8,3	11,0
Pre-int profit (Rm)	‡0,5	(1,1)	0,8	0,9
Pre-int margin (%)	‡13,5	—	10,9	8,1
Earnings (c)	‡0,62	(1,85)	0,11	0,22
Net worth (c)	8,7	5,3	2,4	2,7

* 18-months. ‡ Annualised.

Quick Holdings' metronomic share price movement over recent weeks has attracted a great deal of attention. More than 13m shares — equal to a fifth of those held by minorities — have changed hands.

The strong possibility that Quickco might make an acquisition which could lead to its transfer to the main board is one theory *(Fox* April 2) supporting the clamour for this development capital stock. Another — less convincing — centres on the latest results.

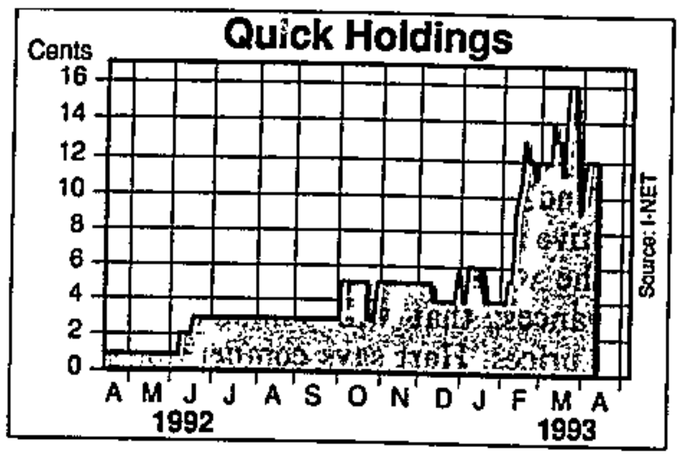
The recovery which began in 1991 was sustained last year. Improvements include increases of 32% in turnover, 25% in operating income and 100% in EPS at year-end August. Contingent liabilities have been reduced to R230 000 (1991: R900 000).

However impressive this turnaround seems, management's attention is focused elsewhere. Two special proposals will be put to shareholders at the AGM next month.

First, Quickco wants to set off the deficiency of reserves at year-end against stated capital, which will decrease from R10,9m to R3,5m. Financial director Malcolm Lucas sees this as a means to "clean up the balance sheet." Otherwise, he says, it would take three to four years to clear the R7m deficiency of reserves, which has been increasing since 1989.

Still, the proposal is a curious way of dealing with the embarrassment of a prolonged period of losses. The best that can be said for it is that it's one way of avoiding drawing attention to an unhappy track record. Recent acquisitions have, however, brought stated capital to R11m, lifting NAV from 3,4c a share to 4,5c.

Second, the group will put to the vote an increase in authorised share capital from 400m to 800m ords. The money will be used to aid expansion by further acquisition. It's no secret that Quickco pays for acquisitions primarily through the issue of new shares —



and has had a tendency to sell them for cash years later.

Only last year the group sold its interest in Belfast Coal Holdings (Pty), Nthabangala Game Farms (Pty) and 73 Anderbolt Properties (Pty) for a total of R1,36m. This contributed to the improvement in net current assets from a negative R2,1m to a positive R475 000.

Nub of the problem

But the real nub of Quickco's problems — and, by extension, where directors have concentrated their efforts — is the debtors' book. Though accounts receivable almost doubled to R11,5m last year, Lucas says most of the book is insured and is equivalent to a comfortable 38 debtors days. The change in working capital hit cash flow; there was a R2,8m outflow from operating activities. However, commendably only 0,6% (1991: 0,4%) of gross billings returned as bad debt. Part of the reason for the rise was increased disbursements resulting from the introduction of Vat.

At the last AGM, shareholders approved the acquisition of a foreign freight company, International Freight Holdings. This earned R311 000 in 1992. But the company is in disagreement with the Reserve Bank about how that profit is to be treated. Discussions have been in progress since July. Lucas says the subsidiary's profits should come to book in financial 1993, making the forecast of doubled earnings more likely.

On the face of it, and with all these goings-on, Quickco seems increasingly to be a company to walk around rather than one in which to invest.

Kate Rushton

It's war if dispute is not settled, say taximen

S/Times 25/4/93

By CARMEL RICKARD

BOTH sides in a Natal taxi wrangle have warned that if their dispute cannot be resolved quickly by the courts, violence will inevitably erupt.

Several Natal taxi officials launched a Supreme Court case earlier this month, challenging a decision by the Southern African Black Taxi Association to oust them from office.

Sabta locked them out of their offices, froze their bank accounts and installed a new interim committee.

This week Sabta head office officials filed court papers justifying their actions. The ousted executive members have in turn commented on the affidavits.

From the papers three important factors become clear:

(332)

● Both sides concede it is a dangerous situation, with "open warfare" between supporters of the two sides only a matter of time.

● It emerges that Sabta acted against the Natal officials in order to protect Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam), a marketing company with which Sabta's head office had made an exclusive deal.

Benefits

The ousted Natal officials, like a number of officials and members in other parts of the country, had begun to get involved with another company, Taxi-Max. They wanted the two marketing companies to compete in order to get the best benefits for the taxi industry.

● Most important, behind all the legal jousting lies a struggle over who in fact controls the multi-million rand taxi industry — Sabta's head office officials in Johannesburg or the regions in the different provinces.

Both sides quote constitutional arguments to back their view. Sabta officials claim they are entitled to strip the Natal executive members of their rank because head office has power over the regions.

The Natal officials say that according to the constitution and structure of Sabta, the national executive is responsible to the regions — not the other way-round.

The court is being asked to decide in effect whether power resides with the head office or the regions.

The case is due back in court this week, but it is likely to be adjourned to next month for argument.

Chicken run is a boon for business

S/Times 25/4/93 (332)

By TERRY BETTY

THE white flight from South Africa has boosted business for a local moving firm, making it the eighth largest international mover in the world.

Stuttaford Van Lines has won an award for increasing its shipment of household goods out of South Africa last year by more than any other international removal firm shipping out of its own country.

It moved R17,7-million of personal effects in 1992 — a 61 percent increase on 1991.

South Africa's net gain from immigration fell to 4 397 last year, down from 8 123 in 1991, according to recent Central Statistical Service figures.

Moving Network International, an organisation of the top 250 international removal firms in the world, has also awarded Stuttafords for achieving the highest sales in the Africa and Middle East region.

International division director Louis le Roux said: "We move 200 to 250 families out of South Africa each month. This includes emigrants, returning expatriates, diplomats and people being transferred.

Records

"The majority come from the PWV region, while Cape Town and Durban also feature prominently."

Mr le Roux said there were only 35 companies in the world that moved more than R4,8-million a year on international routes.

He said most of the outward-bound traffic headed for the UK, North America, Germany, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand.

Stuttafords records showed that people moving to Europe and the UK were mostly expatriates, while professionals headed for New Zealand and Australia.

"Another discernible trend is an increasing number of in-company transfers being made to Hong Kong and Bangkok."

Mr le Roux expects Stuttafords will maintain this growth, judging by the number of inquiries received.

"This should be reflected in bookings in the next few months."

US shipper now uses Cape Town Harbour

S/Times (C/moto) 332

OPENING NEW MARKETS ... Andrew Daly, of World Groupage Services (left), and International Freight Management's Claude Nuttall at Cape Town's docks Picture: JACK LESTRADE

By JEREMY WOODS 25/4/93.

Edited by JEREMY WOODS

CAPE TOWN has become the primary point of entry for a major American shipping company.

APA World Transport, one of the largest trucking and international shippers in the United States, switched their entry-point from Durban after finding they could cut their delivery time by up to 14 days, according to Mr Andrew Daly, whose company World Groupage Services represents APA in South Africa.

Although bringing containers bound for Johannesburg through Cape Town is "a little more expensive", the big bonus is the time saving, according to Mr Daly.

"Many of our customers bring in a range of light engineering products from America on a regular basis and time-saving and reliability is critical for their stock levels," he says.

"While companies don't want to carry too much stock for obvious financial reasons, they also cannot afford to run out of stock. Many local importers agree to pay for goods based on past arrival dates. If we can save them up to 14 days on delivery time, it allows them time to get their invoices out before they have had to pay for their goods."

Mr Daly, who is represented in Cape Town by International Freight Management, said the amount of freight being shipped into Cape Town has made APA World Transport take serious note of its South African operation.

APA international director Tom Downs says the company had always believed that Cape Town was a difficult market to penetrate.

"We've always being nervous about using Cape Town due to its relative size to Johannesburg and its traditional conservatism in responding to new freight entrants. But our South African partner World Groupage Services, through its agent International Freight Management, has proved that Cape business leaders are quite willing to try more cost-effective methods of transporting their goods from sources in the US."

Millions for 'new' airports

332

JOHANNESBURG. — In order to soften tariff increases the government will pump tens of millions of rands into South Africa's commericalised airport and navigation companies in their first three years of existence.

Minister of TransportDr Piet Welgemoed announced this at a Press conference at Jan Smuts Airport.

He said Mr Justice Cecil Margo was one of two provisional members of a regulatory committee which would protect consumers' interests by setting maximum tarriffs and minimum standards of service.

The other member of the committee was the Commissioner of Civil Aviation, Mr Japie Smit. ARG 27/4/93

As far as the top management of the new companies was concerned, a professional "head hunter" had been appointed. — Sapa.

Star 28/4/93

Woes still grip taxi industry

(332)

By Abdul Milazi

The taxi industry is still in crisis. The drivers' grievances that caused the two-day February minibus taxi blockade of Johannesburg have not been addressed and the South African Taxi Drivers' Union (Satdu) has warned that anger may erupt again.

In addition to grievances which gave rise to the protest, other serious problems have not been resolved.

These include:

- Alleged unfair labour practices by taxi owners.
- The reluctance of taxi bodies to recognise the union.
- "Impossible" income which taxi drivers are required to generate to keep their jobs.
- Taxi wars which have claimed close to 200 lives in the PWV region this year.
- And a breakaway faction called Save Our Sabta has claimed that Sabta (Southern African Black Taxi Association) officials have lost touch with its membership.

Satdu spokesman Mphikeleli Sibanyoni said only five out of 18 grievances which led to the protest had been addressed.

Sibanyoni said the clash between traffic authorities and drivers was caused by unsatisfactory working conditions in the taxi industry. Drivers were breaking traffic rules to keep their jobs.

A driver was required to bring in a certain amount of money a day and pay traffic fines himself.

Many drivers earned only about R200 a week and this led to fights over routes.

He said his union's attempts to foster good relations between taxi owners and drivers were continually being frustrated by the owners and taxi organisations' reluctance to recognise the union.

Sabta has denied this and a spokesman said the organisation was prepared to meet Satdu to discuss its recognition in the taxi industry.

Unhappy

Meanwhile, several Sabta officials who were unhappy with the organisation's marketing wing, Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam), recently formed a breakaway group to challenge both Taxsam and Sabta.

The group, Save Our Sabta (SOS), claimed that Sabta officials had lost touch with members and were favouring shareholders over members.

Earlier, Sabta dismissed SOS as a group of "faceless people" who wanted to disrupt the organisation's running.

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng said violence in the taxi industry would never be resolved unless the industry could regulate itself and advise local authorities on the issuing of taxi permits.

He said taxi permits were issued "like confetti". This caused much in-fighting among operators over routes.

Evidence led on taxi murder

EVIDENCE on the murder of Codeta leader Mr Sipiwo Mooi was heard by the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into the taxi war yesterday, after Cape Town Mayor Mr Frank van der Velde urged the commission to reconvene. 332

Mr Mooi, vice-president of Codeta, died in Groote Schuur Hospital at the weekend after he was gunned down in New Crossroads on Friday. CT 28/4/93

Mr Van der Velde said the commission was called together to "investigate accusations" surrounding the murder, but evidence had to be heard in camera because of witnesses' fears of intimidation.

Mabuza quits post at Sabta marketing arm

THEO RAWANA 332

FUTURE Bank chairman Jabu Mabuza has resigned as CE of Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam), the marketing arm of taxi organisation Sabta and its umbrella body Fabcos. B/DAY 29/4/93.

The announcement by Taxsam came yesterday after a source close to Sabta had "leaked" information that the Taxsam board had asked Mabuza to resign because it regarded him as a hindrance to its plans to improve the profitability of 55 000 taxi operators affiliated to Sabta.

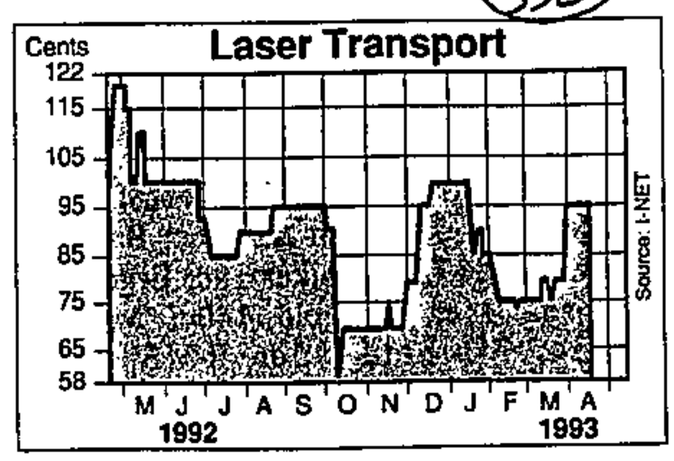
Taxsam public affairs director Mike Ntlatleng denied the board had asked Mabuza to resign.

The organisation simply said Mabuza was resigning from June 1 after successfully restructuring Taxsam to meet its commitment to make the taxi industry and black business more commercially viable.

Mabuza is also black business's representative at the National Economic Forum and a member of the President's Economic Advisory Council.

The Taxsam statement said Mabuza had agreed to serve as non-executive director of Taxsam and represent Fabcos at the forum and on the council.

(332)



LASER TRANSPORT Fm 30/4/93

Trucks, but few removals

Activities: *Transportation and storage of household goods, freight forwarding and insurance goods.*
Control: *Pocot Trust 32%.* (332)
Chairman: *P Thomas; MD: A Cotterell.*
Capital structure: *10m ords. Market capitalisation: R9,5m.*
Share market: *Price: 95c. 12-month high, 120c; low, 60c. Trading volume last quarter, 185 000 shares.*

Year to Sep 30	'89	'90	'91*	'92
ST debt (Rm)	3,0	0,8	2,9	10,2
LT debt (Rm)	9,4	13,5	19,4	9,5
Debt:equity ratio	0,56	0,59	0,82	0,99
Shareholders' interest	0,38	0,39	0,35	0,31
Int & leasing cover	4,7	3,4	2,6	nil
Return on cap (%)	26	15,2	‡10,4	1,2
Turnover (Rm)	106	107	87	116
Pre-int profit (Rm)	14,6	9,3	6,0	0,7
Pre-int margin (%)	13,7	8,7	6,9	0,01
Earnings (c)	62	33,9	‡25,1	(28)
Dividends (c)	25	13	‡6,7	nil
Net worth (c)	214	237	267	192

* 9-month trading period.
‡ Annualised.

A glance at the annual report gives the impression Laser's financial condition is parlous. The table accompanying this review tends to confirm this. There are, however, tentative signs that the worst is over and profitability is being restored.

The major cause for concern is the marked deterioration in operating income to R4,1m from R6m for the previous nine months. Had it not been for a tax credit of R1,3m, the EPS loss of 28c would have been 41c before extraordinary items and 54c after.

The income statement lists a number of items that are unlikely to be repeated. Costs of rationalisation of R3,4m (included in the EPS loss of 28c) and other write-downs or write-offs of R3,9m indicate substantial paring and cleaning up.

Also cause for concern is the illiquidity. Debt:equity remains too high and the current asset ratio is an unacceptable 0,6. After losses and other write-offs, shareholders' capital fell R7,5m to R19,2m.

In addition, capital employed shrank by R11,8m, largely because of a reduction in accounts receivable of almost R8m and an increase in accounts payable of R2,6m. To preserve liquidity, it is intended to pass dividends for some years.

That's the bad news. The good news is that no tax will be payable for some time; also that it should not be a surprise when the interim results are released next month, if the company is trading profitably again.

Competition remains cut-throat and unless and until recession abates and population mobility resumes, it will be difficult for the industry to maintain, let alone increase, turnover. Better profits therefore have to be achieved by generating internal efficiencies. That is where MD Tony Cotterell's new broom is already making an impression.

Cotterell bought ex-MD Denis Kaye's 32,6% stake in September and has since been troubleshooting, cutting costs and shedding unproductive assets. He is a successful businessman (*People* December 18) and has no intention of sullying that reputation.

The share bounced off its 60c October low and has appreciated 58% since then. It should be closely watched as it could be a good recovery stock. *Gerald Hirshon*

FM 30/4/93. (332)

GRINDROD UNICORN (332)

International connection

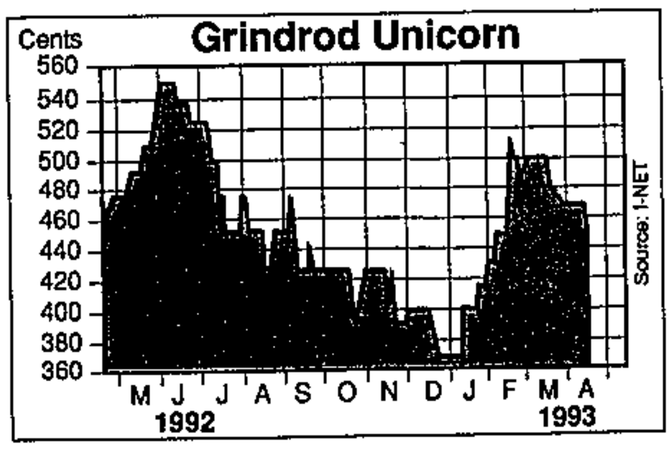
Activities: *Storage, handling and transport of goods by sea, air and on land nationally and internationally.* FM 30/4/93.
Control: *Grindrod Holdings 53,1%.*
Chairman: *W M Grindrod; MD: I M Groves.*
Capital structure: *35,8m ords. Market capitalisation: R161m.*
Share market: *Price: 450c. Yields: 6,7% on dividend; 16,7% on earnings; p:e ratio, 6,0; cover, 2,5. 12-month high, 550c; low, 370c. Trading volume last quarter, 768 400 shares.*

Year to Dec 31	'89	'90	'91	'92
ST debt (Rm)	17,9	12,4	22,6	2,3
LT debt (Rm)	54,5	88,5	159,2	188,1
Debt:equity ratio	0,72	0,90	0,98	0,51
Shareholders' interest	0,29	0,28	0,24	0,34
Int & leasing cover	3,9	5,1	3,4	3,5
Return on cap (%)	15,4	12,1	11,2	8,3
Turnover (Rm)	424	497	564	655
Pre-int profit (Rm)	46,5	43,8	57,2	50,0
Pre-int margin (%)	10,8	8,4	10,2	7,6
Earnings (c)	62,3	73,2	78,9	75,3
Dividends (c)	23	28	30	30
Net worth (c)	236	270	262	360

Despite reservations several years ago by analysts and investors, Grincor's move into offshore interests has proven its saving grace. International operations have contributed increasingly to overall growth in attributable earnings since 1988.

With the exception of financial 1991, internationally based activities have been the main influence in overall growth in earnings as Grincor has concentrated efforts offshore. By contrast, the performance of SA-based activities has, at best, been pedestrian.

In 1992, the contribution of international operations rose by R7,4m while total attributable earnings were up only R5,1m; that indicates a drop in SA earnings of R2,3m. But this is not strictly a fair comparison, as the figures are favourably affected by the profit on the sale of a multipurpose ship and a products tanker and by an adjustment of depreciation on two roll-on roll-off vessels. These, says MD Mike Groves, have been sold since year-end for substantially more than they cost.



Grindrod ... *restructuring*

Because of the distortion caused by ship disposals, irrespective of whether they represent profits or losses, policy is not to take them into account in determining dividends.

The operating margin declined marginally to 8,7%. Groves notes that this was caused particularly by freight rates and business volumes, as a result of the poor trading conditions and the impact of initial losses on certain new activities.

Interest paid increased by 24% to R14,2m, the result of further offshore funding requirements and the capitalisation of leased assets. This was to some extent stemmed by favourable interest rates on offshore borrowings which, says Groves, represent roughly 74% of group loan funds.

Following the acquisition by French shipping and transportation group SDV SCAC-Delmas-Vieljeux of a 25% stake in holding company Grindrod Holdings (an important strategic development which consolidates Grincor's future in the EC and secures continued operations in Central and West Africa), a R49,9m, 40-for-100 rights issue was held. Income attributable to shareholders improved 25% on year-ago levels to R25,1m, but EPS fell by almost 5% to 75,3c.

Funds raised were applied in repaying short-term debt and restructuring the group. R112,5m was spent on fixed assets of which approximately 67% represents investment in additional capacity. Groves says capex will continue this current year. Gearing has subsequently declined to 51% (98%).

There were extraordinary losses of R9,9m, mainly in the Intra-European and SA/Israel liner trades, since discontinued. Groves notes that these were offset by a realised foreign exchange profit and a profit on the sale of the 12,5% interest in associate company SA Container Depots, totalling R9,4m.

Chairman Murray Grindrod believes any improvement in the international shipping market is unlikely until the end of this year. But he says that with profits on the sale of the roll-on roll-off vessels being brought to account and with improvement in operating profits, earnings this year will move ahead.

Despite its good record, Grincor continues to be viewed with suspicion by the market. While the rating has improved, a 6,7% dividend yield is still a large discount to the industrial market. This doesn't seem justified in view of the conservative balance sheet and prospects for growth. *Marylou Greig*

CHANGING MIX

Attributable earnings

	International	SA-based	Total
1992 ...	16,0	9,1	25,1
1991 ...	8,6	11,4	20,0
1990 ...	6,9	11,9	18,5
1989 ...	2,8	12,9	15,7
1988 ...	0,5	9,7	10,2

SOWETAN Thursday April 1 1993

NEWS Two-hour stoppage in Natal over fuel price

Taxi operators in appeal for help

332
Sowetan 1/4/93

By Joshua Raboroko

PROTEST ACTION Fares may go up unless Govt gives concessions:

THE black taxi industry may be forced to increase fares unless the Government comes to its aid. Among the taxi operators' demands are the issuing of fuel price concessions and subsidies.

The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association and National African Federated Transport Organisation are to meet this week to decide on "mass protest action" before passing the increases on to the community.

Sabta public relations officer Mr DP Mahlangu yesterday said they had met Government representatives and explained the need for relief (subsidies) and concessions on fuel prices.

"We have also spoken to the VAT Co-ordinating Committee on the effects of VAT on our people," he said.

Nafto president Mr Peter Rabali said they would also meet civic associations, labour movements and political organisations before increasing the fares.

Minibus taxi operators in Natal stopped work for two hours last Wednesday in protest against the petrol price.

Mr Johnson Dladla, chairman of the seven-member committee elected by taxi operators to handle the fuel hike issue, said taxi owners in the whole of Natal stopped their vehicles from 12 noon.

Mahlangu said: "We understand the action taken by Natal members. We warn that should the demands presented by our members not be attended to, the taxi industry will pass the increases to the community."

Shadowy taxi threat

SP Times [C Metro]

By AYESHA ISMAIL

A DISSIDENT faction within the Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) has been blamed for the murder of five prominent Codeta members over the past four months.

215193

Codeta was formed in 1992 to stop the open warfare that was being waged between rival taxi groups, Lagunya and Webta.

Two senior officials of Codeta have been gunned down since last weekend and there are fears that these killings could jeopardise the fragile peace in the taxi industry.

There are fears that a shadowy group, known as the "Big Eight", are targetting Codeta officials and members and many have gone into hiding.

Police confirmed that they were aware of the "Big Eight", which has been accused of the murders, but so far had no evidence to link them to the killings.

But Codeta president, Mr Kidwell Magwayi, blames the group for the killings and said they were being supported by "forces who are trying to jeopardise peace".

Codeta vice-president Mr Sipiwo Mooi died in Groote Schuur Hospital last Saturday after being shot in New Crossroads.

The chairman of the Bellville Taxi Association Mr Tike Mxhosana died this week after being shot twice in the head.

(332)

While Mr Magwayi believes that the "Big Eight" consists of dissident members of Codeta, the Western Cape co-ordinator for Riot and Violent Crimes Investigating Unit, Major L Van Brakel, said they were made up of a group of old Webta members who did not consider themselves members of Codeta.

Mr Magwayi claimed the motive for the killings was "both criminal and political".

"We have appealed to the Goldstone Commission to appoint an international police force to investigate this matter," Mr Magwayi said.

SOWETAN Tuesday May 4 1993

NEWS Bloody taxi war erupts in Brits ● Union to pay f

Sowetan 4/5/93

5 taxi owners are killed

By Josias Charle and Abbey Makoe

■ **Crazed hitman wreaks havoc as commuters look on:**

FIVE taxi owners were gunned down and an undetermined number wounded in Brits yesterday in what is believed to be a taxi war.

Two men have been arrested in the incident, described by police as a "cold-blooded act". Another suspect, known by police, is still being sought.

It is believed the feud involved the Brits United Taxi Organisation and the Brits Long Distance Taxi Organisation over routes.

About 100 people witnessed the shooting, which took place at around 11.40am at the taxi rank in Tom Street.

Northern Transvaal police spokesman Major Andrew Lesch confirmed the shooting.

Other taxi operators said the shooting was started by a lone "hitman" allegedly hired to carry out the mission.

He attacked a group of Garankuwa taxi owners in the rank with a pistol and they returned fire. Before fleeing on foot the man left five taxi owners dead or dying and others wounded. He escaped from the scene unhurt, taxi operators said.

332

People ran for cover

The number of the injured could not be established by late yesterday.

A witness to the shooting, who asked not to be identified, said people ran for cover when the shooting started. He saw others falling to the ground as they were hit by bullets.

He said the shooting lasted a few minutes and then there was silence as stunned taxi drivers and commuters emerged from their hiding places. Police arrived on the scene immediately and cordoned off the area as others searched for spent cartridges.

A large number of bystanders gathered around the taxi rank as more police reinforcements arrived.

Another witness said police tried in vain to save the life of one of the victims. He died as policemen applied first aid. He was then covered with a blanket as were the other four. Their bodies were removed from the scene just after 1pm.

Several hours after the shooting, shocked taxi drivers stood in small groups discussing the incident and commuters said they feared retaliation.

The names of the dead and injured have not yet been released.

Taxi disputes on the increase in Reef townships

Star 5/5/93

(332)

By Helen Grange

Taxi disputes in a number of Witwatersrand townships have escalated noticeably in the past two weeks, sparking sporadic incidents of violence, say peace monitors.

At the same time, however, there has been a steady decline in political violence recorded by human rights organisations.

According to Piroshaw Camay of the Wits-Vaal Peace Secretariat, disputes in the taxi industry have spiralled since Chris Hani's assassination, affecting most townships in the region.

"Disputes simmering for a long time have come to the fore," he said yesterday.

Camay said the Wits-Vaal Peace Secretariat was trying to facilitate the setting up of a dispute resolution mechanism to address the problem.

A dispute between taxi associations in Brits, near Pretoria, claimed the lives of five taxi operators, gunned down on Monday.

The ANC, in a statement yesterday, said the outbreak of violence in the industry needed urgent investigation.

It further expressed alarm at allegations of police involvement in the Brits carnage.

"We note with c[illegible] that a member of the Br[illegible] United Taxi Association said that 60 percent of the rival Lethlabile taxi owners are policemen.

"The ANC proposes an independent and thorough investigation into the whole question of taxi ownership in the area. We cannot allow a situation where police, as interested parties, investigate themselves," the statement said.

Other criminal activity has continued to plague the Reef, especially the East Rand.

Police statistics have, however, not shown any significant rise in crime apart from an increase in damage to property during mass action two weeks ago.

Last weekend, seven people were killed, eight wounded and vehicles valued at more than R500 000 hijacked on the East Rand.

Statistics on political violence show that fatalities this year have dropped to levels last seen in the second half of 1989, before the major upsurge of violence in December 1989.

The SA Institute of Race Relations recorded 94 political-violence fatalities in the first three weeks of April, about h[illegible] of them in the Transvaal in the wake of Hani's assassination.

The average monthly death toll for four successive months to date has been below 150, according to the institute.

Taxi killings: 2 men released

Sowetan 5/5/93

■ **Police have new information that could lead to arrest of gunman responsible for five deaths in Brits:**

By Josias Charle

TWO men who were arrested in connection with the killing of five taxi operators in Brits on Monday have been released, police confirmed yesterday.

The men were taken into custody soon after the shooting on Monday morning.

Police liaison officer for the Northern Transvaal Major Andrew Lesch told *Sowetan* yesterday that two firearms, a 1.75mm pistol and a 9mm pistol belonging to the two men, had been sent away for tests.

Lesch said there was no evidence linking the two men to the shooting incident "at this stage" and as a result police released them yesterday morning. He said, however, that police had information that could lead to the arrest of the attacker.

Lesch also released the names of the five operators killed. They were Mr Ernest Mphye, Mr Peter Madingoane, Mr Chippa Tshabalala, Mr Solly Malope and Mr Jerry Mokwena.

Mrs Bertha Sefudi (44) was wounded in the right hip and leg. Her husband was also slightly injured.

Lesch said police picked up 13 spent cartridges at the scene of the shooting near the Tom Street rank. He said all had apparently been on target, indicating that the assailant knew what he was doing. Post-mortems were performed on the bodies yesterday (332)

The shooting broke out on Monday morning at about 11.40am when, according to witnesses, a lone gunman approached the five men and started shooting. Shots were fired back at the man but apparently missed. He managed to flee on foot.

The shooting is believed to have been between members of the taxi association operating between Brits and Pretoria and those operating between Lehlabile and Brits.

South 15-5/5/93

'Codeta group killed Mooi'

By Sabata Ngcai (332)

A SHADOWY group within the Convention for Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) is alleged to be responsible for killing the organisation's vice-chairperson last week.

Mr Sipiwe Mooi was shot in the headlast Friday in New Crossroads.and died the following day.

A source, who refused to be named, because he was "very close" to both the "Big 8" Group and Codeta, said the group was a breakaway from the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) before it merged with the Lagunya Association to form Codeta.

On Tuesday night a second man, who police believe may be connected to a taxi organisation, was killed in Guguletu.

Mr Tiki Mbatana Mxhosana, 40, of Tembani Village, Khayelitsha was gunned down as he was leaving a pharmacy at the Eyona Shopping Centre.

Three shots were fired at him and he was hit twice. He died later at Groote Schuur Hospital.

Mooi, described as instrumental in bringing about Codeta, was formerly an executive member of Webta.

The source claimed the "Big 8" was formed as a result of internal grievances within Webta.

"I have information from within Codeta alleging that the Big 8 was responsible killing for Mooi," the source claimed.

He said differences between Webta and Lagunya still existed, despite their merger last year.

The source ruled out the possibility of a renewed taxi war because he believed "the top men in Codeta were strong enough".

Codeta agreed "hooligans within our organisation were responsible for the death of Mooi".

"We believe these elements were also involved in balaclava-clad robbery during the taxi war," Codeta spokesperson Kidwell Magwayi claimed.

Magwayi conceded he had heard of the existence of the "Big 8" but had been told not to talk about the issue.

He claimed Codeta was "strong enough to withstand elements within the organisation".

He ruled out a split, but said Codeta members feared for their lives after the incident.

Praise for murdered taxi leader

ARG 6/5/93

EDWARD MOLOINYANE
Staff Reporter

MORE than 2 000 people attended a memorial service at Nyanga stadium for taxi leader Mr Sipiwe Mooi, who was gunned down in New Crossroads.

Speakers from political, business and community organisations paid tribute yesterday to the 37-year-old deputy president of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

They said he had been in the forefront of efforts which led to the amalgamation of the two warring township taxi associations.

United Nations observers, independent monitors and members of the Local Dispute Resolution Committee attended the service, which was interpersed with political speeches.

Most of the speakers called for an end to the killing of blacks by other blacks and blamed the "balaclava gang and State agents" for most of the violence in the townships.

Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magwayi said he and Mr Mooi had been enemies during the "taxi wars" but added: "Then he became a good friend when we started to build Codeta and, before his death, a brother.

"Those of you who lived through the taxi war will know that it needed enormous courage to bring an end to the war, a quality that Mooi had in abundance."

Mr Magwayi said Mr Mooi, who will be buried in Transkei at the weekend, had the courage to "stand up for the truth".

There were a "few" within the taxi industry who were putting their own interests before those of the taxi business.

"They are also collaborating with the sinister forces plaguing our communities. We want to warn them that they are trying our patience and that of our community. They should not take our passive response for granted.

"However, while we are angry, we appeal to our members not to be misled by these sell-outs and evil supporters. They want us to respond by engaging in a new war but let us not feed their bloodthirsty appetites," Mr Magwayi said.

Joint venture for Pentow

EDWARD WEST (332)

MURRAY & Roberts marine services subsidiary Pentow Marine had entered into a multimillion-rand joint venture with French offshore support vessel company Feronia International Shipping (Fish), the company announced last week. B/DAY 6/5/93.

Fish owns a fleet of 24 anchor-handling tug supply vessels, four platform support vessels and three dedicated polar vessels active in waters off Antarctica. Of these, 21 are on charter in West Africa.

Pentow Marine spokesman Dave Murray said the joint venture had resulted in the creation of Octo Marine, which would target its activities at the large offshore oil and gas market active in West Africa.

Octo Marine now had offices in Argentina, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, England, France, Gabon, SA and the US. Activities include rig and platform support and supply, anchor handling, towage and subsea engineering.

Murray said the two shareholders would benefit from the venture. Octo would provide Pentow with entry into West Africa and associate Pentow with the owner of a modern fleet of ships.

On the other hand, Octo would enable Fish to diversify out of the pure boat market using Pentow's expertise and specialised marine services.

Blockade: City taximen in protest

CT 7/5/93 (332)

BY CLAIRE BISSEKER

A GROUP of about 100 taxi drivers blockaded four city streets for two hours yesterday in a protest against their own leadership — and the mayor, Mr Frank van der Velde, later blamed the SA Police for a new surge in taxi tensions.

Fears abound of a possible split in the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) which was formed after a prolonged and brutal "taxi war" between rival groups in the Western Cape.

Irate taxi drivers thronged outside Codeta's Waterkant Street offices shouting "murderers" and hurling insults at the Codeta executive, while SAP negotiators tried to persuade them to disperse.

A spokesman at the blockade said they were all Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) members and were protesting against the lack of accountability of the 15 Webta committee members in Codeta.

Mr Van der Velde later lashed out at police for not having arrested any of the dissident Codeta members, known as the Big Eight, in connection with the recent murder of Codeta deputy president Mr Sipiwe Mooi.

Local police spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Dowd said last night "he found it strange" Mr Van der Velde would make such allegations in the press since he had an "open channel" to the Regional Commissioner of Police, General Nic Acker.

● Picture — Page 2

Mayor steps in to calm taxi anger

CT 8/5/93

Staff Reporter

MAYOR Mr Frank van der Velde tried yesterday to smooth tensions that have flared up between disgruntled taxi drivers and the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association.

The situation has reached a level where it threatens to split the ranks of the organisation which was only formed a few months ago after a prolonged and brutal war between two rival representative bodies of taxi drivers in the Western Cape.

Irate drivers, who are predominently members of the now-defunct Western Cape Black Taxi Association, claim there is a complete lack of communication and accountability between themselves and their 15 representatives on the Codeta executive.

The drivers demonstrated their dissatisfaction on Thursday when about 100 of them blockaded four streets in the city centre while they demonstrated for two hours outside the Codeta offices in Waterkant Street.

City authorities subsequently arranged for a meeting yesterday at which drivers and Codeta executive members were to air their differences, but no Codeta officials turned up.

Mr Van der Velde immediately stepped in and offered to chair an impromtu meeting and listen to the grievances of the taxi drivers.

About 100 drivers attended the gathering.

Mr Van der Velde said afterwards that Codeta officials had contacted him and explained that their executive members had gone to Transkei to attend the funeral of their murdered deputy president, Mr Sipiwe Mooi.

"I will now try to arrange a round-table meeting between representatives of disgruntled drivers and Codeta executives next week", he said.

Refering to the murder of Mr Mooi, Mr Van der Velde said he would only be satisfied when a suspect had been arrested.

SAP regional commissioner Lieutenant-General Nic Acker gave his assurance that everything possible was being done with regard to the investigation into the murder of Mr Mooi.

Man shot dead at Nyanga rank

Staff Reporter

A 40-YEAR-OLD man was shot dead at Nyanga taxi rank early yesterday morning.

Mr Ngakaye Gewy, of Old Crossroads, died after several shots were fired about 5.30am by unknown gunmen, police said.

No arrests have been made, no motive established and there were no suspects, police said.

Police said patrols were stepped up in the city centre yesterday following the disruptions caused by taxi blockades the previous day.

Codeta: 'No arrests, no faith in SAP'

ARGT 8/5/93

JOSEPH ARANES
Weekend Argus Reporter

THERE were forces who wanted to jeopardise peace, destabilise communities and start another taxi war, according to Mr Morris Nomala secretary of the Codeta taxi association.

At a meeting organised to discuss "new evidence" members said they were losing confidence in the police for not making any arrests in a number of murders since the formation of Codeta.

A Nissan E20, claimed to be one of the vehicles used in the killing of Codeta vice-president Mr Sipiwo Mooi has been recovered, parked at a Khayelitsha service station.

"We hope the police will now arrest the killers," said Mr Nomala.

332

Taxi hit list puts Codeta on its guard

By CHIARA CARTER

TAXI officials and prominent ANC and Umkhonto weSizwe leaders in the Western Cape are taking additional security precautions after claims that their names appear on a hit list allegedly compiled by dissident taxi operators.

S/Times (Metro) 9/5/93

At least two men, whose names appear on a copy of the hit list, which Cape Metro has seen, have been gunned down in the past three weeks.

They are Tike Mxhosana, chairman of the Bellville Taxi Association, and Sipiwo Mooi, vice-president of the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), whose funeral is this weekend.

(332)

The ANC and the police confirmed yesterday that they were investigating a possible link between the dissident group, known as the Big Eight, and the leadership in the Crossroads area.

In addition to being accused of involvement in the latest taxi killings, the Big Eight is being blamed for several political killings in 1990 and 1991.

Police said two men arrested in the past two months could be linked to the Big Eight and a stolen car found on Friday could have been used in the murder of a Bellville taxi official last month.

At least five people linked to the taxi industry have been killed this year.

There are frantic attempts by various bodies to mediate amid growing fears that if they fail Cape Town's taxi industry may be plunged again into chaos and violence.

Officials of Codeta, the ANC, the Cape Town City Council and peace monitors are working to restore calm in the industry.

Their attempts are being complicated by dissatisfaction with Codeta among some taxi operators. These operators blockaded the street in front of the Codeta leadership's city-centre office in protest this week.

The hit list includes the names of Codeta senior executive members, operators previously close to the Big 8, ANC executive members in the Western Cape and uMkhonto we Sizwe leaders.

The ANC and Codeta have confirmed that they have been told about the hit list and have stepped up security.

'Wrecking peace'

Major Louis van Brakel, who is heading the investigation into several taxi-related murders, said the police had also been told but had no proof that the list existed.

The ANC also confirmed yesterday that it was investigating allegations that the Big 8 were linked to Crossroads and its controversial leader, Jeffrey Nongwe.

Mr Kalako said the ANC had been meeting Codeta since last year to discuss the Big 8 and that his organisation had urged restraint.

He claimed the group was set on "wrecking peace" in the industry.

Major Van Brakel said a car that had been reported stolen could possibly be linked to the murder of Mr Mxhosana, one of the men on the alleged hit list.

● Ngakaye Gewy of Old Crossroads was shot dead at the Nyanga taxi rank on Friday.

Court pours oil on rough taxi waters

S/Times 9/5/93

(332)

By CARMEL RICKARD

A SUPREME Court judge this week read the riot act to warring parties in Natal, saying they should resolve their dispute in a democratic way instead of threatening a "taxi war".

Mr Justice Keith McCall was hearing an urgent application brought by Natal taxi leaders. They asked that they be reinstated after national officials of the South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) ousted them from their positions last month, froze their bank accounts and locked them out of their offices.

Both sides in the dispute warned in their court papers that if the dispute were not resolved quickly violence would erupt.

On Thursday Mr Justice McCall granted an interim order effectively reinstating the Natal officials. Certain disputed facts still have to be argued in court, but meanwhile the judge gave the reinstated Natal executive members the power to call a general meeting for the purpose of holding a new round of elections.

He said Sabta should not interfere in the affairs of the local taxi organisation, that the offices should be restored to the reinstated officials and that Sabta officials should stop telling the public that the Natal officials had been dismissed.

After the court hearing the reinstated officials told the Sunday Times they felt that justice had been done. They would contact members of the taxi industry in Natal as soon as possible about holding elections.

The new officials will be elected by 44 people: four representatives of each of the 11 Natal regions who form the management council.

Some of the 44, however, come from regions opposed to the reinstated officials, and special efforts will be made to contact them and urge that they participate in the elections.

The decision and remarks of the judge were heard by dozens of management council members, who said afterwards that his comments about the need to resolve business problems through democratic means had impressed them.

The judge said that he was appalled that the two sides were talking about taxi wars as a way of resolving what was basically a business dispute. Given the threats of violence, he had seriously considered referring the matter to the Goldstone commission.

However, he hoped that if democratic means were used the parties to the dispute would be able to resolve their differences on their own.

Sources close to the taxi industry said the court action could be a watershed for the organisation in helping its members move from the rough "township justice" approach which has characterised the industry so far to a more sophisticated, businesslike approach.

Police to probe 'taxi hit-list'

(332)

CT 10/5/93

Crime Reporter

POLICE have not seen a hit-list allegedly compiled by dissident taxi operators — but are to investigate, a police spokesman said yesterday.

Taxi officials and prominent ANC and uMkhonto weSizwe leaders in the Western Cape are taking additional safety precautions after claims that their names appear on a hit-list, a Sunday newspaper reported.

It is alleged that the names of two prominent taxi operators in the Peninsula, who have been gunned down in the past three weeks, were also on the hit-list. They were Mr Sipiwo Mooi, vice-president of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) and Mr Tike Mxhosana, chairman of the Bellville Taxi Association.

A police spokesman said yesterday: "We have not yet been given access to a copy of the alleged hit-list, but will investigate."

Tougher stand urged on taxis

Staff Reporter

FORMER mayor Mr Gordon Oliver has called on the city council to take a stronger stand against minibus taxis for blockading the city.

In a strongly worded letter to mayor Mr Frank van der Velde, Mr Oliver said taxi-drivers and owners had "no right to hold the city to ransom in the way they did recently".

Mr Oliver, who is now the chief executive of Captour, said taxi-drivers and owners needed to understand they were not the only ones with grievances.

"While one respects their rights as citizens of this city to express their frustrations legally and peacefully, they need to appreciate that the possession of rights also implies obligations towards others," he said.

Mr Oliver said taxi-drivers and owners simply had no right to inconvenience other members of our society.

"We are not prepared to be held to ransom every time there is a dispute among themselves," he wrote.

Supporting Mr Van der Velde's involvement in the taxi problem, Mr Oliver said it was important for the mayor (Mr Van der Velde) to be informed of "other views and experiences" with regard to this problem. (332) CT 11/5/93

Bolton's huge rise in earnings

MARCIA KLEIN

BOLTON Industrial Holdings, whose results reflect its interests in Bolton Footwear and transport company Cargo Carriers, boosted its attributable earnings by 45,7% to R2,7m (R1,8m) in the year to end-February.

But earnings available for distribution dropped significantly, and a final dividend of 5c (14c) was declared, with the full year dividend down by 53,5% to 10c a share.

Cargo Carriers, in which it has a 34,6% interest, reported an attributable profit of R2,3m from a prior year loss of R3,5m.

Cargo's pre-tax profit was improved by R10m due to a decision to depreciate vehicles over their useful lives based on actual number of kilometres or time. If not for the adjustment, the result for the year would have been a loss of nearly R7m. No dividend was declared.

Nevertheless, directors said operating results showed a substantial improvement in the second half. This was achieved largely through strict controls, reduced operating costs and a drive to increase market share.

Cargo's results were expected to improve in the coming year.

Bolton Footwear, in which Bolton has a 74,2% holding, reported a 38% decline in earnings to R2,6m from R4,3m.

A final dividend of 2c a share was declared, bringing the full year dividend down by half to 4c a share.

Earnings were expected to improve on the back of modernisation of Bolton Footwear's manufacturing processes.

Renfreight out in front when it comes to globalisation

B/DAY 12/5/93

EDDIE STEAD

GLOBAL shipping, forwarding and airfreight interests in SA have been gearing to further assist two-way trade as more markets open up to SA.

The Rennies Group is out in front, particularly its major freight forwarding company Renfreight, which is meeting the new challenges in freight systems and management.

Renfreight CE Eddie Stead says that to meet economic growth targets, SA business has to become more globalised.

SA and its neighbouring countries are not only a major producer and consumer region, but an integral part of world trading patterns.

In the area of international brand marketing, all industries have global players which want to source raw materials where they are cheapest, add value where labour costs are low and sell where consumption and prices are high.

332

Consistency

They seek consistency in their transportation methods worldwide and the forwarder has had to respond with global solutions.

"We are in a decade of rapid development, where transportation and communication are becoming increasingly symbiotic," says Stead.

Like other initiatives such as fax, EDI (electronic data interchange) and JIT (just-in-time) manufacturing), globalisation has evolved from buzzword to reality in less than a decade.

"Thus freight management companies have had to adapt their infrastructure, systems and pace to cope with the demands of the '90s."

Greater visibility of SA products is a key prerequisite. This year, SA products and services will be on display at more venues locally and overseas than before.

Renfreight was recently appointed SA representative of the International Exhibition Logistics Associates, which has 70 members worldwide.

"Safto has just appointed us as the offical forwarder for the first South African-only products exhibition to be held in Singapore in September."

Positive

Though economic activity is at a low ebb, world expectations of SA are positive, says Stead.

The mix of export products is extending towards the added-value end of the spectrum and these encouraging signs have acted as a green light to international air and sea carriers.

NEWS Turfloop closed until further notice ● No hope for most to own a home, professor

News in brief

Sowetan 12/5/93

Soweto cop killed

A SOWETO policeman was shot dead near the YMCA in Dube yesterday.

Police say Constable Johannes Shabangu (30) was hit in the head by a shot fired from a crowd of about 600 people who were looting and setting alight a delivery truck at about 11.45am.

Police spokesman Major Herman Oosthuizen appealed to anyone with information to contact the police at 980-7997.

Joseph honoured

THE late anti-apartheid activist Helen Joseph will be awarded the Posthumous Award by the Gleitsman Foundation in Johannesburg today in honour of her work for human rights.

The award will be presented to her friend Ilse Wilson.

Sowetan 12/5/93

Taxis blockade town

ABOUT 30 minibus taxis yesterday blockaded Wick Street, the main entrance to Verulam, to protest against the operation from Verulam to Durban of a bus company which charges lower fares.

A police spokesman said the taxi operators had demanded that the bus company raise its fares and stop interfering with commuters on the taxi route. Taxi drivers removed their vehicles after police intervened.

Man dies in ambush

A MAN was killed and five others injured in an ambush near the University of Zululand in northern Natal yesterday.

University spokesman Mr Dirk Reselman said a truck had picked up workers from the Mangezi Reserve when two men with AK-47 rifles fired at the occupants from the side of the road. The truck went out of control and overturned down an embankment.

Sowetan 12/5/93

Teachers go back

CLASSES at Indian schools in Durban and Maritzburg were temporarily back to normal yesterday following a teacher chalk down protest against merit evaluation last week.

A spokesman for the SA Democratic Teachers Union said teachers returned to their classes pending the outcome of a meeting between House of Delegates Education Minister Devi Govender and a union delegation scheduled for today in Durban.

Sowetan Reporters and Sapa.

Varsity shuts its doors on students

Sowetan 12/5/93

By Josias Charle

THE UNIVERSITY OF Bophuthatswana has been closed indefinitely with effect from yesterday.

The decision to close the trouble-torn university was taken at a management meeting on Monday.

The Information Service of Bophuthatswana confirmed yesterday that the university has been closed.

The closure comes at a time when students had decided to continue the class boycott until several of their demands are met.

These demands include:

- That the university be renamed University of Northern Cape;
- The university council resigns with immediate effect as it is "not representative";
- Examinations be rescheduled; and that
- Students be allowed freedom of movement and speech on campus.

Last Friday police broke up a students' march to the government offices to present the demands. Several students were injured and some were arrested when police fired at the marching crowd.

Those arrested were released by court order on Saturday.

The crisis at Unibo was also discussed in parliament in Mmabatho on Monday.

President Lucas Mangope addressed members of parliament, providing background to the students' demands.

He also accused the media of failing to report on the riotous behaviour of some of the students, while "radical elements" in the student ranks failed to keep agreements.

KEY DEMANDS Lawyers call for the immediate reopening of campus:

Mangope said students were, by agreement, due to send a three-man delegation to government offices on Friday to present their grievances.

"Instead they refused to send the delegation and a riot had resulted," Mangope told parliament.

The Lawyers for Human Rights in Bophuthatswana condemned the closure of the campus and said there was no need for such drastic action.

A spokesman for the organisation, Mr Pat Huma, called for the immediate reopening of the campus and said students and management should have tried to resolve their problems by negotiation.

He blamed the Bophuthatswana government for the disruptions.

Price cutting linked to declining service levels

BIDM 12/5/93 332

THE effects of price cutting in the service industry, particularly in freight forwarding and shipping, are pertinent to players and customers alike.

These findings stem from an in-depth study comprising part of Profreight executive Euan Simpson's Bachelor of Business Administration degree studies.

He says it is unclear whether price cutting leads initially to lower levels of service, or declining service standards lead to lower prices.

What is clear is that the two are inextricably linked and both price and service levels declined in the service industry in the '80s and into the '90s.

Individuals surveyed in the industry — including shippers, shipping line executives and freight forwarders — raised the point that as prices fell service standards declined.

One said it had a "very adverse" effect. "As our income has been squeezed, so we have had to downgrade the qualify of staff employed."

A management and business consultant in the freight industry wrote: "Price cutting has been the single most important factor affecting service levels." History would show the trigger was the birth of the airfreight consolidator who bought business from the airlines at reduced freight rates, he said.

Spread

He said that at the insistence of the importing and exporting customer, this spread to customs broking services which the airfreight agents provided.

With the advent of containerisation, the seafreighters followed suit, although not to the same extent.

Simpson says it is a moot point whether containerisation led to price cutting in the shipping industry.

"There has always been considerable differentials on rates, especially on trades which have vigorous non-conference operators.

"However, it can be said that development of containerisation has led to conference and non-conference lines alike adopting a more market-friendly rating policy, with the published tariff books of old being used more or less as guidelines."

His findings further show that price cutting led industry management towards employing lower-cost personnel and many potentially capable operators left freight forwarding to seek more remunerative pastures.

An important aspect of price cutting is how long it continues.

A shipper said that in the initial phase of price cutting or a price war the end user usually benefited.

"However, the longer the price cutting phase or price war continues benefits are outweighed by costs.

"This typically starts with the emphasis on cutting variables or operating costs and then goes on to trying to reduce fixed costs. As the price cutting continues so service levels begin to fall ..."

EUAN SIMPSON

While Profreight recognises it must maintain a competitive pricing policy in the highly overtraded freight and forwarding industry, it is committed to maintaining a high standard of customers who believe quality of service ranks above price when measuring competition, Simpson says.

It's one price for all as bus fares go up

STAR 13/5/93 332

Staff Reporter

Johannesburg's bus fares will go up on June 1 when a flat rate, regardless of the distance travelled, will be introduced.

Johannesburg transportation director Stan Verrier yesterday cited rising fuel and operating costs for the increase.

"We have managed to keep fare increases to a minimum. The new flat rate for commuters means they will pay one price regardless of the distance travelled and the number of zones crossed," he said.

Monthly tickets, which allow an unlimited number of trips, will now cost R60. During peak hours it will cost R3 a trip, and R1,50 during off-peak hours. Coupons per trip will be R1,60 and pensioners travel free.

Monthly tickets for June will be on sale from Saturday.

Taxi-driver killed next to minibus

332

Crime Staff

A WEBTA taxi-driver was shot while standing next to his minibus in the forecourt of a Nyanga service station today.

Police said Michael Gubayo, 45, of Site C, Khayelitsha, collapsed and died next to his minibus at Crossway Service Station in Lansdowne Road about 6am. ARG 17/5/93

His assailants apparently fled on foot, police said.

No arrests have been made and the motive for the killing is not known.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Special Investigation Unit at ☎ 951 3284 or the police toll free number at 0800 11 12 13.

Taxi owners threaten new 'war'

ARG 19/5/93

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

CONVENTION for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) taxi owners took over the organisation's offices today and threatened to start a new taxi war if the police arrested any of them.

A spokesman for the group of about 200 owners said they had tried many times to get Codeta officials to report back about the running of the organisation and the killing of taxi drivers, but to no avail.

Codeta workers and officials arrived at the offices to find them occupied by the owners. A filing cabinet had been ripped apart and documents and office equipment destroyed.

The officials, who refused to enter the building — saying their lives would be in danger — laid a trespassing complaint with the police.

Police entered the offices and confiscated four licensed firearms. (332)

A policeman threatened to arrest the owners for trespassing and damaging property.

A spokesman for the owners said: "We are prepared to be arrested and to co-operate with the police, but our arrests will lead to the start of a taxi war that nobody will be able to stop."

During a stand-off, policemen liaised between the parties, who agreed to a meeting next week.

BUSINESS — P13, P14 RACING — P18 SPORT — P18, P19, P20

Unicorn in African deal

(332)

PETER DELMAR

UNICORN Lines has signed a co-operation agreement with Ivory Coast-based Sivomar which will give the West African country a shipping presence in SA and the Indian Ocean.

Unicorn MD Ivan Clark said the company had similar agreements with other shipping lines in Namibia and Congo and was negotiating with others in various African states, including West Africa. B/DAY

Following the signing of the agreement, Sivomar committed itself to acquiring a third ship which will be used in the SA and Indian Ocean routes. 19/5/93.

Clark said it was likely that Unicorn would within a few months be in a position to charter a vessel to Sivomar.

The agreement was endorsed by Ivory Coast Transport Minister Yaya Dembele who said it resulted from political initiatives taken by the country's long-ruling President Houphouet Boigny.

Clark said bilateral trade between SA and Ivory Coast had taken off in recent years and Abidjan was a deep water port of similar importance to Durban or Cape Town.

Taxi gangs in city knife fight

CT 20/5/93 (332)

By PETER DENNEHY

REBELLING taxi-drivers who ransacked their association's head office in central Cape Town yesterday were later attacked by furious knifemen right under the noses of police, who were trying to avert a renewal of the taxi war.

At least one taxi-driver was stabbed — and illegal guns were waved openly — in front of about 30 policemen.

About 100 followers of the "Big Eight" group within the Codeta taxi association occupied and smashed up the association's Waterkant Street offices.

After a tense stand-off — between those in the offices and a rival group downstairs — police allowed the office-occupiers to return to their taxis.

A few knifemen then launched attacks on the retreating occupiers in Bree Street, despite the presence of the police.

Police chased and arrested five men, who had apparently attacked others, mainly in Bree Street. At least one still had a knife in his hand. A policeman with a drawn handgun tripped the fleeing knifeman.

Three were arrested for public violence and two for possession of unlicensed firearms, apparently all of them from the group waiting outside, said police.

Earlier, taxi drivers outside expressed dissatisfaction when police came down from the seventh-floor office and said the office-occupiers must be allowed to leave in peace.

Police had explained they were concerned that the group waiting outside, who support the present Codeta executive, might smash minibus taxis belonging to the office-occupiers if those occupiers were arrested. This would lead to a renewal of the taxi war.

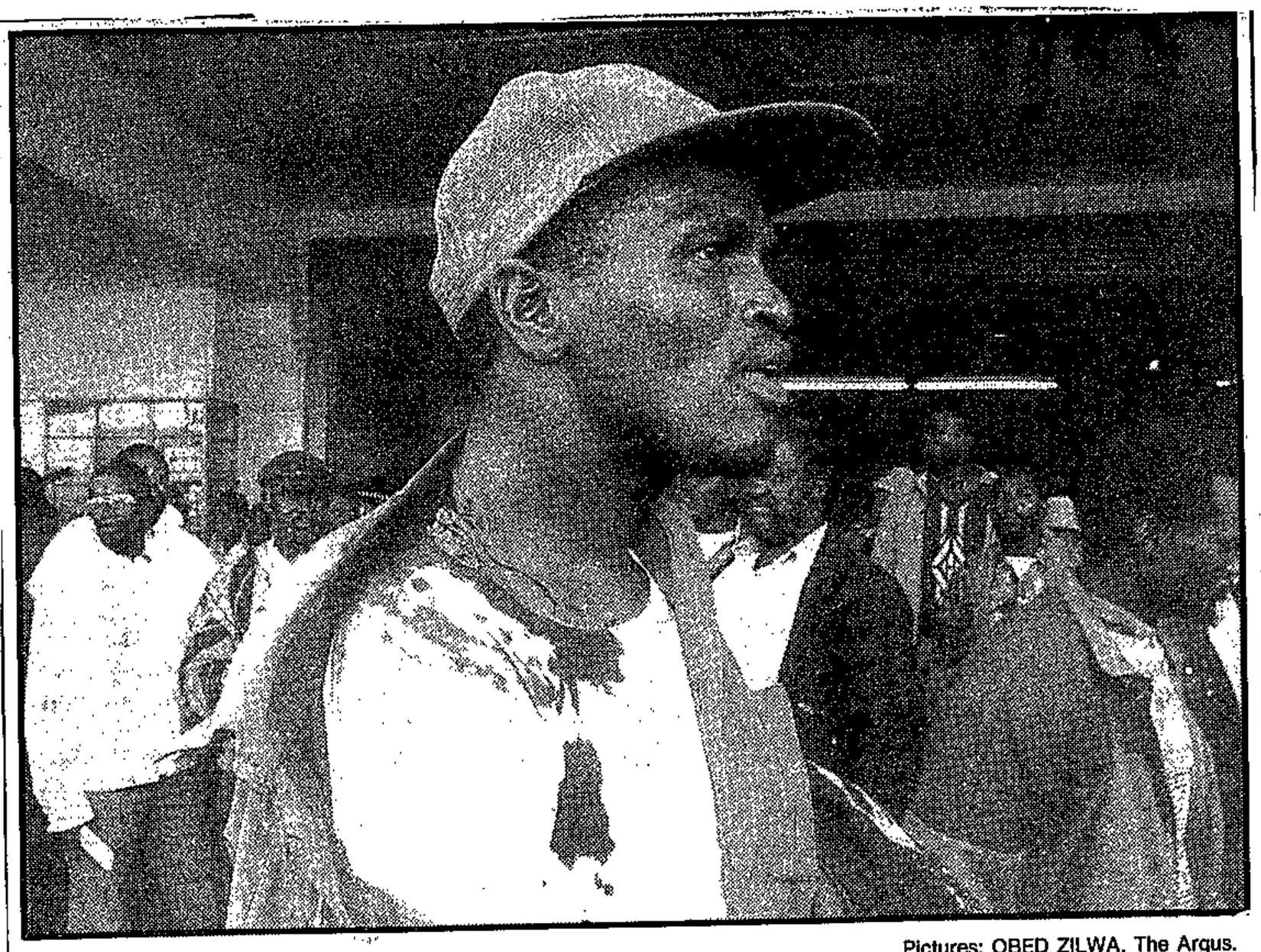
One of the office occupiers, who declined to be named, said the protest had occurred because "our people are dying almost daily, but Codeta does not report back to us".

Meanwhile, Mr Eric Xeketwane, from the other group, said most Codeta executive members were no longer sleeping at their homes, as they feared attacks.

"They have blocked this road twice, and you have let them go, and now you let them go again," Mr Xeketwane complained to Major Louis van Brakel. Major Van Brakel said it was up to the attorney-general to decide who to prosecute, as the police just collected evidence after charges were laid.

ARMED . . . This man's handgun (above) was confiscated by police when violence broke out near The Terraces, in Bree Street, but it was returned when they discovered it was licensed. **LEFT**: Violence flares suddenly at the corner of Waterkant and Bree streets, despite the presence of police.

Pictures: HAROLD KING



Pictures: OBED ZILWA, The Argus.

VIOLENCE: A man bleeds from a stab wound after violence erupted as taxi owners emerged from a sit-in in the offices of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association.

CT 20/5/93 (332)

Attack after sit-in — taxi driver stabbed, four arrested

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

A TAXI driver was stabbed and four people were arrested when about 200 taxi owners emerged from the offices of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association, (Codeta) after a sit-in.

The owners occupied the offices yesterday, saying they were unhappy with the way Codeta officials conducted business. They said they wanted to elect new officials in their place.

During the sit-in, office equipment was damaged, a filing cabinet was forced open and documents were strewn about.

A spokesman for the owners said they had tried many times to meet the officials, but they were either threatened or the officials did not turn up for arranged meetings.

The police liaised between the parties and both agreed the police should set a date for a meeting as soon as possible.

After reaching agreement, the taxi owners left the offices.

Police, meanwhile, closed Waterkant, Loop and Bree streets to traffic.

As the owners emerged from the building, they were attacked. Police intervened and arrested four men.

Owners who had parked their taxis in town were escorted to them by police but most of the vehicles had had their tyres slashed. Police stood guard while owners changed wheels.

The remaining owners were loaded into three police vans and taken to Nyanga terminus where their taxis were parked.

Taxi drivers fear another war

332

Staff Reporter

MANY taxi drivers are afraid the bloody taxi war will start again — but almost all are also hopeful leaders of the Codeta taxi association will work harder to maintain peace and unity.

The taxi drivers said that if something was not done soon, unity would collapse and many lives would be lost.

This follows the ransacking of Codeta's head office in the city on Wednesday by more than 100 followers of the "Big Eight", a group believed to be anti-Codeta. They were in turn attacked by Codeta supporting drivers outside.

The situation was still tense yesterday. A handful of men waiting outside Caledon Square police station said they were there because they hoped their Codeta friends would be released.

Taxis to and from town and in the townships were running smoothly despite the tension caused by Wednesdays' incident.

The drivers interviewed refused to be identified for fear of intimidation. "Having gone through the bloody two-year-old battle in 1991 I am not prepared to live like a dove anymore," said a man who identified himself as "Mpinga".

CT 21/5/93

Other taxi drivers said a return to the war would be a blow to the stability that was building up in the communities.

Mayor working on crisis

CT 21/5/93

Staff Reporter

MAYOR Mr Frank van der Velde said yesterday that he was working hard with the local peace committee and members of the Goldstone Commission to avert a full-scale outbreak of the township taxi war again.

"We are trying to organise a meeting between the two rival groups within the next few days," he said.

Members of the Codeta taxi association said earlier this week that most executive members were no longer sleeping at their homes for fear of attacks.

An executive committee member, only known as Mr Botha from Site C Khayelitsha, was reportedly attacked on Tuesday night. Two people were apparently wounded by gunfire in this incident.

The next day, a group of over 100 "Big Eight" supporters, rivals of Codeta, occupied and smashed up the Codeta offices in Waterkant Street.

A few of them were attacked by angry drivers outside. Five Codeta supporters were arrested and three released on bail.

332

Commission 'unprocedural'

DIRK VAN EEDEN

THE Motsuenyane commission of inquiry into alleged human rights violations in ANC camps may have to call back people who have already given evidence, says International Society for Human Rights spokesman Marc Gordon.

The commission, called by ANC president Nelson Mandela, heard the evidence of ANC members accused of violations before that of victims scheduled to testify.

When ANC deputy secretary-general Jacob Zuma was questioned on Tuesday, lead counsel for the defence Dullah Omar objected, saying it was "unprocedural" for an accused to answer to allegations not yet heard by the commission. B/DAY 21/5/93.

Commission chairman Sam Motsuenyane could not be reached yesterday.

ANC spokesman Carl Niehaus said the ANC regarded the commission as independent and would not comment on the procedures.

The commission has collected 300 pages of affidavits from witnesses. However, these testimonies will not be heard or questioned until after the ANC leaders have been heard.

Gordon said all those who had already given evidence might have to be recalled to re-present evidence or to answer to allegations by former detainees who had not yet been heard.

"Given the situation in SA this may be difficult for the commission to achieve, despite being established on the personal authority of Mandela."

Jamile will not return to the government, says Buthelezi

B/DAY 21/5/93.

DIRK VAN EEDEN

RELEASED murderer and former KwaZulu deputy interior minister Samuel Jamile would not return to the KwaZulu government, KwaZulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi said this week.

Jamile and five others were released from prison on Monday in terms of the Further Indemnity Act. He was sentenced to life imprisonment two years ago for murder and attempted murder.

Reacting to statements by the ANC on the release of Jamile, Buthelezi said Inkatha remained silent when convicted criminals who were ANC members were indemnified.

"The ANC's leadership has perfected the use of double standards into an art. ANC criminals are always canonised as heroes."

The ANC said Jamile's release was a "cynical political manoeuvre" by government, which was trying to placate its constituency.

"The government does not seem to care at all that it is undermining the whole judicial process, and sends a message to the right-wing and third-force elements that they can proceed with criminal actions without fearing serious retribution," the ANC said.

Buthelezi said no evidence was heard in court to indicate that Jamile acted under the instruction of the Inkatha.

Our Durban correspondent reports that Buthelezi this week rejected multiparty control of SA's security forces and warned that KwaZulu would resist the incorporation of Umkhonto we Sizwe into the army or police.

Addressing the KwaZulu Legislative Assemby in his budget speech on Wednesday, he said the "initiatives being mounted by the ANC/SACP alliance aimed at bringing all the country's security forces under one central command structure must be rejected".

The KwaZulu government's demand for a federal SA included a regional security force.

Buthelezi said the ANC and its allies wanted centralised control over the security forces to "enable them to incorporate Umkhonto we Sizwe into the SA Police and armed forces and to gain political control".

Mayor in bid to avert Cape taxi war

B/DAY 21/5/93.

Own Correspondent

CAPE TOWN — Cape Town mayor Frank van der Velde said yesterday he was working with the local peace committee and the Goldstone committee to try to avert a full-scale outbreak of the township taxi war again.

"We are trying to organise a meeting between the two groups within the next few days," he said.

Van der Velde said he had held a meeting recently with one of the warring groups, the supporters of the so-called "Big Eight".

Members of the other faction, supporters of the Codeta taxi association executive, said earlier this week that most executive members were no longer sleeping at their homes for fear of attacks.

CARGO CARRIERS FM 21/5/93

Doing it by depreciation

On the face of it, Cargo seems to have pulled a rabbit out of the hat. After several years of recording attributable losses, shareholders will be overjoyed to note the company has returned to profitability. (332)

But the R10,4m improvement in pre-tax profit relates to management's decision to change its vehicle depreciation policy. Had this adjustment not been implemented, the result for the year would have been a loss of nearly R7m, rather more than the R6,4m loss in 1992. In the past, Cargo has been known for its conservative policy and its strong balance sheet was one of its better attributes.

DONE WITH MIRRORS

Year to Feb 28	1992	1993
Turnover (Rm)	182	175
Operating income (Rm)	0,7	9,2
Attributable (Rm)	(3,1)	2,3
Earnings (c)	(15,4)	11,7

The recent change in accounting policy smacks of expediency. Joint MD Murray Bolton justifies the move, saying that it is "to accord with current industry practice." That might be so but, in the long run, it will detract from the underlying strength of Cargo's balance sheet.

The 22% decline in the interest bill to

FM 21/5/93

R5,8m is more positive. But this benefit is outweighed by R1,1m tax incurred on profits made by foreign subsidiaries plus an amount charged to deferred tax. This is in contrast to the previous year's tax credit of R3,1m. Current liabilities fell 20% to R34m, though long-term loans were up 7% at R7,8m.

The second-largest of the listed private hauliers, Cargo seems to be hurting most. Turnover declined 4% and, though Bolton says the group has been scaled down accordingly and asset management tightened, only reserves, estimated at R21m, have kept the company going. (332)

Contrary to market pessimism, management believes it can turn the company around by using potential "pockets of opportunity" in the domestic market and regionally. And Bolton is quick to add that operating results for the second half-year reflected a substantial improvement over those in the first half, the result of a more cost-effective management structure combined with strict control over working capital and capex.

This is especially encouraging considering that historically, second-half periods have proved to be worse than first half periods. He did warn earlier this year that the benefits of the measures taken would not be visible until February 1994.

Management, in its focused drive to increase market share, might find this difficult to achieve given the group's past performance and lack of bargaining power compared with competitors such as Unitrans.

Though the share, at 95c, holds little appeal, much will depend on the success of measures implemented by the new management.

Marylou Greig

'Big Eight' taxi rebels invade Codeta

South 22/5 - 26/5/93

(332)

By Sabata Ngcai

A DISSIDENT taxi grouping, known as the "Big Eight", caused thousands of rands worth of damage to the Convention for Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) offices when members occupied the premises on Wednesday.

Computers were smashed and other office equipment damaged by the 50 protesters, who initially refused to leave Codeta's Waterkant Street offices.

A protester who gave his name as Michael Smile, claimed former Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) members believe their representatives in Codeta are no longer accountable to them.

Codeta was formed last year after a protracted taxi war between Webta and the Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga (Lagunya) Taxi Association.

Smile claimed that since the representatives were elected they had never reported back to their supporters. He also claimed former Webta members were not invited to Codeta meetings and did not know what was happening in the organisation.

He said Codeta favoured members who belonged to the Lagunya Taxi Association.

'Murderers'

"We have tried in vain to set up a meeting with the Codeta executive committee to sort out this problem," said Smile.

"They refuse to meet us as we are labelled murderers and a dissident group which intends to revive Webta.

"But Codeta is our organisation and we were committed to it."

Police eventually persuaded the demonstrators to leave the building.

As they left a fight broke out between "Big Eight" and Codeta sympathisers. Two "Big Eight" supporters were stabbed and police arrested four men.

Police then escorted the group's followers back to the Nyanga terminus.

A Codeta spokesperson claimed police officers with a stake in the taxi industry were behind the conflict. Police rejected this allegation.

- A daily R20 levy collected from taxi operators during the taxi war last year is the root cause of conflict which led to the formation of the "Big Eight" faction in Webta, according to an informed source.

The money was collected from drivers who continued operating during the taxi war, to assist drivers who could not and therefore had no income.

Recent conflict, which has led to the death of two Codeta members, stemmed from the conflict between Codeta and the "Big Eight", the source said.

The "Big Eight" was mandated by Webta to collect the money.

The group now claims the money was never accounted for, and there was no proof that it was in fact donated to drivers without income.

They are demanding that they be given some of the money.

One son burnt to death, another gunned down in taxi flare-ups

(332) ARG 22/5/93

VUYO BAVUMA
Weekend Argus Reporter

MR Mpumelelo Jeremiah, 68, is a devastated man whose spirit is being eaten away by pain.

His son, Mr Mcebisi Jeremiah, was shot in Guguletu during a clash with Khayelitsha taxi drivers, the second son to fall victim to the taxi war.

His death comes after the killing of two Codeta-aligned taxidrivers, Mr Siphiwe Mooi, a leading member of Codeta, in New Crossroads, and Mr Tiki Mxhosana in Guguletu two weeks ago, sparking another flare-up in the simmering taxi war.

On Monday Mr Michael Gubayo, on bail after appearing in court in connection with taxi deaths, was shot dead in Nyanga.

Mcebisi, 36, of NY 102 no 40, a member of the Convention of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and defunct Lagunya taxi association, was a breadwinner for his five-member family.

In 1986 the former City Tramways driver became a taxi driver when he was employed by a former Lagunya leader who was shot dead at the Nyanga taxi rank in January.

In 1991, at the height of the taxi conflict, Mcebisi fled to Transkei after he received death threats.

A few weeks later tragedy struck Mr Jeremiah's family when his youngest son, Mzukisi, was burnt to death in his backyard shack after unknown people tied up the door and set fire to the building.

Mr Jeremiah and his family watched helplessly as Mzukisi, trapped inside inside by the inferno, screamed for help. They tried to open the door from outside but were repelled by the flames.

Before Mzukisi' funeral, an anonymous caller told Mr Jeremiah's family that the attackers had wanted to "kill Mcebisi, not Mzukisi", adding that they would do their best to get him at a later date — "even at the funeral".

This week Mr Jeremiah was unable to speak about the loss of his son, except to say he was "devastated "and was being "eaten up by deep pain inside".

Mcebisi's cousin Mr Mlungisi Jeremiah told Weekend Argus that Mcebisi had had a premonition about his death.

"A day before he was killed Mcebisi told my wife that he did not think he would see me again. Mcebisi said two guys threatened to kill him after a squabble about a damaged car.

"He said he thought he would be in a mortuary by noon. He wanted me to look after his cars.

"We are at loss to say how we feel about his death."

Ever since the killing, scores of people have been attending vigil services at the Jeremiah's house.

The funeral will be held at there today from 10 am.

SAP collaborate with killers, says taxi chief

(332) ARG 22/5/93

HENRIËTTE GELDENHUYS
Weekend Argus Reporter

THE Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) has accused the police of collaborating with "murderers and vandals" by not arresting anyone in connection with the killing of seven of its members or the ransacking of its offices.

Since the formation of Codeta a year ago, ending months of taxi warfare, seven members have been killed by a dissident group, said Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magwayi at a Press conference yesterday.

A group known as the "Big Eight" was accused of smashing office equipment worth an estimated R100 000 in Codeta's offices in Waterkant Street, Cape Town.

Mr Magwayi said the police had arrested no one in connection with the killings of Mr Ndodi Mbuleni, Mr Richard Mki, Mr Goodwill Ndongini, Mr Mcebisi Jeremiah, Mr Tiki Mxhosana, Mr Michael Gubayo and Mr Siphiwe Mooi.

He claimed that police escorted the "balaclava criminals" from their taxis in Nyanga to the Codeta offices and escorted them back after they had ransacked the offices.

Codeta, which has an executive committee of 15 ex-Webta members and 15 ex-Lagunya members, sought meetings with ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela, PAC president Mr Clarence Makwetu and Transkei military leader General Bantu Holomisa in an attempt to solve the problem.

Mr Magwayi said typewriters, telephones, a photocopy machine, a fax machine, steel filing cabinets, furniture, heaters, and curtains were destroyed during the attack.

Codeta also lost 60 tracksuits, 200 shirts, packs of membership cards taxi drivers had already paid for and R2 000 in cash.

Police spokeswoman Captain Ciska du Plessis said police had decided not to make any arrests in a bid to defuse a potentially inflammable situation.

Referring to the deaths, Captain du Plessis said the police would investigate all complaints that were filed.

Son burnt to death — page 10.

Star 25/5/93

Longrail earns same, pays less

By Stephen Cranston 332

Trucking firm Longrail has reported unchanged earnings per share of 7,6c in the year to February.

But in order to maintain working capital, the dividend has been reduced by 37,5 percent to 2,5c.

Shareholders can elect to take 3,33 new shares for every 100 held.

Chairman Bill Lynch says the results were satisfactory in adverse business conditions.

The company expanded its transport and related activities through a broader customer base and invested boldly in productive assets to lay a foundation for strong earnings growth in the near future, he says.

Operating profit was up by 16,5 percent to R7,5 million on a 12 percent increase in turnover to R70,6 million.

But interest paid increased by 47,2 percent to R3,2 million because of a R20 million capital expenditure programme started in the latter part of the year to service new contracts, increase load capacities and improve the quality of service.

V & A boss slams taxi services

CT 26/5/93

Staff Reporter

CAPE TOWN's taxi industry needs to be seriously reviewed as it is "third-rate and dirty".

This was said by Victoria & Alfred (V & A) Waterfront managing director Mr David Jack, who told delegates at a two-day conference in the city on Tourism in Southern Africa that the Waterfront had recorded more visitors than any other tourist destination in South Africa.

Mr Jack said the country needed to compare its airports, taxis, hotels, restaurants, shops, signage and tourist information to those internationally, and acknowledged there was room for improvement at the Waterfront.

However, he said the forms of public transport most used by tourists fell way short of what is deemed acceptable overseas.

"Our taxis are frequently dirty, third-rate vehicles which are expensive, with no clear set of fees. Regulation of the taxi industry needs to be addressed urgently."

Captour chief executive Mr Gordon Oliver said Captour had proposed a formal merger with the Western Cape Tourism Association to pool resources and marketing skills.

(332)

Trencor's backing will help revamp at W&A

Star 27/5/93

By Stephen Cranston

The de-gearing and focusing of W&A will proceed from a financially secure base and at a steady pace, says executive chairman Jeff Liebesman.

Writing in the annual report for the year to December, Liebesman says that through Trencor's support of the R650 million rights issue, W&A has acquired a partner "whose sure hand will be of invaluable assistance to us in guiding this group to that destiny we envisaged when we founded it."

He says that while there has been speculation about the compatibility of the two corporate cultures, there is high level of affinity and respect between W&A and Trencor, as well as complete agreement on the broad principles of W&A's future.

Liebesman is unrepentant about his policy of building the group with high borrowings. He says that the group was founded on the principle of building wealth and value for investors by acquiring underperforming assets and turning them into good businesses.

"Because we started with no equity, however, we had to borrow to acquire and we needed reasonably quick returns on our investments.

Jeff Liebesman . . . heavy debt burden proved obstacle to growth.

"In normal times these would not have been pressing problems, but the harsh regime of high interest rates and severe recession which ensued placed great strain on the group."

Liebesman says that the heavy debt burden proved an obstacle to growth and a distraction for management.

It clouded the market's perceptions of the group and prevented a proper appreciation of the group's assets and achievements.

During the year W&A sought to define its core interests which it says covers businesses with substantial growth potential in real terms, are of an appropriate size, supply basic products and services to essential industries or mass consumer markets, and are capable of providing the required level of returns.

These core businesses include Gentyre, spares and motor car distributor Vektra, the scaffolding interests in Form-Scaff and AAF Industries, JD Group and National Bolts.

Management is reluctant to pick out its non-core businesses too specifically, but they are believed to include W&A Textiles, Metrotoy and coal distributor MacPhail, the 31 percent holding in Milstan and perhaps Housewares Exclusive and John Craig.

Increased contributions to W&A were shown by the JD Group (up from R16,2 million to R19,7 million), Form-Scaff (up R1 million to R43,9 million), AAF Industries (more than doubling from R3,2 million to R8,2 million) and Curnow M&G (more than coubling to R394 000).

All other group companies had reduced contributions with industrial and automotive fasteners showing a R1,8 million loss.

Drivers march

PRETORIA. — Hundreds of taxi drivers from townships near here participated in a march in the city centre yesterday to highlight their grievances. The march was peaceful.

CT 27/5/93

Asset sales boost Grindrod

B/DAY 27/5/93 EDWARD WEST. (332)

GRINDROD Unicorn expected increased earnings in its financial year to end December 1993 through the sale of two ships and other assets, chairman Murray Grindrod said at the group's AGM yesterday. 27/5/93

A reduced provision for deferred tax, arising from the lower company tax rate, should also boost earnings.

Early this year Grindrod Unicorn's two ro-ro vessels, Border and Barrier, were sold. One of these was delivered to new owners in April and the other was expected to be delivered by the beginning of July, said Grindrod.

"Profits on these and other asset sales, with the reduced provision for deferred tax, should result in total earnings exceeding the 75,3c a share achieved in 1992."

FM 28/5/93. (332)

TRUCK OVERLOADING FM 28/5/93

Getting away with less

(332)

The transport industry has been debating for years proposals to allow trucks to carry heavier loads. But one major roadblock always stands in the way: the railways.

Finally, last June, Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed appointed a 19-member task group to advise him on whether a truck's maximum axle load should be increased from 8,2 t to 9 t. But the group, riven by warring factions representing railways, truckers, road builders and others, has got nowhere. After meeting with the group twice, in August and March, Welgemoed became so disgusted with the infighting that he told members not to come back until they reach consensus.

The increased load limit would certainly help professional hauliers — who are hired to convey the goods of other companies, rather than their own — wean traffic away from rail. Including the weight transferred to the front axle, the increase would, for example, raise the total allowable weight of a double-axle semi-trailer — hauled by a six-wheel truck-tractor with twin back axles — by 3,2 t to 43 t, without adding significantly to costs.

Truckers say they need the extra tonnage because they believe that they're losing business to Spoornet, according to the latest Central Statistical Service figures. In the fourth quarter of last year, their tonnage dropped by 12,3%, to 94,6 Mt, compared with the same period the year before. Spoornet's tonnage in the same period dropped marginally, from 42,49 Mt to 42,48 Mt.

The railways are reportedly using their clout in parliament and demanding that a comprehensive macroeconomic study into the question should be made before any decision. The truckers' view is that 10 studies can be done, and every one will deliver a different result.

The provincial and national roads authorities are being pragmatic. Previously, they vigorously opposed any increase in axle loading, but their feeling now is that they can live with a 9 t limit, provided it's enforced.

A grossly overloaded vehicle does tremendous damage to roads. The American Association of State Highway Officials road test conducted in the US between 1956 and 1960 showed that an axle with 16,4 t does 16 times as much damage to a road as an axle with the legal load of 8,2 t, and one carrying 10,5 t (25% over the limit) does 2,5 times as much damage. The study, disputed by some, also shows that one legally loaded twin-axle truck does as much damage as 100 000 cars.

Natal, which has been exercising much stricter control over truckers than the other provinces since 1988, has demonstrated that overloading can be reduced by adequate policing, though the problem is still serious.

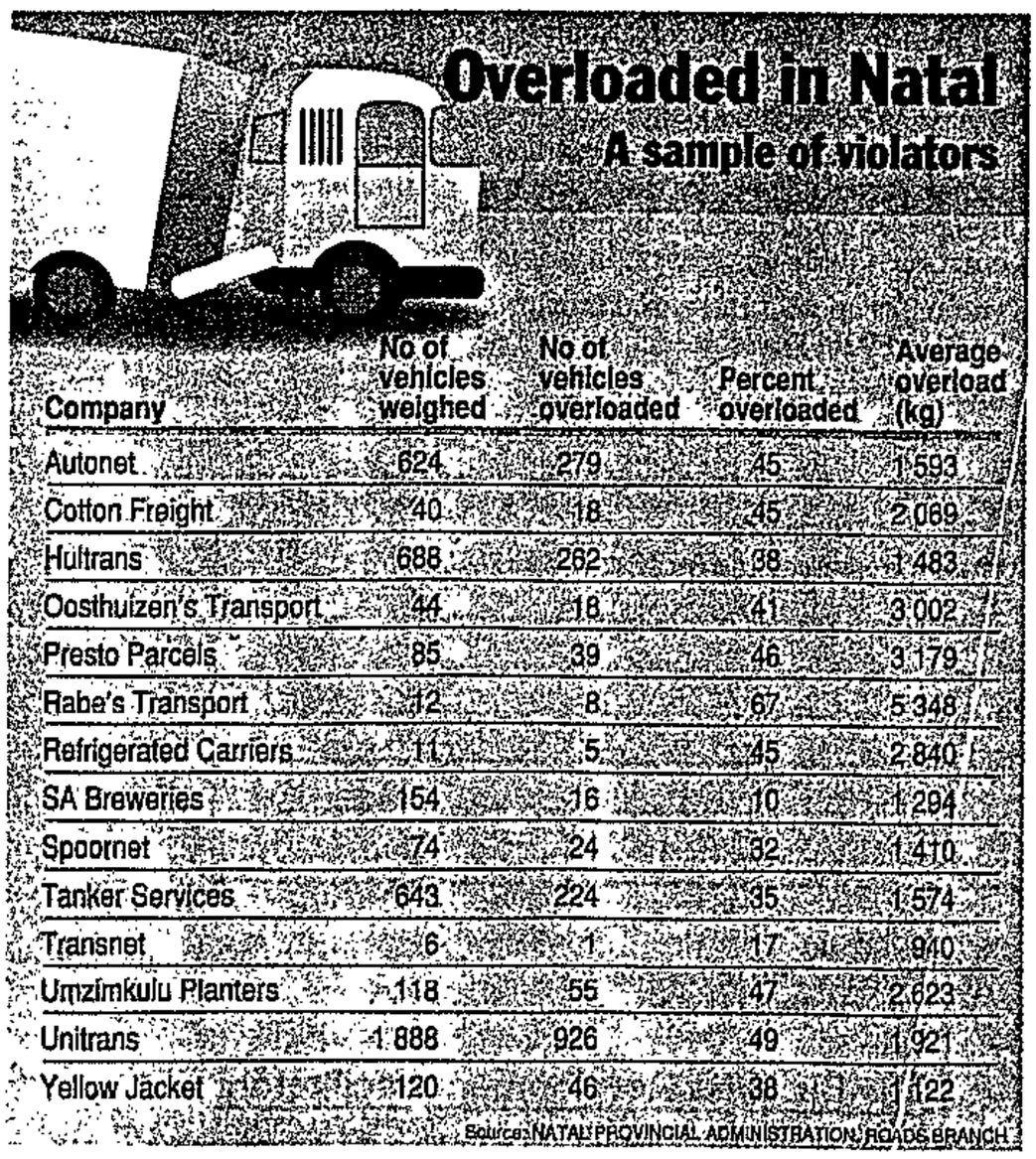
Last year 33 108 trucks were weighed and 13 897 found to be overloaded, compared with 31 725 weighed in 1991, with 16 195 overloaded, according to the province's Road Traffic Inspectorate. John Schnell, the inspectorate's deputy chief, questioned how much the truckers were being hurt by competition when he told last month's Outlook for Trucks Conference: "They paid R4,5m in fines in 1992 in Natal alone. Can any industry under pressure pay that?"

The same trend is apparent in the amount of axle overloading, which has dropped every year from an average of 2,42 t (21,6% over the limit) in 1988 to an average of 1,49 t (11,6%) last year. Some operators do their best to throw off the average. The inspectorate reported that one firm, J Theron, loaded 16,52 t on an 8,2 t axle, an overload of 101%.

Hennie van Tonder, who heads the Transport Department's National Co-ordinated Overload Control Policy Committee, says he intends "cracking down on the real criminals, those who, for example, overload by 43 t." He is trying to get law enforcement agencies in the provinces to use their officers more effectively and work to the same set of standards in controlling overloading.

He wants the roads policed 24 hours a day and a network of weighbridges staffed around the clock. Schnell says he has enough officers to police the roads for only 16 hours a day. "Many (truckers) get away with murder during the eight hours the roads are not policed."

There are 99 weighbridges in SA with many needing an upgrade. Van Tonder would like 130 to be operating in five years but this would cost R20m/year. ■



Overloaded in Natal

A sample of violators

Company	No of vehicles weighed	No of vehicles overloaded	Percent overloaded	Average overload (kg)
Autonet	624	279	45	1 593
Cotton Freight	40	18	45	2 069
Hultrans	688	262	38	1 483
Oosthuizen's Transport	44	18	41	3 002
Presto Parcels	85	39	46	3 179
Rabe's Transport	12	8	67	5 348
Refrigerated Carriers	11	5	45	2 840
SA Breweries	154	16	10	1 294
Spoornet	74	24	32	1 410
Tanker Services	643	224	35	1 574
Transnet	6	1	17	940
Umzimkulu Planters	118	55	47	2 623
Unitrans	1 888	926	49	1 921
Yellow Jacket	120	46	38	1 122

Source: NATAL PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION, ROADS BRANCH

Voting sparks taxi confusion

S/Times 30/5/93

By CARMEL RICKARD

THE South African taxi industry is once more on the edge of chaos after a meeting of Natal Sabta regions to elect a new committee this week failed to return national president Tom Ngoya. The organisation is now technically without a president since the constitution states that no one can be a national office bearer unless they are on a regional committee.

The meeting followed Supreme Court action by a group of Natal taxi officials, locked out of their offices by another group. Affidavits from both sides warned that there could be violence if the issue of who represented the taxi industry in Natal was not resolved. (332)

The court empowered the Natal executive to hold a meeting and sort out the problem. It was held in Ulundi on Thursday, with eight of the 11 Natal regions represented.

Under the close scrutiny of an electoral officer supplied by the regional peace committee, delegates chose a new executive committee and new representatives to the Sabta management council. Mr Ngoya was not re-elected to either body and, according to the constitution, may therefore no longer hold his top Sabta post.

Lawyers said that if the Sabta national executive refused to accept the decision of the Natal delegates, any decision taken with Mr Ngoya still "in office" would be invalid. If the executive spent any Sabta money as a result of such an "invalid decision" they could be sued by members.

Sabta condemns US
Jubilation after stormy m
Attack mars taxi
Taxi crisis 'a warning
Plan to cut taxi repossessions
Sabta launches new taxi finance scheme
Sabta in warning to erstwhile adviser
MOVING IN AND MOVING OUT
Taxi groups move to head off appointment of adviser

BAD NEWS . . . a troubled industry hits the headlines

Supporters of Mr Ngoya appear to be confused over how to respond.

An official at the Durban offices, claiming to be the regional chairman, said it was nonsense to claim that Mr Ngoya was no longer the national president.

He said this was "a story being put out to the media" and that Mr Ngoya would continue in office "until 1996, unless he does something wrong".

Mr Ngoya was said to be unavailable until Tuesday. However, he spoke to national Sabta PRO Mike Ntlatleng on Friday.

Officials at Sabta's head office would not comment on the situation, which remained unresolved last night.

East Rand death toll reaches 70

Buss. Day 1/6/93

LLOYD COUTTS

THE killing of nine people in Katlehong and Thokoza at the weekend pushed the death toll in these townships since May 22 up to 70.

However, police spokesman Maj Ida van Zweel said yesterday violence was abating on the East Rand, and that the situation in the townships was "practically back to normal".

One of the latest killings appeared to have been a "muti murder", she said.

Last week the ANC admitted to the Goldstone commission that its criticism of police conduct during a march, which sparked the spate of violence, had been based on incorrect information.

Thirteen people were killed and 63 injured when ANC demonstrators clashed with hostel residents during an ANC march in Thokoza on May 22. The Thokoza Hostel Dwellers' Association has since promised to ensure that hostel residents do not posess illegal firearms.

Judge Richard Goldstone criticised the march, saying no action was taken on key recommendations that could have averted the clash.

Meanwhile, the SA Council of Churches said it was convinced of the need for joint control of the security forces and the establishment of a non-partisan, armed peace force under the control of an independent international command.

Flitestar grounds flights to Bahrain

B/Day 1/6/93. (332)

STEPHANE BOTHMA

FLITESTAR had cancelled its only international service, a weekly flight to Bahrain, MD Jan Blake said yesterday.

The carrier had instead entered into an interim agreement with Gulf Air whereby a block of seats would be made available to Flitestar customers on every Gulf Air flight between Johannesburg and Bahrain, Blake said in a statement.

This arrangement was intended to become a more formal one, he said.

The move had been dictated by low passenger loads and the fact that the available aircraft was not suitable for the route, a Flitestar spokesman said.

The Airbus A320 used by Flitestar on the route — although an excellent short- and medium-distance aircraft — was not suited for the long-distance haul between SA and Bahrain, he said.

Blake said that for Flitestar customers the move meant the advantage of greater felixibility in departure times and the comfort and convenience of the wide-bodied aircraft used by Gulf Air.

Gulf Air operated Boeing 767s from Johannesburg via Abu Dhabi to Bahrain and flew twice weekly.

For Flitestar, the arrangement would release an A320 for weekend use on the popular Johannesburg-Durban route, giving the airline more time to make its medium- to long-haul aircraft purchase decisions, Blake said.

"The deal results in a win-win situation for all parties. Gulf Air maximises its passenger loads, Flitestar passengers gain the advantage of more frequent flights and convenient linkage to other Gulf destinations, while Flitestar retains the option of reinstating its own service when passenger loadings will support this move," Blake said.

On the domestic front, Flitestar had just completed the reconfiguration of four A320s — increasing economy class seats to 114 from 96 and decreasing business class seats to 20 from 35.

The present state of the economy revealed a growing demand for economy class seats, Blake said.

However, he said, the airline had also noted that with the high standard of its value-added services in economy class — such as more leg room, wider seats and a free bar service — travellers who normally flew business class on other carriers were happy to settle for economy class on Flitestar.

Teachers ready to return to school

Business Day Reporter

TEACHERS in Soweto, Johannesburg, Natal and the western Cape were set to return to school today after a decision by the SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) NEC at the weekend to suspend its national strike. Buss. Day

Sadtu decided to suspend the action until July when it would be reviewed at the union's national congress, spokesman Randall van den Heever said.

He said the decision was taken because of a commitment among teachers to restore a culture of learning, the imminent convening of the national education forum and a government undertaking to reopen salary talks.

The striking teachers, who went ahead with their labour action on a regional basis after a national strike was called off recently, were demanding a 25% increase in wages and an end to rationalisation, retrenchments and the unilateral restructuring of education. 1/6/93

A national strike was averted after discussions between ANC president Nelson Mandela and President F W de Klerk recently. Sadtu said it would refer its demands concerning rationalisation and retrenchments to the education forum.

No room for 'privilege' in publishing

Buss. Day 1/6/93

MARIANNE MERTEN

THE relationship between government and publishers should not be based on privilege, a Sached Trust/National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) conference statement said at the weekend.

Conference co-convenor Sached Trust book division director Orenna Krut said yesterday this decision was particularly important in the light of a proposed agreement between Macmillan Boleswa and the ANC-linked Thebe Investment Company.

It was necessary "to clean up" educational publishing so that it would operate freely and transparently.

The ANC at the conference had made a commitment to a free and fair publishing industry, Krut said.

Another key recommendation was that publishers' associations draw up a code of conduct to avoid corruption.

Krut said she was sure most of the resolutions would be adopted when they were submitted to the national education and training forum.

Although the forum's main task would be to formulate a national education policy, practical input was also necessary.

Conference delegates also resolved to establish a national book development council to "represent the interests of learners, educators, material developers, publishers and distributors".

Sapa reports that ANC education head John Samuels said the ANC favoured a wide-ranging publishing industry independent of government.

Freedom from government intervention would depend largely on "the extent to which publishers commit themselves visibly to the development of a local publishing industry". Published material should assist in a short-term transition and also lay the foundations for longer-term educational changes, Samuels said.

fore subject to fluctuation. Mercantile Registrars Limited is the transfer secretary and the register of shareholders is available for inspection at that company if the present shareholder composition needs to be established.

In terms of the prospectus, no shareholder may, with the exception of the Employees' Share Trust, own more than 10% (4,4 million shares) of National Sorghum Breweries Limited. The transfer secretary has confirmed that no single shareholder owns more than 10%.

Funeral of Chris Hani: special trains

341. Mr J CHIOLÉ asked the Minister of Transport:†

(1) Whether any assistance in the form of (a) special tariffs, (b) special trains and/or (c) subsidized services was rendered by the South African Rail Commuter Corporation to persons who attended the funeral of Mr Chris Hani recently; if so, what was the (i) (aa) nature and (bb) extent of, and (ii) cost involved in, this assistance;

(2) whether any persons attending the funeral caused damage to property of the Corporation; if so, what was the (a) (i) nature and (ii) extent of this damage and (b) total cost involved in repairs to the damaged property? B798E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

The Managing Director of the South African Rail Commuter Corporation informed me as follows:

(1) (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(i) (aa) The cost of a ticket was R2,00 per passenger per return journey.

(bb) 44 such tickets were sold.

(ii) None.

(2) Certain damage was caused but not necessarily by "persons attending the funeral".

(a) (i) Arson and vandalism.

(ii) One first-class motor coach was destroyed by fire at Grasmere. A Nasrec ticket office was destroyed by fire and a public-address system was damaged and stolen.

(b) Approximately R615 000.

Bus companies: State subsidies

345. Mr M J ELLIS asked the Minister of Transport:†

Whether he will furnish the name and address of each of the bus companies in the Republic currently receiving State subsidies; if not, why not; if so, (a) what are their (i) names and (ii) addresses, (b) what total amount was paid to each in 1992, (c) (i) what is the longest subsidized route and (ii) what amount was paid per kilometer on this route and (d) what amounts have been awarded to contractors to operate bus services other than school bus services? B785E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(a) (i) and (ii):

Algoa Bus Company
PO Box 225
Port Elizabeth
6000

Bahwaduba Bus Services (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1505
Pietersburg
0070

Braatvedt Bros
T/a Washesha Bus Service
PO Box 118
Eshowe
3815

Boland Passenger Transport
PO Box 1795
Cape Town
8000

Bophuthatswana Transport Holdings (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 16719
Pretoria North
0116

Darnall Motor Transport
PO Box 97
Mandini
4450

Durban Transport Management Board
PO Box 1746
Durban
4000

EAJ Transport Services (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1666
Vryheid
3100

Eastern Bus Lines (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 79
Witbank
1035

Estate Late K H Maraj
T/a Doornkop Bus Service
PO Box 105
Stanger
4450

GaZankulu Transport (Pty) Ltd
Private Bag X4048
Tzaneen
0805

Golden Arrows Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1795
Cape Town
8000

G Phadziri & Sons
PO Box 301
Louis Trichardt
1760

Ikageng Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 6532
Baulliepark
2526

Impendhle Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 26
Howick
3290

Interstate Bus Lines (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1343
Bloemfontein
9300

Knysna Bus Service
PO Box 438
Knysna
6570

KwaZulu Transport (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 427
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Laeveld Bus Service
PO Box 413
Ellisras
0555

Lebowa Transport (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1839
Pietersburg
0700

Mabirimisa Bus Service
PO Box 50
Louis Trichardt
0920

Matstrans (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1319
Nelspruit
1200

Maphumulo Mail Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 105
Stanger
4450

Marinpine Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 386
Pinetown
3600

Mayibuye Transport Corporation
PO Box 1392
Bisho

Midland Bus Service CC
Poste Restante
Paulpietersburg
3180

Northern Cape Bus Service
PO Box 593
Kimberley
8300

Putco Ltd
Private Bag X3
Wendywood
2144

QwaQwa Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 13141
Witsieshoek
9870

Risaba Bus Service
PO Box 96
Letsitele
0885

South Coast Bus Service
PO Box 23025
Isipingo
4110

cont

Southern Cape Bus Service
PO Box 2393
Cape Town
8000

Lenasia Bus Service
Private Bag X3
Wendywood
2144

City Council of Brakpan
PO Box 15
Brakpan
1540

Vaal Transport Corporation
PO Box 76
Vereeniging
1930

Washesha Bus Service
PO Box 118
Eshowe
3815

Comuta Services (Pty) Ltd
Private Bag X3
Wendywood
2144

David's Bus Service (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 10437
Strubenvale
1570

Newtra Holdings (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 50845
Lynnwood Ridge
0040

Johannesburg Transport Directorate
PO Box 1787
Johannesburg
2000

Empangeni Transport (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 7050
Empangeni Rail
3910

(b) The total amount paid to each in 1992 was as follows:

Algoa Bus Company	R 11 556 987,15
Behwaduba Bus Service	R 2 488 189,15
Boland Passenger Transport	R 1 535 067,63
Braatvedt Bros	R 636 067,90
Bophuthatswana Transport Holdings	R119 444 781,65
Darnall Motor Transport	R 449 409,20
Doornkop Bus Service	R 34 649,65
Durban Transport Management Board	R 59 047 086,01
EAJ Transport Services	R 2 175 231,90
Eastern Bus Lines	R 5 406 910,75
GaZankulu Transport	R 1 451 584,72
Golden Arrow Bus Service	R 50 794 629,50
G Phadziri Bus Service	R 815 117,35
Ikageng Bus Service	R 201 490,00
Iphendhle Bus Service	R 1 410 283,25
Interstate Bus Lines	R 18 259 121,60
Knysna Bus Service	R 7 696,50
KwaZulu Transport	R 48 843 115,51
Laeveld Bus Service	R 1 215 429,76
Lebowa Transport	R 17 084 223,90
Lenasia/Putco	R 4 243 771,40
Mabirimisa Bus Service	R 1 027 593,45
Matstrans	R 31 416 336,45
Maphumulo Mail Service	R 660 410,35
Marinpine Bus Service	R 1 085 078,35
Mayibuye Transport	R 342,95

Midland Bus Service	R 386 814,89
Northern Cape Bus Service	R 1 539 557,40
Putco Ltd	R226 581 603,83
QwaQwa Bus Service	R 7 095 155,40
Risaba Bus Service	R 1 201 215,95
South Coast Bus Service	R 2 834 048,45
Southern Cape Bus Service	R 7 568,15
City Council of Brakpan	R 867 895,30
Vaal Transport Corporation	R 8 592 560,25

(c) (i) The longest subsidized route of 190,3 km is that of PUTCO, Pretoria, with the following route:

Toitskraal — Rathoke — Uitvlught — Keerom — Vlak Plaats — Driefontein (KwaNdebele) — Group CCC (Pretoria)

(ii) The total subsidy paid out for this route cannot be determined easily, therefore the subsidy amount per ticket type is submitted.

Ticket Type	*Passenger fare*	*Subsidy*	*Total fare*
5–Day	39,70	109,10	148,80
6–Day	47,60	130,90	178,50
22–Day	174,70	480,00	654,70
26–Day	206,40	567,30	773,70

Contract No.	*Contractor*	*Amount*
V2/88	David's Bus Service	R 584 200,39
VS4/88	David's Bus Service	R 1 195 251,76
VS6/88	Newtra Holdings	R 5 083,29
VS7/88	Newtra Holdings	R 7 683,28
VS8/88	Newtra Holdings	R 5 499,43
VS10/88	Chetty's Coach Lines	R 2 557,49
D1/91	Empangeni Transport	R15 984 758,70
D2/91	Empangeni Transport	R11 968 359,33
D3/91	Empangeni Transport	R10 018 765,10
D4/91	Empangeni Transport	R 2 014 969,44
D5/91	Putco Limited	R 6 030 833,11
D6/91	Putco Limited	R 1 155 063,41
D7/91	Johannesburg Transport Directorate	R 576 287,05
D8/91	Newtra Holdings	R 1 175 588,16
D9/91	Newtra Holdings	R 1 989 032,84
D10/91	Newtra Holdings	R 1 832 501,52

cont-D

Contract No.	Contractor	Amount
D11/91	Newtra Holdings	R 861 186,01
D12/91	Newtra Holdings	R 1 883 788,44
D13/91	Newtra Holdings	R 425 649,87
Total		R57 717 058,62

Your attention is drawn to the fact that all the above amounts are as yet unaudited and are therefore possibly not the final figures. Final figures for each financial year are published in the annual report of the Department of Transport.

Independent Black states: RSA citizenship

349. Mr P G SOAL asked the Minister of Home Affairs:

How many Blacks from each independent Black state regained their South African citizenship in 1992 in terms of the provisions of the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act, 1986 (Act No 73 of 1986)? B789E

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS:

The Department of Home Affairs does not keep record of the number of persons who acquired their South African citizenship in terms of the Restoration of South African Citizenship Act, 1986 (Act No 73 of 1986).

Transnet: travel benefits for current/retired employees

354. Mr W U NEL asked the Minister for Public Enterprises:

(1) Whether he will furnish information on the travel benefits, other than those utilized in the course of duty, afforded by (a) Spoornet, (b) the South African Airways and (c) Autonet to (i) current and (ii) retired employees of Transnet; if not, why not; if so, what was the total cost of the benefits so afforded during the latest specified 12-month period for which information is available, expressed in terms of the equivalent full fare cost thereof;

(2) whether he will make a statement on the matter? B835E

The MINISTER FOR PUBLIC ENTERPRISES:

The Managing Director of Transnet Limited furnished the following reply to the hon member's question:

(1) (a), (b) and (c): Yes. Spoornet, SA Airways and Autonet do not afford travel benefits to Transnet employees and retired employees of Transnet. The divisions, business units and service centres of Transnet Limited grant travel benefits to their employees and retired employees and these units and their employees/retired employees compensate Spoornet, the SA Airways and Autonet for the accommodation or seats utilised.

For the 1992–93 financial year this compensation amounted to:

(i) Spoornet R60 492 659
SA Airways R18 421 217
Autonet ..... R 312 000

(ii) Spoornet R14 079 293
SA Airways R16 297 634
Autonet ..... Nil

The accounting system does not differentiate between payments received from full-fare paying passengers and payments received for the portion of certain travel benefits which the concession holder is required to pay. Consequently, only the concession value of the travel benefits can be furnished.

Furthermore, the figure for concessionary air travel does not include journeys undertaken by SA Airways employees/retired employees as the accounting system does not differentiate between service and concessionary travel in the case of employees of the SA Airways.

Reservation procedures for complimentary travel is so structured that mainly accommodation and seats which would otherwise go unused, are made available to concession holders. The figures furnished can thus not be seen as an expenditure or a total loss of income.

(2) No.

Own Affairs:

Pupils completing 1992 school year

79. Mr R M BURROWS asked the Minister of Education and Culture:

How many pupils who, in 1992, were in (a) Grade 1/Sub A, (b) Grade 2/Sub B, (c) Std 1, (d) Std 2, (e) Std 3, (f) Std 4, (g) Std 5, (h) Std 6, (i) Std 7, (j) Std 8, (k) Std 9 and (l) Std 10 at schools falling under his Department, failed to complete the 1992 school year? B866E

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE:

These statistics are not available.

Taxi operators fear attacks

TAXI operators in Venda's Dzanani district have been living in fear of revenge attacks since the fatal shooting of a rival taxi boss early in May. Sowetan

Their reluctance to take to the road, particularly after dark, has seriously affected local transport services. (332) 2/6/93

The situation has prompted members of the Dzanani Taxi Association — an affiliate of the National Federated Transport Organisation — to request Venda Police to apprehend the gunmen who shot and killed Mr Cedric Dongola "to secure the lives of innocent people who may be caught in the crossfire".

Armed arsonists gut Soweto taxis

Star 2/6/93

(332)

Ten minibus taxis, valued by police at about R400 000, were gutted by fire in Soweto early today — and one passenger was shot in the arm with an AK-47 rifle when gunmen forced passengers out and set the vehicles alight in three different areas in the township.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said taxis were gutted at the Baragwanath taxi rank, near the Diepkloof Hostel and in Orlando East.

He said the arsonists started burning taxis at the rank at about 5.05 am and then moved to the other areas.

In Orlando East, Elliot Mabusela was shot after being forced out of a taxi.

Ngobeni said it was not clear if there were passengers in all the taxis.

Police are looking for a white BMW, registration LLG 160 T, which was seen near the burning taxis in all three areas.

No one has been arrested. Anyone with information should call Crime Stop's toll-free number 0800-11-12-13. — Crime Reporter.

Gold falls as profits are taken

Star 2/6/93

Profit-taking drove gold prices below the $370 level in New York last night.

On the New York Commodity Exchange, gold lost $8,80 to close at $369,50. In Hong Kong this morning the metal was trading at just above the $370 mark.

Analysts say that gold's fall was the result of wholesale profit-taking after its inability to sustain recent gains.

Over the past two months gold has risen by more than $40 from recent lows.

● See Page 20

TAXI MEETING . . . ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela addresses hundreds of Codeta members in Salt River yesterday. With him are, from left, ANC regional vice-chairman, Mr Lerumo Kalako, regional secretary, Mr Tony Yengeni, and Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magwayi. (332) CT 2/6/93

Picture: BENNY GOOL

Mandela wants SAP major removed

Staff Reporter

ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela yesterday called on taxi drivers to "love and respect your commuters" — and said he would be asking President F W de Klerk to remove a police major from office when he meets the President today.

Speaking at a press conference in Salt River, where he met leaders and members of the Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta), Mr Mandela said the police major, whom he identified by surname only, should be removed immediately.

Codeta leaders have repeatedly said the major was implicated in the ongoing taxi violence.

A police spokesman, Colonel Raymond Dowd, said yesterday there were a number of officers with the surname identified by Mr Mandela and it would be difficult to guess which one Codeta was referring to.

He called on Codeta leaders to come forward and identify the officer and to support their allegations with evidence.

"We want him dismissed and we do not want to hear that he is still here a day after I have spoken to Mr De Klerk," said Mr Mandela to a loud applause.

He urged taxi operators to be cool-headed and told them taxi violence was not exclusive to the Western Cape but was all over the country.

"The bottom line to peace is to love and respect your commuters. Make their journey safe and drive carefully, in that way you will maintain peace," he said.

10 minibus taxis torched in Soweto

(332)

CT 3/6/93

JOHANNESBURG. — Police yesterday afternoon had yet to establish the motive for the torching of 10 minibus taxis in three Soweto areas early in the morning.

Attackers gutted the vehicles and shot and injured three men. One taxi was burnt at the Baragwanath taxi rank, four near the Diepkloof hostel and five in Orlando East.

The rampage began about 5am. Damage is estimated at R400 000. Police said they were searching for the occupants of a white BMW believed to have been in the three areas.

● The bullet-ridden bodies of two men were found less than 100m apart next to the Tamboekiesfontein-Blesboklaagte road near Kliprivier, south of Johannesburg, on Tuesday night.

Neither of them have been identified. A murder docket has been opened.

● Thirty-two deaths and 23 injuries were recorded in incidents of violence in the week-long period ending on Tuesday, the Human Rights Commission said yesterday.

The weekly violence toll was substantially lower than the previous week's total of 100 deaths and 189 injuries countrywide. — Sapa

Stoning 'hampers' repair services

CT 3/6/93

By PETER DENNEHY
Municipal Reporter

TOWNSHIP youths throwing stones at vehicles often prevent council electricity trucks from going into Guguletu to attend to accidental supply cuts.

Council spokesman Ms Dolcé Perks said yesterday that when stoning was common, "we adopt a policy of asking the police whether we can go into a certain area, especially at night".

When the police thought it was too dangerous, the trucks were not sent in.

Ms Perks was asked for comment after a complaint by Mr Lennox Sabela, of NY147, who said there had been no electricty in his section of Guguletu "at least four or five times" last week after 6pm.

"It always happens when we get home from work and want to start cooking," he said.

He said regular power breaks, especially in winter, had been going on for the past five years.

He had written to the authorities and people in his neighbourhood had continually telephoned to complain, but the breaks continued.

He had been told that the trucks only go in when the children are at school.

Ms Perks said it was not true that trucks only went in when school was in progress.

"One of our trucks was badly stoned just today, in Hazeldene which is a nice area, in the middle of the day," she said.

"We must protect our staff if we know something is dangerous."

She said the council had to adopt new strategies, such as going in at very unusual times, such as the early morning.

The substation near Mr Sabela's home would be checked to see if there was a trip-switch problem there.

Govt, PAC set for bruising encounter

Political Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The government and the PAC are set for another bruising encounter when they hold their fourth meeting this week before multiparty talks resume at the World Trade Centre today.

Nearly three hours of talks on Tuesday failed to resolve the festering dispute sparked by the swoop on PAC members last week and the ongoing refusal of the PAC to at least suspend the armed struggle.

Neither side last night appeared willing to budge from their positions and a government source said prospects for a compromise looked decidedly gloomy, adding: "There appears to be little chance of movement from their side.

CT 3/6/93

The source said last night that if the PAC failed to either agree to suspend the armed struggle or declare a moratorium on all armed activities, the government would look for support among the negotiating parties to censure the PAC.

"But we don't have any strong remedy," he said.

The government is clearly anxious not to force the ANC to choose sides in the dispute.

Last night sources conceded that the one possible area of compromise in the stand-off could centre on the announcement of an election date. The PAC indicated at the weekend that a poll date for a constituent assembly could allow the organisation to reconsider its commitment to the armed struggle.

Investment performance lets down assurer Metpol

Buss. day 3/6/93

LINDA ENSOR

CAPE TOWN — Life assurer Metropolitan Life (Metpol) achieved sound premium income growth in the six months to end-March, but a sluggish investment performance constrained the earnings growth to a still respectable 21%.

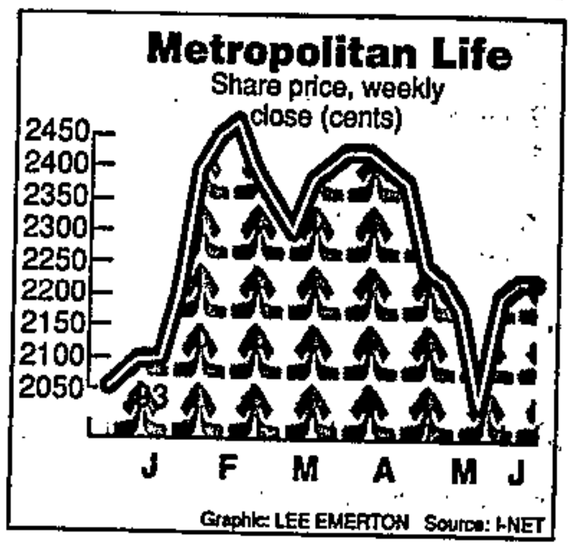
A 20% higher dividend of 24c (20c) was declared on earnings of 37c (30,5c) a share. In its previous financial year Metpol posted a 23% rise in earnings a share.

Total income in the six months increased by 18% to R668m (R567m), while the disclosed surplus attributable to shareholders grew 22% to R24,2m (R19,9m).

Recurring premium income, which represented 94% of total premium income, rose 20% to R450,5m (R375m) and single premium income (mainly from individuals) by 103% to R30m (R14,9m).

This gave a 23% hike in total premium income to R480,6m (R390m).

"In a period characterised by unrest and poor economic circumstances that affected our focus markets to a substantial degree, the increase of 23% in our premium income is considered to be good," MD Marius Smith said. He added that the unrest had affected the mobility of field staff.



Senior GM, finance, Peter Doyle noted that the difficult economic climate was reflected in the sharp increase in policy surrenders and the resort by policyholders to the bridging finance facility provided by Metpol's Dynamic Life product. This provided for the financing of premiums out of investment funds.

Investment income inched up 6% (13% last year) to R187,5m (R177m), reflecting lower interest rates and slower dividend growth. However, Smith said total returns, including capital appreciation, compared favourably with industry averages. The market value of investment assets rose to R4,8bn (R4,2bn).

Total assets at end-March stood at R5,2bn (R4,5bn), and life insurance funds grew 16% to R4,7bn (R4bn).

Smith expected the satisfactory interim results to be maintained for the full year.

Metpol's major shareholder Sankorp announced recently that it was to sell 10% of its 40% stake to a black-owned company, Metlife Investment Holdings, for R135m.

Metlife would in turn sell the shares to institutions and to the life assurer's predominantly black policyholders who constitute about 80% of all its policyholders.

Doyle said the announcement of Metlife's acquisition had had a motivating effect on sales staff and he expected premium income to pick up in the second half of the year because of a more receptive market.

Cargo Carriers lowers costs

Buss. day 3/6/93

EDWARD WEST

ROAD transport group Cargo Carriers expected improved results this year after restructuring which had lowered costs, chairman Gerald Stein said in the group's 1992 annual report.

An extensive planning operation had been undertaken to focus the group. The resulting restructuring had enabled operations to be managed from a lower cost base and the group was poised to expand market share, Stein said. (332)

Sophisticated techniques were being used to monitor the group's operating efficiencies.

The restructuring had led to a reduction in the work force at all levels, he said.

The reported pre-tax profit for the year to end-February 1993 had been improved by R10,43m.

This was because of an adjustment made following a decision to depreciate vehicles over their useful lives based on the actual number of kilometres travelled or time.

Previously vehicles were depreciated on a straight-line basis over a period of five years.

Without this adjustment, a loss of R6,98m would have been reflected.

Stein said industry deregulation, which virtually had been completed, had resulted in an oversupply of available transport capacity because of the economic decline.

This was forcing operators to charge subeconomic rates.

While this was beneficial to customers in the short term, there was a long-term danger national transport infrastructure would be impaired.

This was being exacerbated by the inequitable situation under which foreign operators were permitted to transport goods within SA and their own countries free from the restrictions experienced by SA operators.

Selective enforcement of the Road Transport Quality System would lead to an increase in the already high number of accidents and unfair competition, said Stein.

Tetra Laval back after disinvesting

Buss. day 3/6/93

WORLD packaging group Tetra Laval has re-acquired its South African arm Tetra Pak after disinvesting in 1987 as a result of political reasons.

Tetra Pak South Africa MD Richard Tonkin said yesterday his firm had operated for the past 14 years under a licensee arrangement.

"We have continued to flourish but the arms length relationship has meant compromises in a number of areas. We really are looking forward to reconnecting with the strength of the international group," he said.

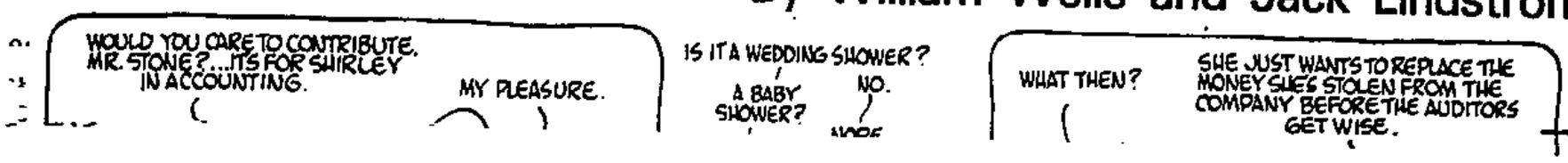
Following the re-acquisition, Tetra Pak and Alfa Laval South Africa would be merged under a new holding company to be known as Tetra Laval Southern Africa. (332)

This is a result of the Tetra Laval Group in mid-1991 acquiring international group Alfa-Laval AB, which supplies production equipment for the food and agriculture industries.

The two SA companies would continue to operate separately. — Sapa.

EXECUTIVE SUITE

By William Wells and Jack Lindstrom



New road regulations positive for business

Buss. Day 3/6/93

IMPLEMENTATION of the Road Transport Quality System (RTQS) will drive more private transport operators into the hands of full maintenance leasing (FML) and long-term fleet rental operators.

Rent-A-Bakkie chairman Don Dick says increasing administrative burdens will force private vehicle fleet operators to seek a measure of relief from the added responsibilities of the RTQS regulations.

"Companies whose core business is not transport and who do not have good internal controls and a professionally managed fleet are better advised to get out of the transport industry and focus on their business," he says.

"The RTQS has far more stringent requirements than the previous Road Act and the onus falls on companies to ensure they adhere to the new system."

Dick, who is also chairman of the Truck Rental Association of SA (TRAOSA), says a worrying aspect of the transport industry is the age of the national commercial vehicle fleet, which now exceeds 10 years.

"Many companies are hanging in there and extending the lives of vehicles well beyond economic sense, and a number have changed their depreciation policies accordingly. The problems will come at replacement time when the costs of heavy commercials, many priced above R500 000, are not catered for."

He says there is going to be a day of reckoning.

In this situation FML and rental are viable options to reduce strain on cash flow and the burden of administration.

"The new laws will create growth opportunities for professional operators in the truck hire industry.

Complete

"The industry will have to provide a more complete transport service than merely truck hire. Truck rental companies will have to work far closer with customers to ensure that the new laws are adhered to."

Dick says the truck rental industry is gaining in status among road transport legislators and has received growing recognition as a separate special interest group.

It has also gained a greater voice since it affiliated to the Road Freight Association in 1990.

Comprising about 50 operators and 149 outlets countrywide, it represents 90% of wheels in the truck hire industry. Its turnover exceeds R350m a year.

He says truck rental is a different animal to FML. With rental the risks lie firmly with the rental company, whose responsibility it is to ensure vehicles and drivers comply with the RRTQS.

TRAOSA has been heavily involved in the implementation of the RTQS, as well as an important lobbying voice. The RTQS will benefit truck rental.

"Few companies can afford to have excess fleet capacity and rental is the perfect option to fill the gap at times of peak demand."

During the phasing in of the RTQS, operators could be subjected to three sets of regulations — depending on whether operator cards have been issued or vehicles are still subject to the 300km exemption or, in the case of vehicles registered in the TBVC states, where the permit system still applies.

"Despite the complications, TROASA has welcomed the RTQS from the safety aspect and because it levels the playing fields between private and public transport operators."

DON DICK

10 taxis set alight

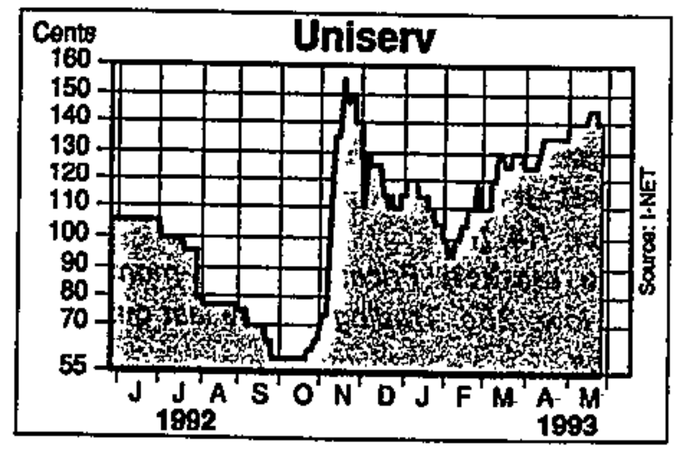
Sowetan 3/6/93

THREE people, including two passengers, sustained gunshot wounds and 10 taxis were set alight when a group of people went on the rampage in Orlando East and Diepkloof, Soweto, yesterday.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said the motive for the 5.05am attacks was not known. No arrests have been made and damage to taxis is estimated at R400 000.

"Two passenger were treated for gunshot wounds and discharged from hospital. The driver is in a satisfactory condition in hospital," Ngobeni said.

Drivers said three of the taxis belonged to one owner. (332)



UNISERV Fm 4/6/93

Back in the fast lane

Activities: *Freight courier and travel services.*
Control: *Anubis Trust 58,2%.*
Chairman: *M J Wessels.* (332)
Capital structure: *48,4m ords. Market capitalisation: R68m.*
Share market: *Price: 140c. Yields: 5,0% on dividend; 16,3% on earnings; p:e ratio, 6,1; cover, 3,3. 12-month high, 155c; low, 55c. Trading volume last quarter, 170 914 shares.*

Year to Feb 28	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	16,9	10,5	13,8	9,9
LT debt (Rm)	5,3	6,9	5,4	4,9
Debt:equity ratio	0,34	n/a	0,32	n/a
Shareholders' interest	0,27	0,33	0,25	0,24
Int & leasing cover	5,8	5,6	2,1	4,7
Return on cap (%)	17,1	17,1	3,8	12,1
Pre-int profit (Rm)	19,0	18,4	8,7	15,9
Earnings (c)	27,0	27,0	nil	24,1
Dividends (c)	8,0	8,0	nil	7,0
Tangible NAV (c)	41,4	56,6	54,6	60,1

Having fallen foul of the recession and labour unrest in financial 1992 (pre-tax profit plunged 84% to R2,1m), Uniserv is back on track. It is again chasing its previous record of being the fastest-growing company among the 1987 listings. EPS in the year to February recovered to 24,1c and dividends were resumed.

The sixfold increase in pre-tax profit to R12,6m came about from improved efficiencies as a result of internal rationalisations and restructuring. But it was Sun Couriers, traditionally the largest contributor to earnings (just over 50%), that showed the biggest improvement, especially in the second half. In 1992, the effects of industrial unrest saw a reverse swing of R10m. With that behind the company now, chairman Tiger Wessels says volumes have increased on a reorganised infrastructure and lost market share is being recovered.

However, a new threat appears to have emerged in recent weeks. Analysts are concerned that Telkom's proposed move into the courier business might affect Uniserv's profits. Though Telkom could try to undercut private industry, much will depend on managerial ability.

Attributable earnings jumped to R11,5m, from R16 000, but this was dampened by R4,8m extraordinary items, which include certain investments outside SA.

Performances by Burlington Air Express and Burlington Ocean Express (trading as International Ocean Express since March) improved, with increasing volumes and market share. In 1992 Ocean Express was saddled with R1m bad debt.

Benefits from expansion at Mounties, the intra-city messenger service to corporate and institutional clients, are now being felt and Wessels adds that plans to expand these operations will boost earnings.

Retail Distribution Services, begun in 1992 as an additional service to Sun Couriers, came into its own, though it has yet to make a significant contribution.

Prospects are mixed. Core business Sun Couriers has increased volumes, and Wessels says service standards have improved after a year disrupted by industrial unrest. He believes that, through operating efficiencies, it can become a low-cost operator.

While restructuring in divisions will continue to show benefits, Wessels is concerned the export division might continue to operate at a loss, given its reliance on financial and political stability on the subcontinent.

At 140c, the share is on a p:e of 6,1 and some way off the 12-month high. The company faces something of a paradox: profitability has been restored but the threat of competition means it is a counter to be watched, not bought.

Marylou Greig

W&A INVESTMENT

Cheek by Jow(el)l

(332)

Activities: *Investment holding company with subsidiaries in manufacture and distribution of industrial and consumer products.*
Control: *Waicor 50,1%.*
Chairmen: *J Liebesman & R Hasson.*
Capital structure: *505,7m ords. Market capitalisation: R910m.*
Share market: *Price: 180c. Yields: 6,1% on dividend. 12-month high, 405c; low, 165c. Trading volume last quarter, 4,4m shares.*

Year to	'90	'91	'92	*'92
ST debt (Rm)	89,1	197,6	279,2	•197,2
LT debt (Rm)	942,4	867,7	1126,3	589,6
Debt:equity ratio	0,98	0,87	2,1	0,56
Shareholders' interest	0,35	0,34	0,23	0,46
Int & leasing cover	2,4	2,1	1,4	1,4
Return on cap (%)	11,7	12,5	8,0	8,0
Turnover (Rm)	3 037	3 228	3 189	3 189
Pre-int profit (Rm)	316,7	335,5	237,6	237,6
Pre-int margin (%)	10,1	10,3	7,0	7,0
Earnings (c)†	73,9	68,5	(40,0)	n/a
Dividends (c)	37,1	43,3	11,0	n/a
Tangible NAV (c)	288	239	(32)	119

* Pro-forma after rights issue.
• FM estimate.
† Undiluted.

The 1992 results for W&A, principal operating company in the FSI group, are abysmal — but that is hardly news. What will catch the investor's eye is the way the results are set out in the accounts and — even more important — how Trencor-type accounting policies are being brought to bear.

It is no secret W&A was in trouble with its bankers and that Absa made it plain remedial action was needed urgently. And it is generally conceded in the investment community that CE Jeff Liebesman executed a brilliant coup when he persuaded blue-chip Trencor to come on side.

Trencor's Neil Jowell spelt out his views right after the deal in unequivocal terms: Trencor's board was satisfied it was buying into a (troubled) group possessed of many sparkling but underperforming assets; and

Joint chairman Liebesman ...

... and Trencor's Hasson

he was quietly at ease with the price.

In an exclusive interview with the *FM*, Jowell said the tried and trusted accounting principles which had stood Trencor in good stead would be introduced in W&A/FSI. He knew full well one result would be copious red ink in the 1992 accounts. For a man who had just committed his group to a huge and potentially demanding investment, Jowell was remarkably unperturbed.

Since then, Trencor troubleshooter and key strategist Ray Hasson has become a joint executive chairman (brothers Neil and Cecil Jowell will also join the board), a successful rights issue has raised R750m throughout the group, and a start has been made on implementing prudent accounting policies.

However, some difficulties of interpretation have arisen. For a start, R156m has been written off patents, trademarks and goodwill.

There will be some dispute about the treatment; it has been brought to account in the balance sheet in a manner rudely described by some accountants as a "dangling debit." The inference is that the directors know they have to put it somewhere but aren't quite sure where.

Extraordinary items of R218m below the line in the income statement include R50m for what is described as an "amount written off current assets arising from the adoption of stricter valuation criteria." This appears to be, in effect, an admission of a fundamental error in previous years — not unexpectedly, Liebesman denies this. However, in the absence of detailed information, the *FM* believes the amount should have been charged against attributable earnings.

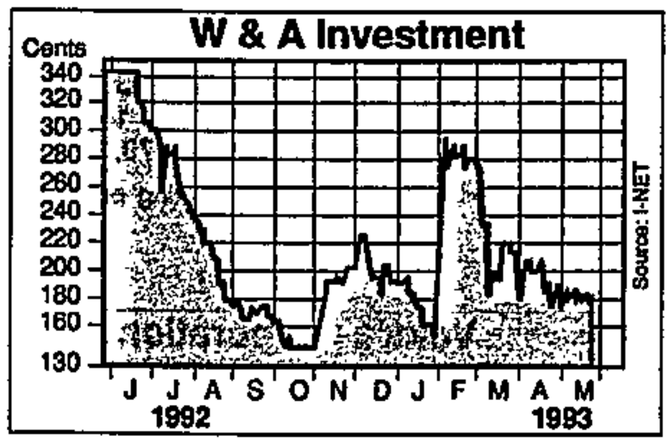
Lastly, attention must be drawn to the calculation in the accompanying table of tangible NAV as a negative 32c a share. The *FM*'s policy is to disregard as equity sums raised through debentures, whether these are compulsorily convertible or not.

In the case of W&A, this means ignoring R303m. Liebesman says this is patently wrong, citing the trust deed which provides that, in the worst case — liquidation — the holders of these debentures will rank *pari passu* with ordinary shareholders.

The *FM*'s view is that debentures aren't equity until they are actually converted.

W&A's position at balance sheet date — December 31 — was parlous. However, the rights issue has changed matters materially. Our table uses a post-rights issue *pro forma* which illustrates the dramatic way in which matters improve: gearing declines from more than 200% to 56% and shareholders' interest doubles to 46%. What's more, tangible NAV (on the *FM*'s method) improves to a positive 119c a share.

For the rest, most investors will know the bad news. Last year was one best forgotten. Even applying the company's figures, the attributable loss of R11,5m meant the final dividend was passed. Liebesman believes the



group will return to profitability this year and dividends will be resumed. So they should, after an injection of R750m to restore capital credibility.

Can the Trencor and Hasson/Jowell influence restore W&A as a leading industrial conglomerate, dependable even in bad times, always reliable?

The *FM* would bet it can.

David Gleason

VEKTRA/VAREX FM 4/6/93.

Shuffling the pieces

Investors will have to wait till next year to evaluate the acquisition of control of Varex by W&A subsidiary Vektra. The deal is a reasonably simple reverse takeover. Eddies, since renamed Varex, bought Femo, Parts

cont

Super Group takes Hultrans

S/Times C/Buss J 6/6/93

By DON ROBERTSON

A NEW force in the transport industry has emerged after Super Group's purchase of Natal-based Hultrans for R12-million.

Hultrans was involved in a management buy-out, headed by managing director Michael Norris, four years ago.

(332)

Super Group consists of Alex Carriers, Super Rent Truck Hire, Super Fleet Full Maintenance Leasing, Midway Truck Centres and the Doubletonner division.

The combined operation will be the fifth-largest trucking group in SA.

The deal involved the acquisition of about 130 truck tractors and 160 trailers from Hultrans, formerly a member of Huletts Group. The merged operation has 270 tractors and 320 trailers.

Super Group financial director Joel Klotnick says about R8-million of the purchase price was in cash and the rest in guarantees. Most Hultrans staff members will be retained. Mr Norris will retire.

Both companies competed in long-distance haulage of paper, forestry products, steel and other dry goods.

Mr Klotnick says: "Alex Carriers has for some time been keen to expand its long-distance operations and Hultrans was offered to us as an established operation with a successful 25-year record."

The combined group will be able to rationalise its operations and incorporate the synergies which exist between the two companies.

Although the transport business is going through a tough time, Super Group enjoyed a successful past financial year and is looking to further improvements.

W&A INVESTMENT

Cheek by Jow(el)l

(332)

Activities: *Investment holding company with subsidiaries in manufacture and distribution of industrial and consumer products.*
Control: *Waicor 50,1%.*
Chairmen: *J Liebesman & R Hasson.*
Capital structure: *505,7m ords. Market capitalisation: R910m.*
Share market: *Price: 180c. Yields: 6,1% on dividend. 12-month high, 405c; low, 165c. Trading volume last quarter, 4,4m shares.*

Year to	'90	'91	'92	*'92
ST debt (Rm)	89,1	197,6	279,2	•197,2
LT debt (Rm)	942,4	867,7	1126,3	589,6
Debt:equity ratio	0,98	0,87	2,1	0,56
Shareholders' interest	0,35	0,34	0,23	0,46
Int & leasing cover	2,4	2,1	1,4	1,4
Return on cap (%)	11,7	12,5	8,0	8,0
Turnover (Rm)	3 037	3 228	3 189	3 189
Pre-int profit (Rm)	316,7	335,5	237,6	237,6
Pre-int margin (%)	10,1	10,3	7,0	7,0
Earnings (c)†	73,9	68,5	(40,0)	n/a
Dividends (c)	37,1	43,3	11,0	n/a
Tangible NAV (c)	288	239	(32)	119

* Pro-forma after rights issue.
• FM estimate.
† Undiluted.

The 1992 results for W&A, principal operating company in the FSI group, are abysmal — but that is hardly news. What will catch the investor's eye is the way the results are set out in the accounts and — even more important — how Trencor-type accounting policies are being brought to bear.

It is no secret W&A was in trouble with its bankers and that Absa made it plain remedial action was needed urgently. And it is generally conceded in the investment community that CE Jeff Liebesman executed a brilliant coup when he persuaded blue-chip Trencor to come on side.

Trencor's Neil Jowell spelt out his views right after the deal in unequivocal terms: Trencor's board was satisfied it was buying into a (troubled) group possessed of many sparkling but underperforming assets; and

Joint chairman Liebesman ...

... and Trencor's Hasson

he was quietly at ease with the price.

In an exclusive interview with the *FM*, Jowell said the tried and trusted accounting principles which had stood Trencor in good stead would be introduced in W&A/FSI. He knew full well one result would be copious red ink in the 1992 accounts. For a man who had just committed his group to a huge and potentially demanding investment, Jowell was remarkably unperturbed.

Since then, Trencor troubleshooter and key strategist Ray Hasson has become a joint executive chairman (brothers Neil and Cecil Jowell will also join the board), a successful rights issue has raised R750m throughout the group, and a start has been made on implementing prudent accounting policies.

However, some difficulties of interpretation have arisen. For a start, R156m has been written off patents, trademarks and goodwill.

There will be some dispute about the treatment; it has been brought to account in the balance sheet in a manner rudely described by some accountants as a "dangling debit." The inference is that the directors know they have to put it somewhere but aren't quite sure where.

Extraordinary items of R218m below the line in the income statement include R50m for what is described as an "amount written off current assets arising from the adoption of stricter valuation criteria." This appears to be, in effect, an admission of a fundamental error in previous years — not unexpectedly, Liebesman denies this. However, in the absence of detailed information, the *FM* believes the amount should have been charged against attributable earnings.

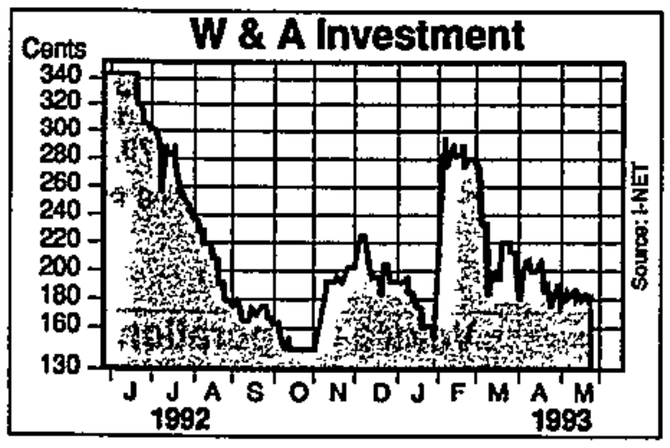
Lastly, attention must be drawn to the calculation in the accompanying table of tangible NAV as a negative 32c a share. The *FM*'s policy is to disregard as equity sums raised through debentures, whether these are compulsorily convertible or not.

In the case of W&A, this means ignoring R303m. Liebesman says this is patently wrong, citing the trust deed which provides that, in the worst case — liquidation — the holders of these debentures will rank *pari passu* with ordinary shareholders.

The *FM*'s view is that debentures aren't equity until they are actually converted.

W&A's position at balance sheet date — December 31 — was parlous. However, the rights issue has changed matters materially. Our table uses a post-rights issue *pro forma* which illustrates the dramatic way in which matters improve: gearing declines from more than 200% to 56% and shareholders' interest doubles to 46%. What's more, tangible NAV (on the *FM*'s method) improves to a positive 119c a share.

For the rest, most investors will know the bad news. Last year was one best forgotten. Even applying the company's figures, the attributable loss of R11,5m meant the final dividend was passed. Liebesman believes the



group will return to profitability this year and dividends will be resumed. So they should, after an injection of R750m to restore capital credibility.

Can the Trencor and Hasson/Jowell influence restore W&A as a leading industrial conglomerate, dependable even in bad times, always reliable?

The *FM* would bet it can.

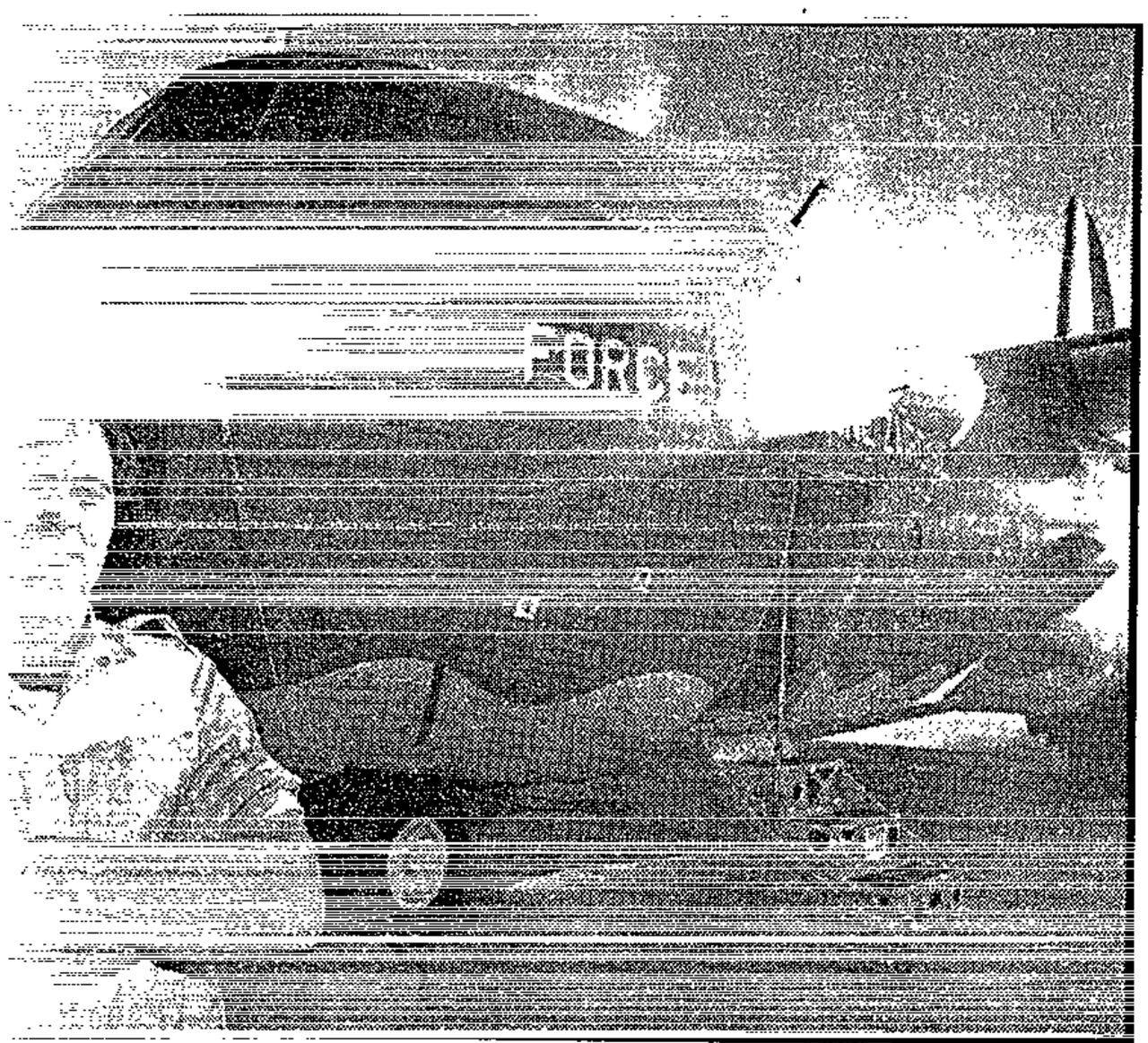
David Gleason

VEKTRA/VAREX FM 4/6/93.

Shuffling the pieces

Investors will have to wait till next year to evaluate the acquisition of control of Varex by W&A subsidiary Vektra. The deal is a reasonably simple reverse takeover. Eddies, since renamed Varex, bought Femo, Parts

cont



ial Vermeulen with the repaired Zaire Air Force Hercules Picture: JOHN HRUSA

Safair breaks into $1bn repair market

S/Times [Buss] 6/6/93

332

By ROGER MAKINGS

SAFAIR is positioning itself to take a slice of the $1-billion African aircraft maintenance cake that until now was farmed out to foreign companies.

Safair has completed an $850 000 structural repair and engine overhaul of a Zaire Air Force Hercules at its R40-million maintenance facility.

It has done engine and component work and provided spares for the Zambian Air Force for more than a year.

It is eyeing contracts from both the Angolan and Mozambican air forces — work which a few years ago would have been a pipe-dream, says Safair general manager, engineering and maintenance, Chris Bester.

But the big money is in the civilian market as African nations bow to World Bank pressure to cut military expenditure and concentrate on reducing debt.

Mr Bester says: "They no longer have money for new equipment. They have to make do with what they have. This means spending more money on maintaining fleets."

Heart

Safair has secured the total maintenance contract for Zairean operator Shab Air's Boeing 727s and 707s and BAC 111 jets. The deal is worth between $3-million and $5-million annually.

Mr Bester says: "Tanzania has asked us for quotes for the refurbishment of its passenger aircraft. Our involvement in Nigeria could bring aircraft maintenance work our way shortly."

Also under discussion with a West African country — Mr Bester will not say which one — is a contract to maintain a fleet of military aircraft. The deal is potentially worth millions of dollars.

Some factors influencing the change of heart by African airlines are the changing SA political scenario, competitive rates and a willingness to assist in training maintenance crews — Europeans jealously guard their skills.

Also in SA's favour is its proximity to other African nations and an ability to complete the work sooner than can be done in Europe or the US.

Dumping

Mr Bester says: "We estimate that African airlines spend about $400-million on labour and $500-million on spares for their aircraft outside Africa. This work can be done in South Africa for considerably less, to the same standards and in less time.

"Africa has traditionally been the dumping ground of ageing '60s and '70s aircraft. But with the stringent requirements emerging in Europe and the US, African carriers are being forced to upgrade their fleets. Buying or leasing new aircraft is out of the question for them. This indicates a growing market in maintenance."

Safair managing director Braam Loots says the company has resumed its operations in Angola after an eight-month withdrawal because of the civil war. It is establishing a maintenance facility in Luanda to be operated as a joint venture.

Earlier this year Safair was forced to retrench 33% of its workforce after a $10-million bad debt incurred in Angola before the election and outbreak of hostilities.

It has resumed work in Angola for cash only and is confident it will recover the money owing to it.

CITY PRESS, June 6, 1993

Ngcoya says he will fight attempt to depose him

C/Press 6/6/93

(332)

By PEARL RANTSEKENG

THE Natal region of Sabta has embarked on a nationwide campaign to unseat the organisation's national president, James Ngcoya.

The move – which was started by the Sabta branch of Ubumbano Lwabansundu KweZomgwaqo – follows a special conference at Ulundi last week when Ngcoya, who was not at the meeting, was voted off the regional executive of Sabta.

This move is widely seen as a power struggle for future control of Sabta.

Constitutionally one can only be elected to head Sabta nationally if one is a member of a regional executive committee, therefore Ngcoya no longer qualifies for presidency.

However, Ngcoya is adamant that he is still Sabta's president and that he still represents Natal on the national management council.

He said "constitutionally I am still in office until September 1996, and that is the only time that I could be voted out.

"I cannot comment on the legality of the new executive committee. What I know is that there was an interim committee that was elected by Natal people. And that committee was put on hold by the judge pending evidence to be given in court on June 23."

The Durban Supreme Court will on June 23 give a ruling on an application for an interim interdict brought by Ubumbano, restraining Sabta from interfering with it.

Ubumbano has vowed that it will do anything in its power to remove Ngcoya from his position. They have set out to gain support from the western Cape, Transvaal and most of the Natal regions in their effort to topple Ngcoya.

"If Ngcoya doesn't want to step out of the office, we will take this further with the national office. We will go on a national tour to brief all the regions on why the president should resign," said Natal executive PRO Gerald Ferror.

Ferror said Ngcoya was not re-elected onto the committee by the members of the management council of Natal as he was not present at the meeting.

He said Ngcoya knew about the meeting but decided not to show up. "Constitutionally we were supposed to give him seven days notice, but we decided to give him 10 days. But he obviously decided not to show up."

Ubumbano attorney Ian Cox said if Ngcoya was not prepared to step down "legal or political action" would have to be taken from within Sabta.

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng has refused to comment.

Fax to boss

Fax to Sol

; force controlled by the international community. — Sapa.

● See Page 6.

Taxi group lobbies for control board

Buss. Day 7/6/93

THEO RAWANA

INDISCRIMINATE issuing of permits is the major cause of taxi wars, and only a taxi control board will curb it, says the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

Ten minibuses were gutted at Baragwanath taxi rank, Diepkloof and Orlando East on Thursday.

Mike Ntlatleng, public affairs director of Fabcos (mother body of Sabta), said that since government decided on deregulating the taxi industry, the Transportation Board had been issuing permits without first checking passenger volumes or ranking facilities.

"There is no liaison even between the board and the local authorities, and this results in taxis choking up space and fighting over limited ranking facilities.

"Through a taxi control board, with which every taxi would need to register, input would be available to councils and the board and, since all members would have to follow a code of conduct, situations such as those experienced at present would be avoided," Ntlatleng said.

Ntlatleng said taxi industry leaders were talking to the Transport Ministry to have taxis subsidised.

Taxis, he said, carried 1,6-million passengers a day and buses and trains only 600 000.

"A technical committee is working on how government should subsidise the industry," Ntlatleng said.

Captain Jean-Francois Tordo. See Back Page.

Picture: GARTH LUMLEY

Pessimism over move to sharpen SAP checks

Buss. Day 7/6/93

RAY HARTLEY

WITWATERSRAND police reporting officer Jan Munnik met senior policemen, including generals in charge of the SAP's complaints investigation unit, last week to sort out key problems relating to his efforts to investigate police misconduct.

The officers had undertaken to investigate new procedures to increase the unit's effectiveness, but Munnik said he remained pessimistic about this improving in the PWV region.

He claimed that efforts to investigate wrongdoings within the force were not receiving the full co-operation of certain police officers.

Munnik was appointed reporting officer by the Minister of Law and Order in terms of the national peace accord in January to refer for investigation complaints about incidents damaging to police-community relations. "It is clear to me that there is resistance among the local police to having these structures where their investigations are checked," he said.

Problems included police insisting on deciding which cases would be looked into and which would be dropped and the fact that there was no effective investigative unit in the PWV region.

Six policemen had been allocated to investigate complaints, but were doing this over and above their normal work.

He had received a report on only one complaint he had referred to police investigators since March. A total of 25 complaints had been referred for investigation.

His impression was that certain senior police officers were trying to minimise the role of reporting officers, who were seen as outsiders meddling in police affairs. His request for men to be allocated to a unit which would investigate complaints on a full-time basis had been turned down on the basis of a manpower shortage. Similar problems existed in Natal, with unsatisfactory investigations taking place, he said.

The executive of the national peace committee had established a sub-committee to look into ways of resolving certain problems, such as a lack of access to police dockets, following a series of complaints by reporting officers, he said.

R100m to streamline mail system

Buss Day 7/6/93

ANDREW KRUMM

THE Post Office would spend about R100m upgrading its mail distribution system in the Johannesburg and Durban regions, Post Office senior GM Willem Joubert said at the weekend.

Two new sorting and distribution centres would come on line in Johannesburg and Durban in January 1995 as part of a new two-tiered national distribution chain, which aimed to boost the speed and efficiency of mail delivery.

The R60m Johannesburg and R40m Durban "mail factories" would be based on a prototype in Goodwood, Cape Town, which had recently been completed.

Joubert added that the existing mail centre in Pretoria had enough capacity, and was sufficiently centralised, to act as the fourth national distribution office. "The four mail factories form the hub of our new distribution model, and will supply 30 transfer offices spread around the country.

"By rationalising and grouping all the present operations together at regional nerve centres, they will speed up sorting and distribution."

Delivery targets were two days (from posting to delivery) for mail within cities, four days for inter-city post or post between major centres, and five days for post between minor centres in different provinces.

He said: "Job cutbacks are not expected as we do not have duplicate staff at the operations level."

Joubert added the Post Office was still looking for likely sites for the new centres in Johannesburg or Durban.

Nelson Mandela calls for mass movement for peace

Buss. Day 7/6/93

MARITZBURG — ANC leader Nelson Mandela has called for signatories of the national peace accord to meet urgently to strengthen the accord and unleash a "mass movement for peace".

The ANC president also called on all South Africans to unite around the tentative April 27 election date, to begin the healing process in violence-torn SA.

Mandela was addressing several hundred people in the Maritzburg City Hall yesterday before he unveiled a memorial statue honouring Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, who, almost 100 years ago, was evicted from a train reserved for whites at Maritzburg Station.

Mandela said in spite of the peace accord's shortcomings, the document had assisted in quelling violence.

"We can no longer delay our coming together again as signatories of the peace accord, to strengthen it and revisit the source of violence and give peace fresh momentum."

Solutions to the current violence could only be found through collective efforts by all polical leaders, Mandela said.

"We need to unleash a mass movement for peace . . ." We can't delay a meeting of signatories of the peace accord."

The ANC president welcomed recent reports about the phased integration of armed formations in the country into the security forces, saying this could be an important subject to be addressed by signatories.

The ANC welcomed all peace initiatives, said Mandela.

He commended a recent peace plan by the ANC southern Natal region and also by the group of concerned Zulus who had both called for urgent meetings between the ANC president and Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Referring to the election date, Mandela said he was aware some people had reservations on the issue.

"We urge them all to look to the future and consider their reservations so that this momentous event becomes a unifying occasion in our strife-torn country," said Mandela.

Never before had there been such a moment in SA's history as the forthcoming election, Mandela said, urging South Africans to ensure it marked a time of healing, he said.

Earlier, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu reiterated the call for all armed formations in the country to come together in a joint peacekeeping force controlled by the international community. — Sapa.

● See Page 6.

Row over witness's indemnity

Buss. Day 7/6/93

RAY HARTLEY

GOVERNMENT yesterday denied that a key witness in the investigation into the death of eastern Cape activist Matthew Goniwe had been given insufficient indemnity to allow him to testify freely.

President F W de Klerk earlier granted SADF Col Lourens du Plessis indemnity for his role in transmitting a signal from Eastern Province Command to the State Security Council in June 1985, which is alleged to have led to Goniwe's assassination, but refused him indemnity for his role in "Operation Katzen".

Du Plessis' lawyer Wayne Gray said in a statement he was concerned that efforts to delve into Operation Katzen — allegedly a plan to destabilise the eastern Cape in the 1980s — were being resisted.

"Du Plessis has already signed an affidavit stating that the Goniwe signal amounted to a "death warrant".

A government spokesman said De Klerk had granted Du Plessis indemnity with regard to the signal against the advice of the board established in terms of the Further Indemnity Act.

"There are no reasonable grounds for the inference that the indemnity granted to Du Plessis is insufficient to ensure his giving evidence on any matter in an uninhibited manner," the spokesman said.

"Indemnity was not granted relating to Operation Katzen because there was insufficient material available indicating that any offence had been committed. Nor is Operation Katzen the subject of any current judicial proceeding."

Sapa reports the partial indemnity was described as a "travesty" which demonstrated that the Further Indemnity Act was a licence for murderers, DP Youth spokesman Colin Douglas said.

Taxi group lobbies for control board

Buss. Day 7/6/93

THEO RAWANA

INDISCRIMINATE issuing of permits is the major cause of taxi wars, and only a taxi control board will curb it, says the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

Ten minibuses were gutted at Baragwanath taxi rank, Diepkloof and Orlando East on Thursday.

Mike Ntlatleng, public affairs director of Fabcos (mother body of Sabta), said that since government decided on deregulating the taxi industry, the Transportation Board had been issuing permits without first checking passenger volumes or ranking facilities.

"There is no liaison even between the board and the local authorities, and this results in taxis choking up space and fighting over limited ranking facilities.

"Through a taxi control board, with which every taxi would need to register, input would be available to councils and the board and, since all members would have to follow a code of conduct, situations such as those experienced at present would be avoided," Ntlatleng said.

Ntlatleng said taxi industry leaders were talking to the Transport Ministry to have taxis subsidised.

Taxis, he said, carried 1,6-million passengers a day and buses and trains only 600 000.

"A technical committee is working on how government should subsidise the industry," Ntlatleng said.

Kappa

Newspaper reports carrying news of the COSATU boycott of the Pepcor Group give the misleading impression that KAPPA as a brandname is being included in the boycott.

KAPPA HOLDINGS LIMITED, the exclusive licence holders of all KAPPA products in Southern Africa, has no dispute whatsoever with COSATU or any of its affiliated organisations.

KAPPA and KAPPA FOOTBALL MERCHANDISE products are found in several hundred independant stockists which are not associated in any way with the current dispute.

Enquiries: 337-6452

Buss. Day 7/6/93

Uniserv results improve

MZIWAKHE HLANGANI

FREIGHT service group United Service Technologies' (Uniserv) results had improved in the year to end-February after industrial unrest in the previous year, chairman Tiger Wessels said in his annual report. (332)

The upturn had resulted mainly from the change in Sun Couriers, which had suffered from strikes. Its results had improved in the second half. Volumes had regained their upward trend on a reorganised infrastructure as the market share lost in the prior year was regained.

Burlington Air Express and Burlington Ocean Express (trading as International Ocean Express from March 1 1993) continued to show an improvement despite poor economic trading conditions. Both divisions had increased their volumes and market share.

Wessels said the export operation had been "downsized" during the the first half with resulting benefits. Losses in this division had continued because of poor trading conditions in non-SA subsidiaries resulting from the drought and limited availability of foreign exchange.

A loss in the export division was being budgeted for in the coming year. This division was largely dependent on trade with other southern African countries.

The group reported attributable earnings of R6,7m, equivalent to 24,1c a share before the extraordinary items (22,8c diluted).

Taxi drivers block routes

Sowetan 9/6/93

SCORES of taxi drivers blocked access routes to Isipingo, south of Durban, for the second successive day yesterday.

On Monday, 100 taxi drivers staged a four-hour blockade in Isipingo to protest against policemen who they alleged demanded cash bribes in return for dropping traffic charges. — *Sowetan Correspondents and Sapa.*

(332)

Taxis blockade town

(332)

DURBAN. — A hundred taxi drivers staged a four-hour blockade in Isipingo on Natal's South Coast to protest against policemen who allegedly demanded cash bribes in return for dropping charges of traffic violations.

The taxi drivers dispersed after the dog unit arrived at the scene, said police spokesman Major Hamilton Ngidi. No charges against policemen were lodged after the protest. — Sapa.

ARGT 8/6/93

Witness at inquest 'fears for his life'

ARG 9/6/93

Staff Reporter

AN inquest on African National Congress activist Mr Michael Mapongwana was postponed in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court when a key witness failed to appear.

The court was told yesterday that the witness feared for his life, particularly because of recent taxi-related violence.

332

Mr Mapongwana, chairman of Khayelitsha Civic Association, was shot in Lansdowne Road on July 7, 1991.

When he died he was involved in peace-making linked to the taxi war, then at its height. The inquest was postponed until July 23.

Trucking tycoon Coetzee punts 'lucrative scheme'

Star 10/6/93

(332)

By June Bearzi
Star Line

Unstoppable trucking tycoon Riaan Coetzee has again side-stepped Government moves, announced yesterday, to outlaw certain business practices in seven of his latest ventures.

He is now inviting the public to invest in a "lucrative tourist scheme", Sun Tours.

Several prospective investors told Star Line that last month they had responded to advertisements offering "a chance to get a foothold in the luxury bus industry".

After an initial visit to the Sun Tours offices in Main Road, Randburg, they said they were led to believe the company had a money-spinning contract with hotel giant Sun International to operate luxury tour buses.

Investors said they were told that for an initial R45 000 outlay they would secure the right to operate Sun Tours buses, which would earn them up to R20 000 a month.

Marsha Fourie of Vereeniging and Willie Dekker of Secunda said they realised after discussing the deals with Alet Muller at Sun Tours that the scheme was similar to the Coetzee transport scams exposed by Star Line over the last two years.

When Fourie challenged Muller about her association with Coetzee, Muller finally admitted she was working with the tycoon but claimed that The Star was intent on "sabotaging" their businesses.

Dekker said he was told by Muller that Sun Tours would be operating from offices in George in the southern Cape.

Muller said tourist buses were in great demand because of the influx of foreign visitors.

"The monthly income they promised sounded too good to be true. It later dawned on me that this was just another Coetzee scam," Dekker said.

In a special Government Gazette published yesterday, it was announced that the Coetzee companies Prime Truck Hire, Ace Hire, Five Star Combi Hire, Five Star Taxis, Check Hire, Club Hire and Prima Vragmotorhuur had been found to be involved in harmful business practices.

It was pointed out that Coetzee's partners in these ventures were Muller, Annette Jacobs, Michiel Adendorff and J Hepburn.

Star Line has, over the last few months, run several articles slating these seven ventures, which netted Coetzee more than R1 million.

The latest move instigated by the Harmful Business Practices Committee follows a ban placed on Coetzee and his first group of schemes — Truckkor, Conomy and SA Rebuild — at the beginning of last year.

The Government action in both cases followed extensive Star Line investigations into Coetzee's business activities.

About 600 investors were snared by Coetzee and many were financially ruined after sinking tens of millions of rands into his schemes.

South 5/6- 9/6/93

Taxi groups need peacemaker

REGINALD MALIMBA

By Sabata Ngcai

332

A MEDIATOR is urgently required to intervene between rival taxi associations which have failed to meet and negotiate.

The Convention for Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) says the killing of its members by a splinter group known as the "Big Eight" demands an urgent intervention of an impartial mediator.

But a spokesperson for the Peace Committee said in the current situation formal mediation was not possible because of the large number of killings and the tension between the two parties.

The spokesperson said this was not just a matter between Codeta and the "Big Eight".

"Criminal elements are playing a destructive role in the situation and they have no intention at this stage of ending the conflict."

The Goldstone commission and the Peace Committee were working together to find ways of resolving the conflict.

Codeta and the "Big Eight" have been at each other's throats since Codeta was formed last year.

The tension dates back to before two rival taxi groups, the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) and Lagunya, merged to form one taxi body, Codeta.

The "Big Eight" broke from Webta over differences within the organisation.

Since the tension began nine Codeta members, including some executive members, have been gunned down.

Codeta complains that it has been struggling in vain to hold talks with the "Big Eight" to sort out their differences.

Codeta executive committee member Mr Reginald Malimba acknowledged that the "Big Eight" had sent letters to Codeta requesting meetings, but the organisation was "very busy" on the proposed dates.

A meeting was arranged by police in the mayor's parlour a month ago after the "Big Eight" had forcibly tried to get into the Codeta offices.

But Codeta failed to attend saying that the "Big Eight" were Webta members and could not be recognised because Webta died when Codeta was formed.

"There is an urgent need for an impartial mediator to bring us together," said Codeta executive member Mr Reginald Malimba.

"Every week Codeta people are gunned down by this shadow group."

Malimba said although they were prepared to talk to the "Big Eight" they were also concerned about their safety. He said the "Big Eight" were "armed and dangerous".

Although Malimba insisted that another taxi war was impossible, he emphasised it was imperative to find a solution to the problem soon.

Star 11/6/93

Two slain in ambush after taxi set alight

Two men were shot dead with AK-47 rifles in Orlando East, Soweto, yesterday and three others were injured in what appeared to be part of an ongoing war among local taxi owners and taxi associations. (248)

Police said the five were ambushed in Power Park while inspecting a minibus taxi which had been set alight. (332)

The SAP said the vehicle had been gutted on Tuesday afternoon. Yesterday, a group of people went to the scene to examine the wreck. It was not clear whether the group were taxi owners.

About four people approached the group as they were inspecting the taxi, opened fire on them and fled, said police.

About 50 spent AK-47 cartridges were found at the scene. Police are not sure whether the taxi was burnt by a rival association. — Crime Reporter.

Receiver claims R7-m from tycoon

Star 11/6/93.

By June Bearzi
Star Line

332

The Receiver of Revenue is claiming R7 million in unpaid income tax from trucking tycoon Riaan Coetzee.

An investigation of Coetzee's multimillion-rand empire by tax authorities started within days of Star Line highlighting his transport investment ventures in October 1991, reliable sources say.

They say Coetzee failed over several years to declare the sums his operations generated from investors.

Coetzee, who has been condemned for building his wealth on deception, has taken millions on the pretext that investors were paying "entry fees" for the right to take part in lucrative transport schemes. But the promised rights never materialised and investors lost their cash.

After launching his first group of trucking companies — among them Truckkor and Conomy — seven years ago, Coetzee embarked on a lavish lifestyle and acquired a number of expensive upmarket homes and a stable of luxury cars worth R8 million.

One of his homes in Bassonia — an exclusive hilltop enclave south of Johannesburg — has 16 garages to house his fleet.

His dealings over the past two years have led to criminal proceedings, civil lawsuits amounting to millions, and government clampdowns.

In February he was fined R20 000 and given a four-year jail sentence for fraud, suspended on condition that he was not found guilty of fraud or theft in the next five years.

After the first Star Line exposé, the Harmful Business Practices Committee outlawed some of his business practices — used in Truckkor, Conomy, SA Rebuild and Contruck in Midrand.

Coetzee promptly moved to a luxury house in Main Road, Randburg, and started new schemes in which investors paid for the right to operate taxi routes or cartage rights.

On Wednesday, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry David Graaff again accepted recommendations by the Harmful Business Practices Committee to outlaw some of Coetzee's business practices.

His new venture, Sun Tours, is actually a bogus luxury bus scheme.

Two killed in Soweto taxi war

332

JOHANNESBURG. — Two men were shot dead in Orlando, Soweto, in an apparent clash between members of a taxi associations and members of a rival association who were visiting the site where a taxi was burned on Wednesday.

● Two police vans came under a hail of stones and half-bricks in Klipfontein Road, Old Crossroads, on Wednesday. There were no injuries. CT 11/6/93

● About 30 youths ordered two policemen out of their bakkie yesterday near a police station at Benoni and set the vehicle alight.

● Meanwhile the ANC is investigating claims by its members that the Carletonville ANC executive committee has been responsible for murder, arson, assault and intimidation in the town.

ANC spokesman Mr Ronnie Mamoepa said an ANC delegation would visit the area next week. — Sapa, Staff Reporter

NEWS Uncertainty about identity of assailants in Orlando

NARROW ESCAPE ... Mrs Anna Mongwe points to a bullet hole in her shack. Earlier yesterday morning gunmen had opened fire on taxi owners at a rank in Orlando East, Soweto. She is holding her one-month-old baby Fikile while her four-year-old daughter Thembi holds a water container which was riddled with bullets during the attack.
PIC: LEN KUMALO

Two taxi owners killed

Sowetan 11/6/93

■ MORNING ATTACK: Witnesses believe incident to be a continuation of ongoing raids:

By Bongani Mavuso

332

Two people were killed and three seriously injured when gunmen opened fire with AK-47 rifles on taxi owners at a rank in Orlando East, Soweto, yesterday morning.

A group of people set three taxis alight at the same rank last Wednesday morning. Taxi drivers said yesterday the latest incident occurred about 6.30am.

Those killed, in what is believed to be a feud over the rank, were taxi owners Mr Mike Mthethwa and Mr Melusi Kunene. The injured were identified only as Rakhotsi, Thulani and Mbongo.

The drivers said three men travelling in a minibus parked their vehicle two streets away and walked to the rank. They pretended to be commuters by joining a queue.

The drivers said the men suddenly opened fire on the taxi owners, killing Mthethwa and Kunene instantly.

The witnesses said they suspected the men were from the same group which set 10 taxis alight at several taxi ranks in Orlando East and Diepkloof last week.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said yesterday they were investigating the killings but did not know the motive for the attack.

He said a taxi was set alight at the rank on Wednesday night and the men were ambushed while inspecting the gutted minibus.

"We are not sure whether the taxi was burnt by a rival association and we can't speculate," he said.

Two spent AK-47 rifle cartridges were found at the scene. Residents in the area said they have been living in fear since the rank was established.

"We no longer sleep peacefully here," said Mrs Anna Mongwe, who was narrowly missed by a bullet while breast-feeding her one-month-old baby in her shack.

"My baby and I were nearly killed for something we do not know. Something must be done about this rank."

Two other shacks were riddled with bullets but no one was injured.

■ Weekend Argus Reporter **DALE KNEEN** conducted a survey of some of the well-known taxi services in the city to determine quality, price, efficiency and friendliness.

Trips were taken from one end of the Company Gardens to the other and the fares charged for each trip recorded. The general condition of each vehicle was noted and the driver was asked typical tourist questions.

The results are presented here.

Sea Point Taxis (Good)

■ A young driver in a spotless Toyota Corolla pulled up outside the Mount Nelson Hotel within five minutes of phoning Sea Point Taxis for a cab. I immediately asked him how much it cost a kilometre and he told me R2,90 and asked me if I was from out of town. When I said yes, he told me to always inquire how much taxis cost as there was no set tariff in Cape Town and some taxi services were expensive and others charged a fee before the journey even began. When I asked him what one could do in Cape Town on a rainy day he laughed and suggested I sleep. "Don't worry, the weather will improve. It's rainy one day and sunny the next." He gave me precise directions to Captour's office, quoting some landmarks to look out for. After taking his fare of R6,30, he said: "Enjoy your stay in Cape Town."

Marine Taxis (Satisfactory)

■ The receptionist at the Mount Nelson Hotel telephoned Marine Taxis and asked for a Mercedez-Benz to take me to St George's Cathedral. She told me the car I wanted was unavailable, but assured me all the cars used by Marine Taxis would be clean and reliable. A Ford Sapphire pulled up outside the hotel within seconds and it was indeed clean and comfortable. Someone called the driver on a radio and asked him if I was happy with the car. He said yes. There was no indication inside the car how much one would expect to pay a kilometre and the driver wasn't sure either. "About R2,50 a kilometre, I think," he said. He told me Captour's office was close to the fountain at the foot of Adderley Street but he wasn't sure what one could do in Cape Town on a rainy day. "Don't know. Sit in the car, I suppose," he suggested. I asked him how long he had been working as a taxi driver and he misunderstood me, saying he had a 24-hour shift. The trip to St George's Cathedral cost R7,20 and the driver gave me a 20c discount. He couldn't give me a receipt and therefore wrote the amount on a card.

Magicab Radio Taxis & Microbuses (Satisfactory)

■ A middle-aged, friendly driver stopped on the corner of Church and Long streets minutes after I called for a taxi. The taxi was a Toyota. It wasn't the newest model but it was clean and it had an attachment on the window which prevented wind from blowing into the car. The driver chatted about the weather in Johannesburg after inquiring where I was from. When I asked him what I could do on a rainy day in Cape Town, he laughed and said: "I don't know. Stay at home, I guess." He was able to give me clear and concise directions to Captour's office. The journey to the Mount Nelson Hotel was R8,20 and was the most expensive in the survey even with the 20c discount the driver offered me.

ARG 12/6/93

City Radio Cabs (Unsatisfactory)

■ The driver of a Mazda 323 hooted from across the island outside St George's Cathedral eight minutes after I called City Radio Cabs. I refused to move from outside the cathedral. He made a U-turn at the first opportunity and stopped right next to me. The car was clean, but the seat was slightly scuffed. After he drove through a red traffic light, I asked if he had been driving for many years and he said yes. I inquired what one could do in Cape Town on a rainy day and he said: "I don't know." I pressed on, asking about Cape Town's attractions and he listed Kirstenbosch, Cape Point, the Waterfront and Table Mountain. I said none of these sounded good on a rainy day and asked him if the city had a good art gallery. He said it didn't. I then asked him for directions to Captour's offices and he said: "Adderley Street." When we arrived at the Mount Nelson Hotel, the driver couldn't give me change for R20 and I had to count the cents in my wallet to get together the required R6,40.

Elite Radio Taxis (Poor)

■ This is the taxi service with the most pretentious name and so I asked for a Mercedes-Benz when I rang from the Mount Nelson. A friendly telephonist answered the call but she was almost inaudible as her voice was almost drowned out by someone shouting in her office. She said she could send a Mercedes-Benz to collect me and it arrived about five minutes later. It was an old 300D model and slightly run down. A piece of wire hung from the boot and the passenger door could hardly open. The car had leather seats covered with sheepskin covers and the headrests were cracked. The glove compartment had been ripped out and replaced with a noisy radio. The ashtray was full of cigarette butts and there was no lighter. As soon as our journey began I asked the driver, a quiet fellow, if he could light my cigarette and he passed me a box of matches. He then used the noisy radio to call his office. The shrill response was: "Not now, I'm busy!" He retorted: "Jou bogger (you bugger)." I told him I had the day free tomorrow and asked him what I could if it was raining. He suggested I try the Waterfront and offered to take me there later that evening. He wasn't sure where I could find Captour's office, but suggested the corner of St George's and Strand Street. The trip cost R6,40.

City sedan taxi probe

(332) ARG 12/6/93

A united bid is being made to stamp out tarnishing "third rate and dirty" services in Cape Town

■ The city council, tourism organisations and taxi drivers are finding ways to improve the service of sedan taxis, a move they believe could contribute to making Cape Town a more attractive tourist destination.

DALE KNEEN
Weekend Argus Reporter

TAXI services in Cape Town could be modelled on those in London or New York with standardised colours, uniformed drivers and set fares for tourists taking trips around the city.

The city council, tourism bodies and sedan taxi drivers have formed a committee to find ways to improve what some have called the "third rate and dirty" services in the city.

The taxi industry was harshly criticised recently by Victoria & Alfred Waterfront managing director Mr David Jack, who said public transport in Cape Town fell way short of what is deemed acceptable overseas.

Most taxi operators agreed that there was room for improvement, but their main concern was applying standard fares for trips as they believed unscrupulous operators were "ripping off" tourists.

City council officials, taxi operators and representatives of Captour and Satour launched the Sedan Taxi Liaison Committee late last year and several meetings had already been held.

According to Deputy City Administrator Mr Alan Dolby, the committee planned to investigate the standards of taxi services in the city and how they influenced the image of Cape Town as a tourist destination.

"Some of the most important issues the committee is looking at include the possibility of having a standard colour taxi and where taxi ranks ought to be.

"A sub-committee is investigating the possibility of implementing these and other suggestions, like having standard tariffs. At the moment taxi operators work to maximum tariffs."

Weekend Argus made several telephone calls to the local road transportation boards in Cape Town and Pretoria, but no one was able to say what the maximum tariff was.

Minister of Transport Dr P J Welgemoed, in correspondence to the Sedan Taxi Liaison Committee, said taxi owners applied to the board for a tariff which was "deemed to be reasonable".

He said tariffs differed from taxi owner to taxi owner, according to the engine capacity of the motor car, but he added that the Road Transportation Board did not determine the tariffs and did not apply price control.

"Should a tourist be of the opinion that a tariff is unreasonable or that he would prefer either a more expensive or a cheaper service, he is at liberty to take another taxi.

"This system applies in many countries and tourists soon come to know about differentiated tariff structures."

A Weekend Argus survey in the city showed taxi fares varied from between R2,50 per km to just over R4 per km. A trip between the city and the airport would cost between R70 and R75.

Few taxi operators in the city displayed their fares on the outside or inside the car. Some taxi drivers were not even aware of what the fare was per kilometre.

But some taxi operators felt fares of R4 per km were justified and cited fuel, repairs, salaries and insurance premiums of up to R700 per month as some of the reasons for high fares.

"Minibus taxis actually make more money than us because they transport about 15 people and charge them each 50 cents per km. That makes their fares somewhere in the region of R7 per km," said one operator.

Picture: LEON MÜLLER, Weekend Argus

□ **RANK AND FILE:** Taxi drivers wait patiently for passengers in Adderley Street while tourist authorities, the city council and taxi owners think of ways to improve their service. Those in the know believe improved transport for tourists will enhance the city's marketability as a holiday destination.

'13 000 MK soldiers to join SADF'

Star 14/6/93

WINDHOEK — The ANC would contribute more than 13 000 trained personnel to a future South African defence force, the chief of staff of its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), said in Windhoek yesterday.

Siphiwe Nyanda rejected the SADF view that MK recruits would be integrated into the SADF only if they met certain standards, saying a new army would be a joint venture between various forces with jointly established standards.

"The SADF must overcome their notion that they have a monopoly on standards. We want people in a future army who can defend democracy. We cannot rely on elements who have defended apartheid in the past."

Nyanda arrived in Windhoek yesterday to attend a regional defence and security meeting attended by delegates from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana and Angola. — Sapa.

Too many permits for taxis

Star 14/6/93

(332)

By Abdul Milazi

The indiscriminate issuing of taxi permits by traffic authorities has turned the burgeoning taxi industry into a hotbed of violence and there was no sign of peace in sight, claim taxi organisations.

Because of the lack of substantially enhanced regulation of the industry, operators were killing each other in gangster-like fights to control the increasing number of taxis, they said.

More than 200 people were killed and about 13 taxis have been burnt in the continuing taxi violence since the beginning of this year.

South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) principal chairman Joe Mabaso said the root cause of the violence was the economic situation.

Violence in May was marked by the killing of five taxi operators in Brits, and an on-going dispute between Natal bus and taxi drivers.

The recession and unemployment had led to a dramatic fall in passenger volumes and competition was becoming increasingly fierce.

South African Taxi Drivers' Union (Satdu) spokesman Mphikeleli Sibanyoni said there were suspicions that the recent killings were an attempt by some drivers or owners to "cull" the increasing number of taxis to maintain profitability.

Particularly affected were those routes considered to be lucrative as they still provided a fair volume of business.

To address the diminishing profitability in the industry, Sabta was negotiating with the Government to have taxis subsidised.

It was also negotiating to buy directly from vehicle and spares manufacturers.

Taxi bodies claim the crisis committee convened by the city council's traffic department after the February taxi blockade in Johannesburg had failed to address the problems of the industry.

The committee of representatives of the drivers' union, taxi associations, National Peace Secretariat and traffic authorities has held a number of meetings but with no substantial results.

Both Sabta and Satdu agreed the violence could be curbed if there was some form of control in the issuing of permits.

The traffic department said it was doing all in its power to address the situation.

Negotiations on the involvement of taxi organisations on the issuing of permits were under way.

ANC leader held over grenade blast

Star 14/6/93

Own Correspondent

KIMBERLEY — An ANC Youth League regional leader has been arrested in connection with a recent hand grenade attack in the city.

ANC zonal committee spokesman Junior Nkabo said Sipho Mxaba was arrested on Wednesday. This was confirmed by the SAP.

Nkabo could not explain why their own members were now being arrested when the ANC had accused the SAP of the grenade attack.

Ezekial Mokone (19) was killed in the blast, which injured more than 50 people. The Russian F1 grenade was thrown into the middle of an ANC Youth League protest outside the Bophuthatswana consulate in Kimberley on May 25.

Chess player's 'first' for SA

Top Johannesburg chess player David Gluckman has won Africa's Zone 4.3 championships with a clean score.

In round 5 on Saturday afternoon, Gluckman defeated SA champion Charles de Villiers to end on 5/5.

Gluckman, a 27-year-old actuary, will represent South Africa in the Interzonal Tournament in Switzerland next month.

This is the first time South Africa will be represented at this advanced stage of eliminations for the world title.

In the women's zone contest, Caroline Bijoux of Johannesburg won with a clean score of 3/3, one point clear of closest rival Yvette Erwee of Johannesburg. She will represent South Africa in the women's Interzonal. — Sapa.

Taxi drivers rapped on the knuckles

Sowetan 15/6/93 (332)

Sowetan & Radio Metro

*Talk*back

with Tim Modise

By Isaac Moledi

THE behaviour of taxi drivers and how the industry was run were among the issues that dominated the *Sowetan*/Radio Metro Talkback Show last night.

Callers said the treatment they got from drivers would ultimately force them to abandon taxis for trains. They said the behaviour of most drivers was unbecoming.

Victor of East Rand, who said he was concerned about the taxi operations in Benoni, told host Tim Modise that the drivers in the area were rude and acted as if they were doing passengers a favour.

He said the drivers brought their internal squabbles into the business. This, he said, led to the victimisation of innocent people.

Octavia of Vosloorus also said drivers were intimidating passengers. She said people who ran the industry were unfair.

She agreed with Modise when he said the problems in the industry could only be resolved by the public rising up against the taxi operators.

"If it is true that teachers are using boycotts to advance their studies, then the South African Democratic Teachers Union needs to take punitive measures against the culprits. This is an irresponsible act."

Jack, Johannesburg

"Archbishop Desmond Tutu must be praised for bringing Mr Nelson Mandela and Mr Mangosuthu Buthelezi together."

Abbey, Meadowlands

"I'm worried about the way domestic workers and some labourers are being abused by their employers and the Government, especially at the time when elections are approaching."

Anonymous, Hillbrow

"I think Occupational Therapy should not only be exposed to Standard 9 pupils but to all black students."

Nokuthula.

Big earnings rise for Laser

Star 17/6/93

Restructuring has helped Laser Transport overcome difficult trading conditions, with earnings per share rocketing from 2,6c to 18c in the six months to March.

Turnover was static at R58,5 million.

Operating margins improved by 3,5 percent and operating profit rose from R3 million to R5 million. Interest declined from R2,5 million to R2 million.

The directors say emphasis is now on asset management and cash flow. — Sapa. (332)

Laser Transport beats trading conditions

B/Day 17/6/93

(332)

EDWARD WEST

LASER Transport's earnings a share soared nearly sixfold in the six months to end-March after an 18-month restructuring programme overcame difficult trading conditions.

Earnings shot up to 18c from 2,6c a share, but the interim dividend was passed. The group planned to strengthen its balance sheet and had budgeted for R12m capital expenditure during the year.

Results published today show turnover static at R58,5m, but the 1992 figures included turnover for the Foden Truck and Laser Parts divisions which were sold during the previous financial year.

Operating margins improved 3,5% and operating profit climbed to R5m from R3m. Interest paid fell to R2m from R2,5m. Interest bearing current liabilities climbed to R6,7m from R2m at the interim stage last year, but was substantially down on the R12,2m reported at the end of the 1992 financial year.

Laser sold its non-transport related activities at the end of 1992. During the 1992 financial year substantial rationalisation took place within the group. The number of employees fell 16% to 1 247 and the fleet was reduced by 5%, MD Tony Cotterell said in a statement.

Other non-core properties would be sold, but the group was also attempting to purchase certain properties which would reduce rental increases in future.

Property related expenses formed a substantial portion of Laser's overheads, said Cotterell.

All companies within the group were trading profitably. Since September, Laser subsidiaries Stuttafords, Pickfords and Frasers received increasing inquiries about international removals.

The volume of export removal business was expected to increase later this year which should benefit Laser. The contribution from this market segment represented about 30% of company turnover, said group GM Denis Kaye.

Substantial investments in vehicle replacements and property expenses were planned to modernise the fleet. This would provide long-term benefits from modern technology in vehicle and trailer design offering payload potential, said Kaye.

Directors said Laser's income traditionally was lower in the second half although continuing asset management was expected to maintain profitability.

Hijackers take only the goods

S/Times (Buss)

By DON ROBERTSON

IMPROVED security measures adopted by distributors of consumer goods have almost eliminated truck hijacking, but looting of vehicles is a major problem.

Manufacturers and suppliers of "cash" goods, such as liquor, tobacco and groceries, have been targets of truck hijackings. Most stolen trucks were not recovered.

Now truck owners have to fight the thief who is after the goods only. The trucks are abandoned and usually recovered.

Social unrest, which has resulted in the burning and stoning of trucks, has also cost distribution companies much money.

Joe Pretorius, secretary of the SA Transport Security Association, says that in 1991, 500 trucks and goods worth R84,4-million were hijacked. The figures rose to 586 trucks and goods valued at R117,8-million last year. Most of the incidents were on the Reef. Fleet operators say theft of trucks only has fallen sharply since 1991.

SA Breweries lost only three trucks last year and one in the first five months of 1993. Last year, however, 22 trucks were looted and the number has jumped to 39 so far in 1993.

(332)

Amalgamated Beverage Industries, bottler of Coca-Cola and other soft drinks in the Transvaal, has armed guards on some routes to protect drivers and cargo.

The massive expense of the moving experience

S/Times (Buss) 20/6/93

By TERRY BETTY

BANISH the thought of emigrating unless you have R100 000 to spare.

This is what it costs for a family of four to move to Australia or Britain.

If your dog accompanies you, add R2 000.

Corporate Relocations director Cally Heal says moving costs include settling-in expenses like finding a school, where to live and shop.

Stuttaford Van Lines marketing executive Estelle Sacharowitz says the contents of an average three-bedroomed house fill a 20ft container.

The cost of shipping the 30 cubic metres of goods to Australia is R17 600 and R14 500 to London.

Mrs Sacharowitz says extra charges are made for antiques, which require special packaging.

The emigrant has to pay insurance of 3,7% of the value of the goods — from door to door.

Mrs Sacharowitz says the value of household goods is usually R150 000, making the insurance charge R5 550.

Hitchcock & Associates Africa representative Dawn Raphaelly says Australia charges a senior manager R3 750 for an application for permission to settle there. For others the cost is R805.

Mrs Raphaelly says migration services charge about R14 500 for an executive, depending on circumstances.

For this fee the applicant is assured that his migration papers will be dealt with correctly.

A consultant in Sydney is assigned to the applicant to have the papers processed.

Immigration officials will handle details, such as lodging documents and providing the correct number of certified copies.

Once the family has been accepted, it has to sell up and tie up loose ends in SA.

Mrs Heal says her firm's departure programme arranges for the removal of furniture, disconnection or transfer of services, forwarding of mail, payment of bills, cleaning of the house, an inventory, clearing rubbish from the garden and cleaning the pool.

The daily rate for organising this is R960, plus the fees of those who do the work.

Mrs Heal says the charge for cleaning a house is about R370 a day. It costs R500 to clean the average swimming pool.

The highest expenses are incurred in the new country.

Mrs Heal says many executives are too busy to handle all the work involved in moving. Help is provided by many firms.

For example, a house search by a UK company for rent or purchase in London will take about five days and cost R8 400. A one-day orientation programme for the executive costs R1 680 and a "look-see" trip R2 625.

Pets are moved by the Animal Travel Agency. It charges R500 to take the animal to the airport, obtain health certificates, import permits and airline bookings.

The cost of the pet's ticket depends on its size. For example, a Labrador requires a box costing R140. Its fare is R1 500.

The owner has to pay for an animal's keep in quarantine in the new country.

Masterbond a winner

Times (Buss) 20/6/93

MY WOODS

ed gambling include
Western Cape. Club
y leisure resort in the
complies with all the

ed the rescue pack-
for several months

would enhance the
at all three groups
rescue plan.

The deal gives Club Mykonos creditors, of which Masterbond shareholders are the major component, a package of debentures and ordinary shares. The debentures should return two-thirds of their money to creditors.

Shares in Club Mykonos have a nominal value of R2 each. They would be worth R8 each if a casino licence was granted, says Mr Riley.

A plank of the rescue scheme is the formation of a new Club Mykonos Langebaan. It will have a capital base of R80-million and 13 000 shareholders.

NEWS Soweto taxi feud rages on ● No start to hangings yet says Justice Ministry

Sowetan 21/6/93

2 taximen shot dead

By Tsale Makam

TWO taxi owners were killed in Soweto at the weekend in the ongoing taxi violence that is threatening the minibus taxi industry.

Police spokesman Major Herman van Oosthuizen could not confirm the killing of Mr George Sebatlelo, who was killed on Thursday evening. Van Oosthuizen however confirmed the killing of Mr Gideon Dire (59) on Saturday evening.

Several times

He said Dire was shot "several times as he tried to pull out of the Baragwanath taxi rank in Diepkloof". He died instantly. There were no passengers in his minibus.

No one has been arrested in connection with the shooting.

Sebatlelo's cousin, who did not want to be identified, said his uncle was shot by unknown gunmen near Merafe station at about 6pm on Thursday.

He said: "I left him for less than five minutes to go and buy fruit on the other side of the station. When I came back he had been shot dead."

Exclusive domain

He alleged that the feud resulted from an attempt to turn the Merafe rank into an exclusive domain of a group linked to the nearby hostel. Three weeks ago 10 minibus taxis valued R400 000 were gutted in Soweto by rampaging gunmen who also forced passengers out of taxis in Soweto, fatally shooting one man.

Police are appealing to anyone with information about murders of taximen in Soweto to phone the Soweto Murder and Robbery unit at (011) 980-8104.

A group of IFP supporters dance and chant at the reburial of Ishmael Bojozi, whose body was allegedly exhumed and set on fire by "comrades". Yesterday a handgrenade was thrown during the march. No injuries were reported. PIC: LEN KUMALO

Another Soweto taxi driver gunned down

Star 21/6/93

Crime Reporter

Hopes for peace between Soweto taxi drivers and owners were shaken again at the weekend when another taxi driver was shot dead.

Gideon Dire (59) was shot several times as he was leaving the Baragwanath taxi rank in Diepkloof.

There were no passengers in the minibus.

On Thursday night, George Sebatlelo, a taxi driver, was shot near the Merafe rank.

At about 6 pm yesterday, three people were killed in Power Park. Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said it was not clear if the killings were connected to the taxi conflict.

No one has been arrested in connection with the three attacks.

Agreement reached on city taxis

B/Day 22/6/93

THEO RAWANA

THE Johannesburg Taxi Forum had reached agreement on most issues relating to taxi operations in the city and was expected to reach full accord next month, Johannesburg Peace Committee chairman Piroshaw Camay said yesterday. (332)

The forum was set up after taxi drivers, complaining of harassment by traffic officers and police, brought Johannesburg to a standstill in February by blockading its streets.

Convened under the National Peace Accord, the forum comprises the SA Taxi Drivers' Union (Satdu), the Johannesburg Traffic Department, the Johannesburg City Council, the SA Black Taxi Association, community organisations and the police.

Camay said yesterday's meeting had gone well and the parties had finalised most of the items at issue.

"A few outstanding issues were referred to the taxi associations and the drivers' union and we hope to reach full agreement next month," he said.

Agreement had been reached that the police and traffic officers would not stop several vehicles simultaneously. Understanding had also been reached on bus lanes to be allocated to taxis.

Putco fare increases

PUTCO yesterday announced fare increases of between 12,4 and 16 percent effective from Sunday June 28. Sowetan 23/6/93

Putco spokesman Niel Groenewald said although the bus company wished to keep its fares as low as possible, "escalating costs have made this impossible".

"However, as a result of negotiations between Putco and the KwaNdebele-Moutse Transport Committee, the fare increase in this area has been reduced from 16 to 12,4 percent," Mr Groenewald said. — *Sowetan Correspondents and Sapa.*

(332)

Putco fares increase next week

Star 23/6/93

(332)

Putco yesterday announced fare increases of between 12,4 and 16 percent, effective from June 28.

Putco spokesman Niel Groenewald said although the bus company wished to keep its fares as low as possible, escalating costs made this impossible.

"However, as a result of negotiations between Putco and the Kwandebele/Moutse Transport Committee, the increase in this area has been reduced from 16 to 12,4 percent," he said.

In addition, he said Putco had absorbed the costs resulting from the 4 percent VAT increase and the petrol price increase earlier this year. — Sapa.

legislation schools may still place limitations on the grounds of race

— compulsory school attendance

— medium of instruction in schools,

(ii) the extent of any other restrictions, other than those mentioned under (i), is unknown as State-aided ordinary schools lay down their own admission criteria. At present more than 95% of the Department's schools are state-aided ordinary schools,

(b) yes,

(i) certain legal restrictions are prescibed. The controlling body/owner of a private school decides on the criteria/policy with regard to the admission of pupils to such a school. In this regard the only restriction placed by the Department relates to certain conditions for the registration of private schools as set out in the Regulations pertaining to Subsidies and Registration of Private Schools (House of Assembly) (Act No 104 of 1986). The applicable regulations refer to:

— the age requirement for admission

— admission of handicapped pupils,

(ii) the extent of any other restrictions is unknown as the controlling bodies/owners of private schools lay down their own admission criteria. At present, approximately 250 private schools are registered with the Department.

Schools: potential capacity/actual enrolment

*2. Mr R M BURROWS asked the Minister of Education and Culture:

(1) Whether he or his Department maintains a list reflecting the current (a) total potential capacity of, and (b) actual enrolment in, each school under the control of his Department; if not, why not; if so,

(2) whether he or his Department will make this list available; if not, why not; if so, (a) when and (b) in what manner?

B988E

The MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE:

(1) (a) Yes,

(b) yes;

(2) The information is at present being checked for accuracy. Once this process has been completed, the information will be made available in the format as requested.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

QUESTIONS

†Indicates translated version.

For written reply:

General Affairs:

Job opportunities: amounts allocated

36. Mr M RAJAB asked the Minister of State Expenditure:

(1) Whether any amounts were allocated in the budgets for 1991–92, 1992–93 and 1993–94, respectively, for the purpose of creating job opportunities; if not, why not; if so,

(2) whether any of these amounts were utilized for this purpose; if not, why not; if so, (a) to what extent in each case and (b) in what manner;

(3) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

D305E

The MINISTER OF STATE EXPENDITURE:

(1) Yes.

(a) Amounts were voted for 1991–92, 1992–93 and 1993–94, for, amongst others, the following programmes which make a substantial contribution towards the creation of job opportunities:

(i) The Regional Industrial Development Programme:

1991–92—R941,180 million
1992–93—R911,425 million
1993–94—R739,633 million

(ii) The export incentive schemes:

1991–92—R 915,000 million
1992–93—R2 028,964 million
1993–94—R2 006,556 million

(iii) The electricity subsidy for the refinement of base metals:

1991–92—R140,000 million
1992–93—R134,280 million
1993–94—R188,563 million

(iv) The Phase VI Scheme for the motor industry:

1991–92—R116,400 million
1992–93—R217,198 million
1993–94—No funds

(v) Small business development:

1991–92—R 93,632 million
1992–93—R 18,632 million
1993–94—R124,632 million

(b) Over and above the abovementioned amounts the following amounts were voted for the creation of job opportunities directly:

(i) Vote: Manpower

1991–92—R50,0 million
1992–93—R11,8 million
1993–94—R45,0 million

(ii) Vote: Development Aid

1991–92—R51,955 million

(c) A further R20 million, being the proceeds from the sale of strategic oil reserves, was also allocated for this purpose in August 1991.

(2) Details of the utilization/expenditure of the voted amounts can be obtained from the Departments of Manpower, Trade and Industry, Regional and Land Affairs and the Central Economic Advisory Service.

(3) No.

Written reply to question set down for oral reply on Wednesday, 30 June 1993:

Taxi services: subsidization

*1. Mr K PADAYACHY asked the Minister of Transport:

(1) Whether his Department intends subsidizing taxi services; if not, why not; if so, (a) from what date and (b) by what amount;

(2) whether he will make a statement on the matter? D332E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(1) Yes. I refer the hon member to my statement on taxi violence of 3 February 1993 as reported in Hansard, Volume 1 and specifically columns 248 and 249.

(a) Not fixed as yet.

(b) Unknown.

(2) No.

INTERPELLATIONS UNDER NAME OF MEMBER

Abrahams, Mr T—
Own Affairs:
Education and Culture, 629

Beyers, Mr J M—
General Affairs:
Constitutional Development, 573

Botha, Dr W J—
General Affairs:
Finance, 2037

Bruwer, Mr A A B—
Own Affairs:
Agricultural Development, 783

Burrows, Mr R M—
General Affairs:
Local Government, 2134
Regional and Land Affairs, 1617
Own Affairs:
Education and Culture, 99, 954, 1920

Carlisle, Mr R V—
General Affairs:
National Health and Welfare, 1127
Own Affairs:
Housing and Works, 605

Charlewood, Mrs C H—
Own Affairs:
Welfare, 1524

Chiolé, Mr J—
General Affairs:
Transport, 49
Own Affairs:
Education and Culture, 1159

Gastrow, Mr P H P—
General Affairs:
Home Affairs, 1269
Law and Order, 1504

Gerber, Mr A—
Own Affairs:
Education and Culture, 19, 1432, 1814, 2058

Gibson, Mr D H M—
General Affairs:
Trade and Industry, 309

Goodall, Mr B B—
General Affairs:
Finance, 580
Own Affairs:
Welfare, 1707

Gotinden, Mr T L—
Own Affairs:
Education and Culture, 648

Groenewald, Mr P J—
General Affairs:
Defence, 1263

Haswell, Mr R F—
General Affairs:
Law and Order, 420

Isaacs, Mr N M—
General Affairs:
Public Works, 619
Own Affairs:
Local Government, Housing and Agriculture, 125
Housing, 1719

Accord will save lives

Sowetan 24/6/93

By Joshua Raboroko

THE South African Taxi Drivers Union and the Federated National Transport Organisation have signed an historic agreement that covers working conditions, better wages and the right to strike. (332)

Other benefits include registration of workers with the Department of Manpower.

Saldu general secretary Mr Mphikelele Sibanyoni said the agreement was an important milestone.

His union represents 35 000 members.

Fento chairman Mr Lennox Magwaza hopes this will pave the way for an orderly resolution of disputes and thus save lives.

BIDVEST/SAFCOR (332)

FM 25/6/93

Another deal for Joffe

Bidvest has bought the business of SA Freight Corp (Safcor) for R261,3m, to be settled through an issue of Bidvest shares. The purchase of Safcor fits Bidvest chairman Brian Joffe's idea of the perfect acquisition: a cash generator, low gearing, sound management and growth potential.

Safcor's subsidiaries are principally in freight forwarding, clearing, distribution, warehousing and allied activities. The company was listed in 1987 and its earnings have grown at a compound rate of 28%. It generates income based on a fixed percentage of the value of goods it handles, making it a good hedge against inflation.

Joffe says SA's political changes should lead to improved international trade. "We have been watching Safcor for some time," he says. "Bidvest holding company Bidcorp and Safcor have a common director in Max Brodie. Remember, Bidvest was once Currie Motors and it too fell under the Curfin umbrella." (Curfin holds 50,01% of Safcor.)

Three months ago Bidvest was restructured. Subsidiaries Crown and Afcom were delisted and Bidvest and Bidcorp held rights

FM 25/6/93

issues. Joffe said then that the restructuring would enhance Bidvest's cash flow management, improve tax efficiencies and borrowing capacity — R700m-R800m was mentioned.

(332)

Bidvest has, however, chosen to settle the Safcor deal by issuing shares. The consideration will be paid by about 3,5m shares of 50c each at an issue price of R75 and/or Bidvest convertible debentures of R18 each.

Kate Rushton

FM 25/6/93

(332)

TAXI RANK SHOPPING

FM 25/6/93 (332)

Spawning new industry

Grinaker Projects and the Foundation for African Business & Consumer Services (Fabcos) have informally agreed to co-develop about 20 taxi rank shopping centres countrywide over the next two years.

The programme is just one of a few Fabcos is planning with various developers. Fabcos aims to become co-owner and manager of a number of retail centres, enabling it to give associates such as tavern owners, hairdressers, fashion and beauty consultants, hawkers and insurance salesmen first option to lease shops in the centres. Spin-offs would include the provision of improved taxi ranks, offices for black business associations and training for blacks in shopping centre development and management.

The centres will bear the name Gateway Mall with suitable prefixes denoting locations. Fabcos plans to take equity in Spar supermarkets that open in its centres as Spar's franchising flexibility allows this.

Construction began on January 11 on the first Gateway Mall between the taxi rank in Carletonville (on council-owned land) and the CBD. The centre is due to be completed by September 23. The site is bounded by Annan Road, Osmium and Amethyst streets. Offices, boardrooms, training centres and communication systems for taxi operators will be provided. The taxi rank might be upgraded.

About 15 sites have been identified. Grinaker, Fabcos and potential investors are involved in final negotiations on three.

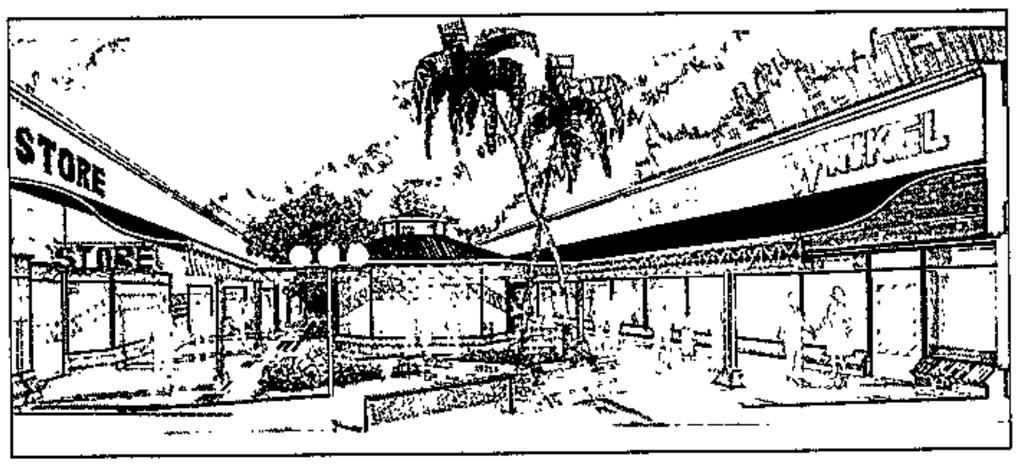
Fabcos property and projects manager Kevin Williams says his organisation wants to bring the taxi industry in line with those overseas. There are plans to expand into freight and haulage to ensure long-term profitability. The bulk of the R21,5m needed to develop the first centre will come from the Eskom Pension & Provident Fund. Fabcos will put up the rest. As part of the deal, the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta), a Fabcos affiliate, has taken a long lease for a service station on 1 800 m².

The mall will have more than 9 000 m² of lettable space, of which 2 000 m² will be occupied by a Spar supermarket. The remaining 50 shops open on to a mall and consist of a mixture of convenience retailing. Three national chains have already signed up: Diskom, Patrick Daniel (of the Smart Centre stable) and Pep. Negotiations with other retailers are at an advanced stage. Provision has been made for Sabta offices, medical and dental suites.

Gateway Mall's target market comprises greater Carletonville, including Khutsong, which has more than 100 000 residents, and 100 000 at the seven gold mines in the area. It expects to capture at least 20% of the market. Peak times could see 450 taxis visit and they could bring 75 000 shoppers a week.

About 600 taxis use the rank daily.

Grinaker Projects says Carletonville Town Council supported the development and recognises the need to provide better facilities for taxis and commuters. ■



Carletonville's Gateway Mall ... *for training as well*

Star 25/6/93

GDM geared to attract new business

(332)

John Cowper . . . increased demand for services.

By Stephen Cranston

The continued recovery of its clearing and forwarding subsidiary African Shipping enabled GDM Finance to report a 10,1 percent increase in earnings per share to 41,84c in the year to April.

Group MD John Cowper says that the attributable earnings of R10,7 million represents a 29 percent return on average shareholders' equity and a 30 percent compound return in the six years since listing.

The total dividend was increased by 9,7 percent to 17c.

Pre-tax profit increased by nine percent to R12,6 million and the use of tax losses in African Shipping and Repfin brought the tax rate down from six to five percent. Cowper says that the assessed losses in these two companies are unlikely to be used up before the next century.

The ratio of group borrowings in the trade finance companies at year-end was 3,4 to 1, well below the 5:1 maximum gearing for the group. Other finance companies have let gearing increase to 10:1 in the recent past, and in the case of Reichmans this led to huge losses.

Cowper says the conservative risk management, the ploughback of profits and dividends to control gearing, a rand hedge advantage derived from profits generated externally in the UK and Europe, a clearing and forwarding arm and a growing reputation for service have put GDM in a good position to attract new business.

He says there is good synergy between trade finance and clearing and forwarding. African Shipping recorded a 36,7 percent improvement in taxed profit from R2,4 million to R3,28 million.

Cowper says an agreed election date and the prospect of a transitional authority would give hope for an improvement in the economy.

DO YOU WANT TO INVEST IN PORTUGAL

Assured honest and guaranteed business for only R40 000

Limited opportunity

Contact Mrs F Bellosti urgently on (011) 622-6053 at all hours

11486

Star 25/6/93

Zambian millers break into SA market

LUSAKA — Zambia's state owned National Milling Company (NMC), the country's largest milling firm, has broken into the South African market — exporting its livestock feeds.

NMC has also broken ground in neighbouring Zimbabwe for its stockfeed and was exploring further export potential to Botswana and Namibia, a company spokesman confirmed in Lusaka yesterday.

"We are also looking at exporting number three maize meal which is a by-product for animal feed," he added.

A ton of wheat bran is currently fetching $55 although this might be revised to bring it in line with increased costs of production, he said.

The exports were a surplus to the local demand by Zambia's farming community.

The spokesman however, declined to divulge details of how much foreign exchange would be earned, but stressed: "We can't just yet quantify our projected earnings because we are still processing the volumes of exports so far undertaken since we started the exercise a few months ago." — Sapa.

Star 25/6/93

Fury over Putco increase

By Mokone Molete (332)

Bus commuters were angry that Putco had raised fares without consulting passengers, the chairman of the Soweto Daily Passenger Committee said yesterday.

Stephen Sangweni said pamphlets had been distributed on Tuesday to inform commuters that fares would go up by 13,5 percent on July 1.

He claimed attempts to talk to Putco over the past three weeks had failed.

Putco assistant managing director M Oldham said Putco had consulted widely with passengers since February.

"There might have been reasons to have more consultations, but we believe that we have communicated well with various communities.

"Our relationships with Mr Sangweni is good and together we have worked very well in the past two years," he said.

He said the fare increases — which varied between 12,4 and 16 percent according to areas — were in line with inflation. "We did not raise our fares when the price of fuel went up in April and also when VAT went up."

GDM generates 10% increase

DUMA GQUBULE

INTERNATIONAL trade finance company GDM Finance increased attributable earnings by 10% to R10,7m in the year ended April.

This was equivalent to earnings of 41,84c (38c) a share from which shareholders received a payout of 17c (15,5c) a share for the year.

MD John Cowper said the success was attributable in part to the synergy between international trade finance and the clearing and forwarding activities of 64%-held African Shipping.The latter delivered a 36,7% increase in taxed profit of R3,28m (R2,4m) on a turnover of R181m. African Shipping was becoming a major force and was expected to generate a turnover of over R200m in the current year.

The company maintained a return on shareholders' average equity of 30% since its listing six years ago, a performance that placed it well up on the list of the top 100 companies.

Pre-tax profit rose nine percent to R12,6m (R11,5m) and the tax bill fell to R575 000 (R648 000). After-tax profit rose to R12m (R10,9m) and preference dividends and minorities absorbed R1,3m (R1,1m).

Cowper said the group had total assets of R187m (R170m), shareholders funds of R39m and a market capitalisation of R77m (R66m).

SAB drivers win in-house contract

S/Times (Buss) 27/6/93

By DON ROBERTSON

IT has been tried before, but the idea of allowing truck operators, working for a major distributor, to own their own trucks has taken on a new concept at SA Breweries.

Black truck drivers at the Baragwanath depot of SAB have formed a close corporation and have won a contract for an inter-depot transport contract.

The formation of this new "informal" group has resulted in an order for 11 ERF truck tractors, costing about R500 000 each.

This story of co-operation between black and white businessmen creates a position in which owners become operators with the necessary benefits.

The new group, Wheels for South Africa CC, is an unexpected, but welcome spin off from the brewery's owner-driver programme, says SAB.

Bob Jones, general manager for truck sales at ERF says they were approached by the group which had no financial or credit track record and no assets other than their own 100 years of distribution experienece.

"The close corporation partners had been chosen from SAB's owner-driver programme and would be monitored for driver use, experience, customer orientation, technical capabilities and honesty.

(332)

"We realised that these people, with all their experience, probably knew more about distribution than most," says Mr Jones.

"We, therefore, saw the potential and took the initiative by submitting a proposal to our joint venture finance company, Wesbank. This proposal was approved."

The success of Wheels of SA was a pleasant surprise for depot manager, Deon Kriel, who had planned to award the inter-depot contract to "outside contractors."

SPEAKING OUT . . . Taxi drivers, who need community support, instead face the wrath of the nation, says taxi driver Ndishavhelafhi waRamafola. He is appealing for understanding of the difficulties taxi drivers face. ■ Pic: TLADI KHUELE

C Press 27/6/93

Give us a brake, and help us move ahead

Hundreds of lives have been lost on our roads and taxi drivers have been credited with a mighty chunk of these. Commuters and other road-users have complained of these "rude barbarians". Taxi driver NDISHAVHELAFHI waRAMAFOLA gives their side of the story.

332

IN view of the current level of road accidents on South African roads, it is cause for concern that efforts to curb this are only heard over festive or Easter periods.

The Automobile Association (AA) recently gave a startling traffic report. It said the 21 lives lost in road accidents each day in 1980 had risen to 31 by 1990. It is heart-breaking to hear that the figure is steadily rising.

The survey highlighted a slight decrease in fatal collisions, but the focus fell heavily on the worsening death rate involving minibuses – increasing from 10,8 percent in 1989 to 14,6 percent in 1990. The report added that 35,5 percent of road accidents involved drivers in the 18 to 39 age group.

Given this information, and the fact that most minibus taxi drivers come from this age group, it can be dubbed reckless living if the community is not informed of what type of people they place their lives with each time they board a taxi.

Notorious for their rudeness, recklessness and unacceptable speeding, it is not surprising that taxi drivers, who need the support and sympathy of the community most, instead receive the wrath of the nation.

During the taxi drivers' strike in February one newspaper editor described their actions as "barbaric". Another caller to a radio station labelled drivers thus: "A bunch of uneducated, uncouth, stupid barbarians who only want to be exempted from obeying the rules of the road and this because of their greed for money."

Some time ago I read in a local newspaper that the Johannesburg Traffic Department collected R55-million in one year from the taxi industry alone in traffic fines. This does not include annual cab licence fees and the "street coffees" collected daily by both the SAP and traffic officers. The latter could exceed the former if monitored.

Before we proceed any further, let me ask you this: Has it ever crossed your mind that these taxi-drivers are mostly family men and women? That they are victims of the system like you? That they are also trying to earn a living just like everybody else doing a "decent" job?

Tell me mister, and wena sister, would you rather have these people go on a law-breaking spree? Should they engage in theft, drug smuggling, car hijacking, housebreaking, bank-robberies and rape?

If we changed our legal trade for the above acts would you then accept us as fellow brothers trying to earn a living and not as uncouth stupid barbarians? And please note: I am not only a taxi driver, I am also a lay preacher and a Sunday school teacher.

The focus here is on taxi-drivers, not taxi-owners. Remember, if these people could bring SA's biggest city to an almost standstill for two days, causing the business sector to lose millions of rands, how much would they generate for the same if their courage and energy could be nurtured and channelled constructively?

But if they are crushed from all corners, they – like all other human beings – will burst, because, as Aggrey Klaaste puts it: "The something that forces people to behave like beasts is universal, is not a matter of being third world or uneducated, is sometimes not even the result of abject poverty. There are poor people from as early as the 18th century in France for instance and recently LA, in the US, who one day wake up and say: 'This far and no further' ".

Recently SA was rated the most violent society in the world, with 36 lives a day having been lost in 1991. Violence, however, is being addressed by almost all political leaders.

Deaths from violence and road accidents compare very closely. What a pity that only one issue is being addressed. Is it because there are more political points to score for addressing the violence issue than the road accidents issue? I wonder.

Come the festive season, almost all newspapers and radio stations become mouthpieces for most big guns of the nation. The message is always the same: "We appeal to taxi drivers not to overload, to adhere to speed limits and to drive carefully."

A very gentle, polite and sensible plea indeed, but how do you address stupid, uncouth and uneducated barbarians through the media? Remember, the majority of these people cannot read an English newspaper and those that can, have no time to.

Moreover, when they get home it is long past newstime. Besides, they are just too tired to watch.

Industry is gearing up for change

B/Day 29/6/93

THE phasing in of different components of the Road Transport Quality System (RTQS) is causing truck manufacturers to gear production and servicing programmes to meet new requirements.

Leading commercial vehicle manufacturer in the over-7,5 ton category, Mercedes-Benz SA, says service and technical support have become more crucial. (332)

MBSA management board member (commercial vehicles) Adolf Moosbauer says the more stringent regulations in the new RTQS demand higher servicing standards generally.

"The relationship between product and service is being completely redefined, to the point where back-up service is becoming a major criteria in commercial vehicle purchase decision making."

The company has accordingly developed its service structure network to meet RTQS standards and the expected rise in vehicle units to be serviced, he says.

MBSA commercial vehicle operations manager Stan Bromley says the company anticipated legislative changes in the transport industry. The result is that its latest range of commercial vehicles has been manufactured to meet the higher specifications laid down.

"Transport operators are also being assisted, through our transport consultancy customer advisory system, to effectively incorporate changes in legislation into their fleet management systems."

New hope for taxi industry

Star 29/6/93

By Mokone Molete

Taxi drivers have reached agreement on a number of issues — raising hopes that peace may at last be in sight in the industry. (332)

The South African Taxi Drivers' Union and the Federated National Transport Organisation (Fento) have agreed on working conditions, the recognition of the union, the registration of drivers with the Department of Manpower and wages. The agreement between the two organisations will be signed next month.

Fento represents taxi and bus owners as well as tourism and trucking operators. Some of the problems facing the industry are violence between rival associations, the alleged harassment by traffic officials, overloading and the shrinking number of passengers.

B/Day 29/6/93

Upgradings in assembly and service are essential

DES GUSH

ANY efficient transport operation relies on a minimum of downtime when breakdowns occur and service parts are needed, issues which prompt upgradings in the assembly and back-up service of most truck manufacturers.

Toyota marketing director (trucks) Des Gush says improvements have been made to the Hino, Toyota Dyna and DA models by their Japanese manufacturers and Toyota SA.

As these trucks arrive in knock-down kit form for assembly by Toyota SA, the opportunity arises for the local upgradings that enhance their durability under local conditions.

Most recent of these has been the application of a more durable and uniform primer and paint treatment to the chassis of all makes of trucks. (3327)

Various enhancements have also been made to improve braking on the Hino Super Dolphin range, says GM (truck marketing) Frans Cloete. (193)

The fitting of an air drier in the compressed air system improves braking during moist conditions.

"Toyota was the first to introduce the new ADE engine brake value with an exhaust brake on turbocharged Super Dolphins. This enables a truck to safely proceed down a long slope 20%-30% faster than normal."

The Hino has also had the wheel width increased to nine inches and a valve extension has been fitted to the inner wheels on double wheel configurations, to ensure ease of keeping the correct tyre pressures.

Upgrading

He says the tachograph drive on some models has been upgraded from a mechanical to electronic input, to enable owners to change to more complex tachographs that provide a wider range of checks and data.

Some Super Dolphins are also fitted with a new double sleeper cab designed to provide added comfort for a long distance crew of two during rest stops.

After-sales customer satisfaction is proving as big a sales tool as is the quality and looks of any vehicle, trucks in particular.

Gush says maintaining high levels of satisfaction requires financial commitment, substantial management inputs and routine monitoring of satisfaction levels among customers.

"We now have an accurate and continuing measure of how we perform in our customers' eyes."

FRANS CLOETE

New trends emerge as squeeze continues

B/Day 2.9.1993

NEW trends are emerging as the running of trucks becomes more expensive and competitive.

The squeeze is attributed to the economic slowdown and the undercutting of rates for almost two years because there are too many trucks on the road.

Rent-A-Bakkie chairman Don Dick says there is no indication of an early let-up, particularly for the smaller operator.

What could also stiffen competition over the next few years is the arrival of a new breed of smaller public road carrier whose lower overheads could enable him to shave rates further.

Getting into road haulage is the logical next step for blacks wanting to get out of the overcrowded taxi industry.

Industry sources believe current pressures, including the high price of new trucks, already account for why private carriers are gradually moving from ownership to rental or leasing.

Fleetlease Contracts marketing director Arthur Mutlow sees full maintenance leasing as a viable option to companies purchasing and administering their own trucks.

(332)

Contracting

Nissan Heavy Vehicles transport economist Mark Warner says contracting out is increasing here and worldwide.

Meanwhile, professional hauliers are able to operate more cheaply than private operators for a variety of reasons that include overloading and cutting back on maintenance, insurance provisions and fleet replacement in order to lower rates.

Many smaller carriers ignore new legislation

B/Day 29/6/93

MORE urgency should given by the road authorities towards creating a freer transport industry, say industry sources.

Legislation continues to be phased in, but it is mostly the major transporters that are conforming.

For various reasons the playing fields for state transport organisations, public carriers and ancillary transporters have not yet been levelled.

This is mainly because the authorities have not made the effort to inform smaller operators of the changes, or are not sufficiently geared to enforce new legislation.

Truck Rental Association of SA chairman Don Dick says professional hauliers and the truck rental industry have subscribed to certain tougher legislation based on improving road safety, while other players have not.

For example, legislation introduced in July last year called for vehicle operators to register before July this year. Of some 400 000 operators, only 40 000 have complied, either because they don't know of this requirement or believe a new government will not enforce it.

Phased in

He says legislation to create a freer market has been phased in for years, but the levelling of the playing field has not yet materialised.

Although more legislation is due, it has been delayed as government's attention has turned to other socio-economic and political issues, says Dick.

These factors and increasing competition have placed the profit margins of most major transporters under growing pressure, further worsened by vehicle prices rising at a higher rate than the consumer price index. (332)

"The combination of these factors makes us reluctant to buy new vehicles even though new legislation (RTQS) is scheduled to be introduced with a view to improving road safety.

"At a time when many transporters have no option but to keep their trucks longer, the country's ageing vehicle park is unable to meet the safety requirements of new legislation."

Dick — also chairman of Rent-A-Bakkie — says the transport industry will continue to deteriorate so long as organisations and individuals are disinclined to invest in transport and new trucks.

Road Freight Association executive director Ian Moss says it has become imperative to have a redeployment of strategy towards government intervention in transportation.

"Notwithstanding all the good intentions expressed in the White Paper on Transport Policy of 1986/87 and subsequent efforts to achieve some of the laudable goals therein, the legitimacy and effectiveness of present directions is questionable, to say the least."

Adapt

Like all business sectors, the trucking industry must adapt to free market forces and the reality of global business and competition — or pay the inevitable price.

"Participation is not just an effective means of rendering a decision more acceptable, but also the only way in which competition will be perceived to be fair in transport."

Demand will pick up for 'full service'

B/Day 29/6/93

ECONOMIC recovery will stimulate demand for a multimodal transport capability that not only moves heavy and delicate equipment, but installs and possibly commissions it.

Distances from sea ports to industrial areas are often long, prompting more purchasers of equipment to seek transporters who provide a value-added or total turnkey service.

SA transporters who know the ropes with regard to a wider turnkey capability will be sought throughout southern and central Africa, says Vanguard Rigging MD Mike Woodward.

Turnkey services include provision of huge warehousing and rigging facilities.

Since 1990, a trend has emerged among African countries to look to SA for professional transporters, who combine expert rigging services so that they can install, but not commission, heavy imported equipment. A major reason is the value of awkward and heavy loads and the implications of lost production can be considerable.

(332)

This arises as critical plant start-up timings are often excessive when handled by different specialists, including transporters who do not go beyond transporting and offloading on site.

"I also foresee when the customer will not only want his equipment collected from the port and transported, unpacked, delivered and installed, but also commissioned on time by a one-stop service," he says.

As advancing technology has increased the complexity of heavy industrial machinery and other equipment, and as peripheral control and instrumentation is more delicate, so the margin for error in trucking and rigging has narrowed.

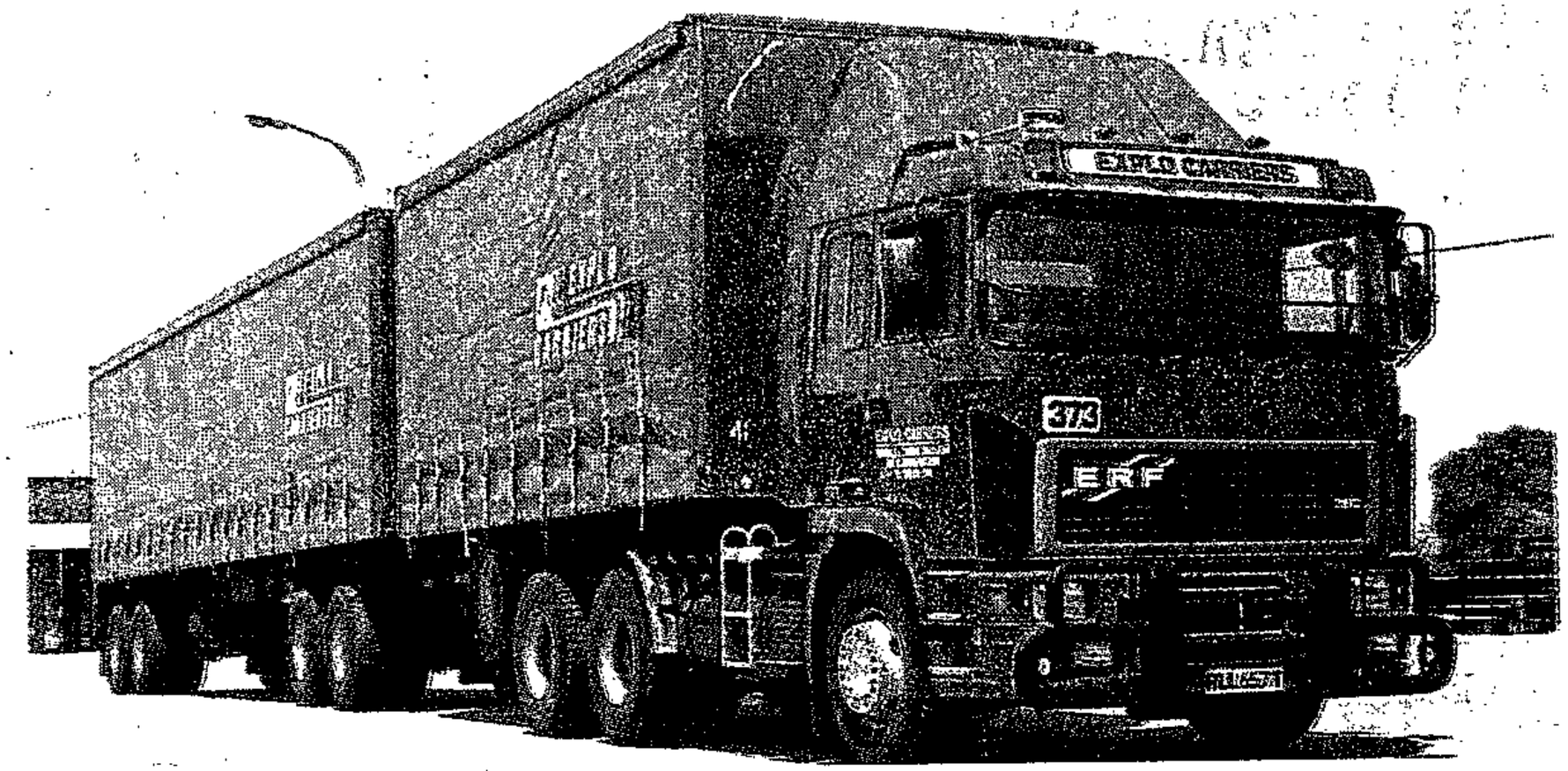
Woodward says the SA rigging market is in the process of splitting into two groups: customers who cannot afford delays during transportation or installation, or damage to major equipment; and those who, because delay is not a problem as equipment timing start-up is scheduled for later on, look to cut corners to reduce equipment delivery costs.

"The former want specially equipped vehicles, skilled crews, extensive warehousing facilities and a total rigging capability by one company to take charge and accept full responsibility."

He says that although insurance is taken out for transit and installation damage, the first type of customer wants everything in place so that production can begin on schedule.

Business Day SURVEY

In an effort to reduce the accident rate, new legislation will oblige drivers of vehicles exceeding 3,5 tons to hold professional driver permits. In terms of these, the driver is defined as an operator and can be held criminally liable for overloading. ***LYNN CARLISLE*** *reports.*



Promoting safe road transportation of hazardous products.

Explo Carriers looks outside the AECI nest

B/Day 29/6/93

EXPECTED demand for safe road transportation of hazardous products has prompted Explo Carriers to promote its services to producers other than its parent AECI.

The decision is based on the belief that its record of safety and reliability in transporting explosives, fertiliser, pills, acids, plastics and general cargo, is relevant to the market.

With a fleet of 123 specialised vehicles based on the Reef and Free State, the company transports to Namibia and Botswana and is exploring the possibility of setting up depots in Natal and the Cape.

The company attributes its safety record to management, training, choosing trucks suited to transporting hazardous products and comprehensive back-up emergency systems, to ensure timeous deliveries.

(332)

Explo Carriers applies a strict safety policy for its driving staff, including medical checks, strict procedures and high training standards.

The truck makes and types are based on those with maximum capacity deck length and low tare weight, for greater payload within revised legislation.

To be competitive necessitates the regular upgrading of the fleet, and its latest order is for vehicles compatible with the new length and mass regulations, such as the new ERF 86AV360 6x4 truck tractors.

Meanwhile, compatibility of ERF super truck tractors has also resulted in an order from Roadhaul Africa — a new arrival on the SA transport scene.

Roadhaul Africa GM Philip Walker says the machines have an extended wheel base of 3 850mm which allow for better weight distribution and the transfer of more weight to the tractor front axle.

The configuration also provides a 1 000l fuel capacity in side-mounted tanks for a long-range rig with a 22m overall length, he says.

No end in sight to takeovers and price war

B/Day 29/6/93

SURPLUS capacity in the trucking industry will see predatory takeovers of more public road carriers and a continuation of the unofficial cartage rates price war among hauliers.

Downward pressure on public carrier rates stems from a steady decline in goods volumes transported from an average of 38-million tons a month in 1989 to 32-million tons a month in 1992, while haulier rates remained fairly constant.

The negatives of excess capacity were further compounded by higher running, maintenance and labour costs.

Falling

With inflation in the trucking industry running at an annual average of 25% — way above the CPI — hauliers have been feeling the pinch, with many falling by the wayside and some becoming sitting ducks for takeover bids.

"It is not over yet and we expect many more takeovers," says Road Freight Association business development manager Hugh Sutherland.

He says deregulation introduced last July was the final straw to break the camel's back.

Plagued

Most notably, however, deregulation brought about the removal of the road permit system, which encouraged a free-for-all in a market plagued by shrinking turnover and profit margins.

However, the abolition of road permits provided some compensation, with trucks no longer restricted to returning empty on the haul from outlying areas.

Still, many truckers faced with continuing cost pressures, such as soaring prices for new rigs, have battled to make do with older and less economic vehicles that have proved less efficient and required high maintenance costs.

Seeing their plight, big money has muscled in to easily buy up some better quality operators — large and small.

Recent acquisitions of significance include the 450-truck fleet of Tanker Services and Quattro by the Imperial Group, and major transporter Hultrans by Alex Carriers in the Super Group. (332)

Under the prevailing economic recession, this has been a win-win situation, particularly as buyers find takeover to be the cheapest way to expand.

In effect, the strong hauliers also gain market share while the acquired operators — whose trucks have not already been ceded to the banks — may receive shares or payment that they would not have otherwise realised, particularly as a truck is a big investment that cannot easily be sold.

The move towards larger haulier conglomerates at the expense of some smaller privately funded carriers is also in line with US trends after 1980.

Citing the findings of a recent independent survey of 65 000 companies comprising public and private (ancillary) fleet owners, only 1 460 had five or more trucks in their fleets.

National

Against a national fleet of 250 000 trucks, mostly owned by ancillary fleet operators like non-transportation companies, the mines and local authorities, the RFA's 460 professional public motor carrier members make up only about 22 000 vehicles — mostly extra-heavy trucks.

Because public carriers rely solely on trucking for profits while the ancillaries use them as a non-profit (cost) service, RFA members — including the major motor carrier fleets — are expected to remain highly price competitive.

Delta helps in effort to educate drivers about new standards

B/Day 29/6/93

(332)

TO ENSURE truck owners are not caught unawares, Delta Motor Corporation consultants have been enlightening customers on the impending requirements of the Road Transport Quality System (RTQS).

Delta has held seminars and workshops to train and guide fleet operators and other Isuzu truck customers on the RTQS, says sales & marketing director John Cumming.

Ignorance or disregard of the RTQS is reportedly widespread. With July 31 the D-day for commercial vehicle owners to register, many vehicles could be impounded if the traffic authorities enforce the new requirements.

Display

Under the new RTQS, owners must also display certificates of fitness (COF) for their vehicles that are not older than nine months.

Cumming says the extent of non-compliance is perhaps best illustrated by a Natal provincial traffic police assessment.

Police believe only about 15% of operators have registered under the system since July last year, with many claiming to still know little about the existence of the RTQS.

JOHN CUMMING

Industry sources also attribute this low figure to SA's ageing commercial vehicle park, which is estimated to exceed 14 years, with many vehicles unlikely to pass a COF test.

Cumming says there are many items on which a truck could fail the test. "Repairing old vehicles can be prohibitive, as many operators are cash-strapped and new vehicle prices are out of their reach.

"As a result, the rental or leasing route is becoming the most attractive option."

Frees

Kempston Vehicle Leasing director Shirl Preston says outsourcing the responsibility of fleet management to a vehicle leasing company frees vehicle users from red tape and allows them to concentrate on core business issues.

Full maintenance leasing has become the most popular and cost-effective option and proper enforcement of the RTQS should enhance demand for FML, she says.

New road laws will be tough to implement

B/Day 29/6/93

IMPLEMENTING new road legislation will be a thorny issue — especially laws to ensure heavy vehicle drivers are competent and do not spend long hours without a break from driving.

Road Freight Association business development manager Hugh Sutherland says sections of Chapter 3 of the Road Traffic Act may be implemented from January next year, beginning with registration of drivers of all vehicles in excess of 3,5 tons gross mass.

Chapter 3 also aims to ensure all heavy vehicle drivers, not just those providing a public service, possess valid drivers licences, are competent and medically fit.

This is seen as the first stage towards introducing stricter driving hours, adding another dimension to the new Road Transport Quality Service (RTQS) legislation being phased in.

Registered

Problems could arise, as Chapter 3 will require drivers of vehicles exceeding 3,5 tons to become registered PrDP (professional driver permit) holders.

Not only is the PrDP expected to be a stiffer test than is the existing PDP (public driver permit), but many who do not hold PDPs — such as private fleet drivers — could fail the medical and lose their heavy duty licences.

A large number of drivers for private fleet operators are in that transport sector because they could not pass the old PDP test to qualify for employment with public fleet operators.

Sutherland says some resistance from trade unions is expected, as those drivers who fail the new PrDP test could be disqualified from driving heavy trucks and stand to lose their jobs.

As things stand, the holder of a PrDP will be defined as the "operator" and also be held criminally liable should his vehicle be overloaded — even if this is the fault of his unscrupulous employer.

In an effort to reduce fatigue and the accident rate on SA roads, these tougher driver requirements will precede new legislation due in July next year on stricter driving hours for commercial vehicle drivers.

Enforcement is always the real test and, if past records are anything to go by, there could be hiccups.

Toyota SA director (truck division Des Gush is concerned about the number of incidents of corruption among law enforecement officers that are reported by operators.

"Such practices should be discouraged and reported to the authorities. If road transport is to remain a dynamic and vital industry, the RTQS must be properly enforced," says Gush.

A major requirement in enforcing RTQS driver hours legislation is that a monitoring device — on-board computer or tachograph — must be able to make such records available at all times.

In terms of SA Bureau of Standards requirements introduced two months ago, monitoring instruments must meet new stringent accuracy calibration, installation and servicing requirements which ensure they cannot be tampered with, says Sutherland.

SABS-approved monitoring devices will help to reduce the number of hours a driver spends behind the wheel, says Control Instruments marketing director Terry Savage.

A tachograph fitted to a commercial vehicle, for example, can at any time produce on-the-spot driving time records for law enforcement officers.

The latest SABS requirements aim to prevent it from being falsified, and each driver will need his own tachograph chart on each journey.

Simple

"It is believed most medium and heavy trucks are fitted with tachographs and, when legislation on driver hours is fully implemented, enforcement can be simple," says Savage.

"This is because traffic officers require little training to obtain tachograph information on how long the driver has been at the wheel or resting and can take immediate action."

In SA, legislation allows the driver of a heavy vehicle to drive continuously for up to five hours before taking a mandatory break of at least 15 minutes. No more than 15 hours of driving is allowed in any 24-hour period.

'SA needs luxury buses for tourists'

B/Day 29/6/93

HOPES that local manufacturers will build the latest luxury buses used in Europe have been temporarily stifled by a subdued inflow of tourists.

This emerged at a local seminar for bus builders organised by Parts Incorporated, where its German-based supplier, Happich GmbH, a leading European bus and automotive fitment supply company, assessed the situation.

Happich assistant export manager Uwe Woitha told delegates they had the ability and needed to manufacture Europe's superior models, despite unfavourable conditions.

European buses are desirable in SA because of their advanced safety, comfort, road noise level and fuel economy.

Moreover, the interior "service stations" for passengers were more sophisticated than those in aircraft, while the entertainment and catering facilities were the most advanced.

(332)

Expertise

While standards set abroad are particularly high, SA bus manufacturers possessed the technology and expertise to build luxury buses comparable with those produced by their overseas counterparts, he says.

"Local bus builders are keen to produce luxury buses despite being faced with such obstacles as local content legislation."

Notwithstanding hindrances such as the depressed economy and a slow upturn in overseas visitors, Woitha says it is vital that local bus builders and operators have as their main goal the comfort of passengers.

"It would seem that local tourists pay twice as much to fly rather than travel by bus largely because of perceptions that bus journeys are uncomfortable and tiring.

"One has to ask whether such perceptions would remain if passengers knew they would be accommodated in spacious armchair-like seats in a noise-free bus with excellent entertainment and catering facilities," he says.

Unicorn moves into Africa with end of sanctions

SHIPPING links of Durban-based African ship-owning and operating company Unincorn Lines are being strengthened and extended as sanctions and boycotts against SA are lifted.

MD Ivan Clark and chairman Mike Groves recently visited the Ivory Coast, where Groves signed a co-operation agreement with Sivomar, a large shipping company.

On the east African coast, the company has developed a six-day feeder service to Mozambique ports Beira and Maputo.

A 14-day service has been established to the Tanzanian ports of Nacala and Dar-es-Salaam and Kenya's port of Mombasa, en route to the Arabian Gulf and across to India and Pakistan. B/Day

Clark says that although trade sanctions have not yet been lifted by most of these countries, commercial interest is growing and cargo volumes are improving.

In a joint venture with its French partners, SCAC Delmas Vieljeux, it services the Indian Ocean Islands, Sri Lanka and Singapore.

It also plies across the south Atlantic to the east and west coasts of South America and up to the Caribbean.

Although based in SA, Unicorn is an African company, which for many years has serviced the trades into Africa, to the Indian Ocean Islands and across the Atlantic to South America. 30/6/93

Closer to home, Unicorn has traded regularly from Durban to Walvis Bay and on the west African coast through Luanda and Lobito to African ports as far as Dakar in Senegal.

Delegation

Seeing itself as a forerunner in the development of new trade links, the company recently hosted a Pakistan trade delegation in Durban. It liaises closely with senior officials in the Foreign Affairs Department, the DTI and SA businessmen.

However, Clark cautions that only a certain amount of cargo can be moved and growth is restricted to a certain rate.

"The many shipping lines that are seeing SA as an oyster might well find that trade volumes are just not there to sustain the number of lines now serving the country.

"We are negotiating with the mainline carriers of the world to work with them in the feedering of their cargo out of the port of Durban."

He says Durban is ideally positioned as a trans-shipment port.

"It has good facilities, and Portnet is keen to co-operate in improving these and in facilitating the potential for increased cargo volumes."

Business Day SURVEY

Although maritime business is depressed, indications based on current local and international trends suggest an improvement in 1995, and Portnet has embarked on a programme to improve ship turnaround times, provide value-added services and make its seven seaports more cost effective. ***LYNN CARLISLE*** *reports.*

IVS expanding in Durban

B/DAY 30/6/93

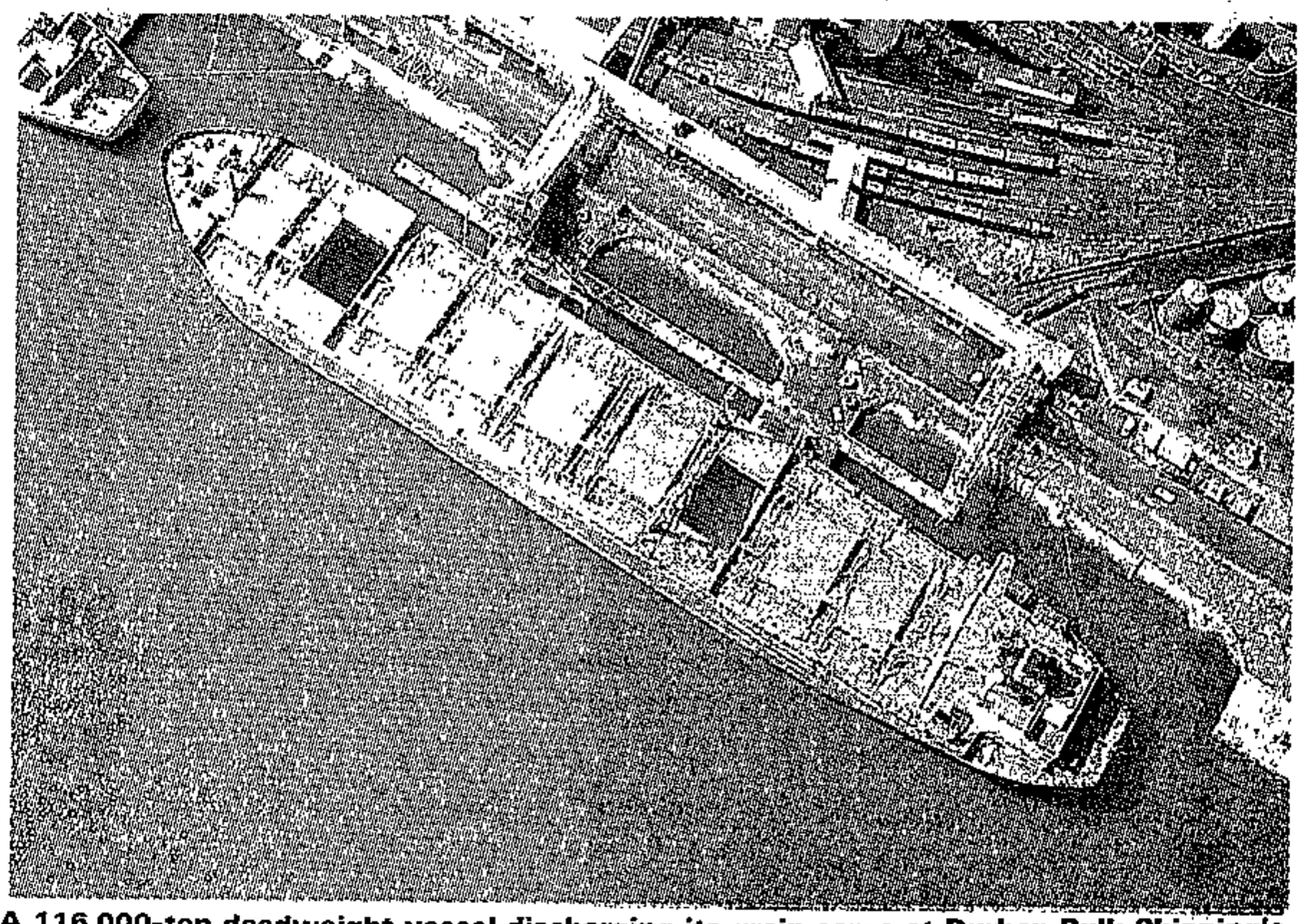
SEEING the need for additional bulk liquid import and export capacity has set Island View Storage (IVS) on the expansion path at Durban Harbour.

332

IVS MD Rodger Graham says the company is investing R7m in an extension that will meet demand for the foreseeable future.

The new project, to be known as Bay V, will be situated on a 1,6ha site next to Bay IV in the Island View area. It follows a number of expansions in recent years, including a venture to provide the PWV area with rentable storage for bulk liquid chemicals at its 24 000m³ tank farm.

Work on the new bulk liquid facility began last month and is expected to come on stream early next year. Graham says it will comprise 12 low-flash storage tanks for liquid products with above-average volatility. Their total capacity will be 12 000m³, increasing IVS' low flash capacity by about 10%.



A 116 000-ton deadweight vessel discharging its grain cargo at Durban Bulk Shipping's cargo offloading terminus at Maydon Wharf.

Changes in grain discharging

B/Day 30/6/93

THE latest in bulk discharge technology and terminal facilities to handle giant cargo vessels at Durban Harbour is helping to change the face of grain discharging.

It is also significantly reducing costs. (332)

Bulk discharge company Durban Bulk Shipping (DBS) is largely responsible for these developments, says MD Koos Smith.

The Tiger Oats group company recently modernised and expanded its facilities — the largest in SA — at a cost of R20m, when it installed two pneumatic bulk dischargers capable of speeds up to 500 tons of grain an hour.

"This is three times faster than conventional discharge methods," he says.

BDS expects to handle more than 120 000 tons of wheat this year for the Wheat Board, which stands to benefit from the modern bulk discharge facilities.

With DBS geared to handle Panamax vessels (large cargo ships designed to sail the Panama Canal with loads from 42 000-55 000 tons, the Wheat Board will for the first time be able to bring in such wheat loads instead of the usual 33 000 tons.

"Larger shipments mean a saving of up to $6/ton of freight, which amounts to a saving of about 25%," says Smith.

With discharge rates in excess of 6 000 tons/day, DBS also offers savings for fast turnaround (on-time savings).

"We believe this can change the face of wheat discharging, as has been proved in the maize trade."

China steps into the gap left by weakened firms

B/Day 30/6/93

FALLING profits are causing some shipping companies to sell off their cargo services — especially containers — to SA. But others are steaming up to take their place.

Companies from the Arabian Gulf and Europe have either stopped sailing, because SA has attracted such an over-capacity of shipping, or have sold their container ships on these lanes.

Among those to give the SA route a temporary miss include Italian companies Lloyd Trestino, Italia Lines, the United Arab Shipping Company and Germany's DSR.

Casualties

Industry sources say casualties have been mounting as competition in the global recession forces freight rates down.

They say it costs about $600 to ship a container from Cape Town to Europe and $700 to the Far East. These rates were more than twice as high four years ago.

Considering this, the Chinese Ocean Shipping Company's (Cosco) decision to introduce a direct service to and from Shanghai is an eye-opener for local shippers and exporters.

Cosco, the world's largest shipping line, represented locally by John T Rennie, is not deterred by a huge overcapacity on shipping lanes linking SA with the Far East.

As Cosco deputy GM Jia Kang Sun says, establishing shipping links is a strategic move. He expects SA exports to recover to provide the volumes to absorb excess capacity.

Shippers estimate overcapacity to Hong Kong and Singapore to be about 80%. Additional lines have come on to the route in anticipation of trade with SA.

But some of Cosco's competitors around SA may withdraw before trade improves, says Sun, who led a three-man delegation to SA this month.

Six months after the inauguration of Cosco's service linking SA with the Far East and Chinese mainland, it has announced a named-day sailing. It is the only line to serve China direct, with calls at Dalian and Shanghai — China's biggest port.

It uses a fleet of 600 vessels, covering 47 liner routes and many non-liner sailings, and its own landside network to tranship cargo to other inland destinations on a through bill of lading.

Cosco's base load of cargo for China is the contract of 17 000 cars Volkswagen SA is exporting from Port Elizabeth. It also carries steel, cables, building materials, timber and foodstuffs eastbound.

Increased

Imports from China include leather, glassware, electronics, chemicals, agricultural produce and bicycles.

Increased two-way trade is a real prospect. China boasts an average annual growth rate of 18% and the recent devaluation of the yuan makes Chinese goods more competitive.

The improvement in relations between the countries has removed the need for expensive intermediaries in Hong Kong. As a result, trade with SA is tipped to flourish.

NEWS Soweto commuters call fo

Fare fury faces Putco after hike

Sowetan 30/6/93

By Joshua Raboroko

PUTCO faces a boycott from Soweto commuters after increasing fares yesterday.

The decision to boycott the bus company was taken by the Soweto Daily Passengers Committee at the weekend. It claimed Putco did not consult it before implementing the new fares.

SDPC chairman Mr Steven Sangweni said they wanted an urgent meeting with Putco to persuade them to reduce the fares or face a boycott.

(332)

Putco managing director Dr Jack Visser yesterday denied that the committee had not been consulted and said the fares would not be reduced.

He said after consulting with commuter organisations they had presented their proposals to the Department of Transport which had approved the fares.

The increases were "incredibly reasonable" — an average of 13 percent — and had been necessary because of hikes in VAT and the price of fuel in April this year.

He wanted to meet with the SDPC to explain the increases.

The hike means commuters will pay R4 to R5 more on monthly and weekly tickets.

Sangweni said commuters were angered by the increase at a time when most were not earning a living wage.

"If Putco is not prepared to reduce the fares we will be forced to mobilise the masses to launch a boycott," Sangweni said.

Visser said the boycott would be regrettable because the company had taken the necessary steps to inform commuters.

Sangweni said his organisation had made proposals to the Government to grant Putco a 90 percent subsidy.

They had given the Government until July to respond. They were shocked by the sudden decision to increase the fares.

KwaZulu le
Mr George
the beginni

Call for unity to end taxi violence

B/Day 30/6/93

ADRIAN HADLAND

PRETORIA — In a bid to end the rivalry and violence endemic to the minibus taxi industry, the creation of a single national taxi association was proposed yesterday.

National transport policy forum chairman George Negota, speaking at the 13th Annual Transportation Convention conference in Pretoria, called on all taxi operators and organisations to unite into one association.

But minutes after the call for unity, the deep rifts within the industry became evident once again as taxi association chiefs took up verbal cudgels.

SA Black Taxi Association president James Ngcoya said the newly formed marketing arm of the Pretoria United Taxi Association, Taximax, was destroying his organisation.

He accused Taximax director Enos Makena of poaching key staff, drawing away Sabta members and of sowing discord in the industry.

Makena had delivered a paper earlier in the day arguing that Taximax, at its foundation in January this year, had pledged to bring professionalism, discipline, safety and profitability to the industry. He said Taximax intended to implement driver training, establish vehicle maintenance workshops and investigate new business avenues.

But Ngcoya said: "I don't know anything about this Taximax other than that it is destroying Sabta."

Negota said the violence associated with the taxi industry, which had killed more than 50 people in Soweto alone this year, had to stop.

A national taxi indaba had been planned by the policy forum at which the question of unity would be debated.

"We want to give the people an opportunity for a new start." At the indaba, a national code of conduct for operators and drivers would be drawn up, he said.

An agenda and date for the indaba were being investigated.

Old cure-all lauded in new report

B/Day 30/6/93

STEPHEN COPLAN

RECENT medical studies had shown that aspirin could effectively combat migraines, heart disease and common strokes, the SA Aspirin Foundation said recently.

Aspirin, which has been in commercial use for the past 100 years, had also been found to prevent pregnancy complications, a report released by the foundation said.

The report cautioned, however, against extensive use of aspirin by high-risk pregnant women.

In two long-term studies in the US and UK it emerged that subjects who regularly received low dosages of aspirin reported a lower incidence of migraine and musculo-skeletal pain. The reason was still being investigated, a foundation spokesman said.

Aspirin's anti-thrombotic properties were responsible for its effectiveness in preventing heart attacks and common strokes, the report said.

But aspirin should not be used regularly by people with gastric problems and by younger children.

However, Kawasaki's Disease, which usually strikes infants and small children, could be countered by aspirin and gammaglobulin, the report said.

Recognition of transport policy body 'breakthough'

B/Day 11/7/93

THEO RAWANA

GOVERNMENT had finally recognised the National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) as the sole policy formulation body charged with making recommendations on transport issues, forum chairman George Negota said in Johannesburg yesterday.

And the first task the forum had set itself was to convene a taxi indaba from whose deliberations recommendations would be made regarding violence in the industry, Negota told a news conference.

Negota said Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed's decision to recognise NTPF was a major shift from his stand last year that he would never recognise the body.

He said Welgemoed wanted the NTPF, which he pledged to assist in obtaining funds from government and the private sector, to devise an acceptable scheme for issuing permits and report any alleged malpractices within government institutions to his office.

332

Committee

Some of the sub-committees charged with looking at policy were the maritime subcommittee headed by Ray Sowman, the road freight committee with Ian Moss as chairman, and the legislation committee headed by advocate Willie Huma.

Negota said a convening committee comprising representatives from the trade unions, the SACC and the national peace secretariat would set out areas to be covered by the taxi conference, which would be held from August 17 to 19.

ANC president Nelson Mandela was expected to open the conference and speakers from the PAC, Azapo and other political organisations would take part.

"The indaba is expected to make strong recommendations to government regarding violence in the taxi industry, the taxi permit system and law enforcement," Negota said.

Bus fare boycott on cards

Star 1/7/93

Staff Reporter

Putco will meet the Soweto Daily Passengers Committee tomorrow to discuss the 13 percent increase in bus fares after a newspaper report that a boycott was looming because commuters were not consulted about the hike. (332)

The committee reportedly decided at the weekend to boycott the bus company if it did not reduce the hike, introduced this week.

Putco managing director Dr Jack Visser said yesterday the increases were "imperative" every July to adjust to the inflation rate.

He said the committee was informed about the increases beforehand but commuters were only "alerted" about the increases and not "consulted" in the sense of seeking permission.

City seeks more say over towing services

Star 1/7/93

By Cyril Madlala

Johannesburg is to ask the Administrator for more authority to regulate the vehicle towaway industry which has been said to charge exorbitant fees.

The city council agreed this week to draw up the requirements and criteria that towing services have to meet, and the chief traffic officer has been authorised to invite tenders from the services.

A management committee report said the need to regulate private towing services within Johannesburg was indentified as long ago as 1983. (332)

However, vehicles were still being removed to unknown storage premises or favoured panelbeating concerns, leaving owners with the daunting task of tracing their vehicles.

The report said the traffic department was concerned about allegations that traffic officers recommended particular towing services in preference to others.

To eliminate possible malpractices between private towing services and traffic officers, and to ensure a fair deal for motorists, the traffic department decided to follow the examples of Germiston, Randburg and Sandton.

Towing concerns will be invited to provide services on a roster basis, and traffic officers will be bound to refer requests for assistance to a particular company. Deviations from recommended towing services would be investigated to prevent malpractices.

Motorists will be provided with a leaflet outlining the assistance offered, and they will be requested to report "undue influencing" by traffic officers to the chief traffic officer.

However, accident victims are free to use towing services of their own choice.

Welcoming the city council's move, councillor Rupert Korb said he was all for deregulation, but this was "an industry gone wild".

LASER TRANSPORT FM 2/7/93 (332)

Swift recovery

One company that could have been expected to report lower earnings, Laser, has posted interim profits well above those generated for all of 1992. It marks a swift turnaround for a group that has been ailing for three years.

The agent of this change is new controlling shareholder Tony Cotterell, who acquired a 32% stake in November and became MD. He has since taken his shareholding to 67%, buying out stakes from Sanlam and First National Bank.

Not surprisingly, Cotterell tells me he is gratified the turnaround has come so quickly; it says a lot for the underlying quality of the business. He emphasises the trend will continue, as the group is trading well.

How were such speedy results achieved? Cotterell's presence helped to accelerate changes that were already taking place. Restructuring had been under way for 18 months. When Cotterell arrived, he says, his main concern was to return focus to the core of the business.

He completed the retrenchment programme and set about reducing short-term debt where possible by disposing of nontransport activities, including Foden Truck and the Laser parts division. Short-term borrowings have declined to R2m from R12m a year ago.

Emphasis is being placed on asset management and cash flow. Certain noncore properties will be sold, but the group is attempting to buy strategic properties that

Cont →

will ensure rental increases are curbed in future. Property expenses form a large part of Laser's overheads.

All companies in the group are trading profitably. Since September, subsidiaries Stuttafords, Pickfords and Frasers have been receiving more inquiries about international removals. GM Denis Kaye says he is expecting international removal volumes — which comprise about 30% of Laser's operating profit — to increase towards the end of the year.

The market was anticipating good results. From a low of 60c in October, the price has recovered to 117c. Cotterell will not predict full-year earnings, but it may not be out of place to expect at least a repeat of the first half's performance, which would place EPS above 30c. If so, the share should recover further.

Gerald Hirshon

Three dead, one injured, in Johannesburg gunbattle

Star 3/7/93

A GUNBATTLE between minibus taxi drivers in central Johannnesburg left three people dead and one critically wounded yesterday, police said.

The shootout ended when a lone police constable came upon the combatants, and tackled and arrested one of the armed men as "bullets were flying over their heads", spokesman Major Eugene Opperman said.

"When the remaining armed men saw the policeman they fled from the scene. Police reinforcements arrived shortly afterwards," he said.

Opperman said the policeman had suffered slight injuries when he tackled the armed man.

"Three men were fatally wounded and one critically wounded during the shoot-out" in Noord and Wanderers streets, he said.

Preliminary investigations indicated that the gunbattle broke out over routes, parking and stopping areas in Johannesburg. The opposing factions operate between Johannesburg and Welkom and Johannesburg and QwaQwa, Opperman said.

Police seized two stolen 9 mm pistols and two ,38 special revolvers. — Sapa.

332

● MOKONE MOLETE of our Soweto Bureau reports that Soweto passengers were stranded yesterday morning as taxi drivers downed tools in protest against the lowering of fares. The dispute between the drivers and taxi-owners has led to at least one death.

The fare reduction of between 10 and 15 percent was proposed at a meeting of the Soweto Transport Services.

According to an STS executive member, the new fares, which will be "temporary to gauge consumer demand", come as a result of dwindling passenger numbers and competition from other associations.

Meeting to prevent bus boycott

Star 5/7/93

Soweto Bureau

Efforts are being made to prevent a Putco bus boycott following a meeting between the company and a passengers' association at the weekend. (332)

General secretary of the Soweto Daily Passengers' Committee Stephen Sangweni said it was resolved that the SPDC would seek clarification from the Government on subsidies to Putco. Further discussions will take place this morning.

The dispute arises from fare increases of 13,5 percent which came into effect recently.

Station deck to be new taxi rank

ARG 5/7/93

(332)

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

CITY officials have asked the council to go ahead with moving the Strand Street minibus taxi rank to the station deck — but, part of the rank may stay, for minibuses going to Sea Point.

In February, the council voted R1,5 million for the station-deck rank, to be built in the financial year which started this month.

There has been mixed reaction from taxi associations to the move.

The Western Cape United Squatters' Association and SA National Civics Organisation, approached as "organisations that best represent minibus taxi passengers", had no objection.

Most minibus taxi passengers surveyed supported the move. Private motorists complained about chaotic taxi behaviour at the Strand Street rank.

Some comments were: "Property owners and lessees have complained vehemently about the negative impact the chaos and squalor in Strand Street have on their businesses.

"The situation in Strand Street reduces property values and discourages investment in nearby properties."

"The threat posed by minibuses violating traffic laws is made worse by the widespread feeling 'if minibus taxis do not have to obey the law, why should other motorists?'"

Traffic control devoted a lot of time and staff to policing the rank. Order was maintained "by and large", but the many transgressions were impossible to police effectively.

Traffic manager Mr Wouter Smit wanted all minibus taxi operations "to move or be moved" from Strand Street to the station deck.

The Rail Commuter Corporation, which plans to redevelop the station deck and build a shopping and conference centre and a hotel, told city officials it was "not opposed" to minibus taxis using the deck.

There was mixed reaction among taxi associations:

- The Peninsula Taxi Association, which represents most minibus taxi operators with permits to rank in and operate anywhere in a certain radius in the central business district, was opposed.
- The Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association, representing all minibus taxis operating between the CBD and Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu, said its members would move only if other associations did as well.
- The Mitchell's Plain Taxi Association was not opposed.
- Park City Taxi Association, representing Hanover Park to CBD operators, was in favour of the move.
- Atlantis Taxi Association was in favour.
- Kenfacta, operators between Kensington and Factreton and the CBD, were "ambivalent".
- Small associations from Athlone-Bridgetown, Heideveld, Bonteheuwel, Manenberg and Wynberg strongly supported the station-deck proposals, because they did not have place to rank in the CBD.

The report said providing facilities on the station deck and making sure all operators used it was the best option.

A planned, formal facility on the station deck would enable taxi operators to discipline themselves and keep illegal operators out.

Passengers would benefit from shelters and a better organised service.

There would be space to accommodate operators who had no space in Strand Street.

The report recommended the city planner, city administrator and city engineer negotiate a management plan with taxi operators for the station deck, on the understanding it would be the central rank.

HELP OR HINDRANCE? . . . A man approaches a driver in the hope of getting a tip for showing him to a parking bay. Picture: HAROLD KING

All Strand Street taxis 'must run from station'

(332) CT 6/7/93

ALL minibus taxis in Strand Street should operate from the station deck, the city council's utilities and works committee decided yesterday.

Although this will incovenience taxis going to and from Sea Point, the committee felt the traffic department's work would be easier.

A report by the city planner's department said the behaviour of taxi-drivers in Strand Street presented a "serious law enforcement problem".

Codeta, which represents minibus taxis operating between the CBD and black townships, said its members would only operate from station deck ranks if other drivers did as well.

The Peninsula Taxi Association, representing most operators with "CBD-radius" permits, does not want to move because it feels its members have the best places in Strand Street.

The report said the station deck has more space and a formal facility there would enable taxi operators to "keep illegal operators out".

"It is not clear how minibus-taxi operators will react to an attempt to force them to operate only from the station deck," the report said.

Sowetan

Commuters take action

7/7/93

THE Soweto Daily Passengers Committee is to call for an urgent meeting with Transport Minister Dr Piet Welgemoed following the recent 13,5 percent increase in Putco bus fares.

The committee met Putco last week over the increase and in a joint statement said they had resolved that the committee would seek clarification from the Government regarding subsidies to Putco.

(332)

Rising losses on Bank forward cover book

B/Day 8/7/93

TIM MARSLAND

THE Reserve Bank is beginning to incur increasingly large losses on its forward cover book due to the continuing decline of the rand against the dollar, market sources said yesterday.

Bank foreign exchange GM James Cross confirmed the Bank had made losses, but would not disclose the amount.

"The Bank unfortunately does make losses whenever the dollar gets stronger," he said.

The Bank provides forward cover — buying currency at a fixed exchange rate ahead of when it is needed — to the local currency market to protect its reserves.

If the Bank did not provide the cover, local banks would have to go offshore for the cover, which would cause an outflow of foreign exchange, draining the country's reserves.

Sources said the rand's fall in five weeks from R3,20 against the dollar to its current R3,35 — a decline of 4,68% — meant an additional R3,8bn would have been added to the negative cash flow on the account.

Based on this, the total loss on the forward book would have increased to about R12bn.

Currency dealers said this loss had been exacerbated by the Bank inflating its forward cover book to support the rand. It had been borrowing dollars in the forward market, which it then sold in the spot market to prop up the rand.

Dealers said the Bank had actively used this tactic over the past few weeks.

Indications were that the Bank had again intervened in the market yesterday, although it was seen only in the spot market, dealers said.

Cross said the gold and foreign exchange contingency account — in which the losses on the forward cover book were included — had shown a net improvement in the past four months. This was due to the better gold price, he said.

Nedcor Bank chief economist Edward Osborn said the losses on the forward book ought to be written off, as they represented an unnecessary claim on the exchequer.

Dorbyl mothballs shipyard as orders dry up

B/Day 8/7/93

EDWARD WEST

DORBYL Marine said yesterday its decision to mothball SA's last shipbuilding yard still in operation followed confirmation from a merchant bank that it was no longer possible to finance further vessels for one of its major clients.

Durban-based Dorbyl Marine delivered the last of three R100m ships built for Europe-based Columbia Ship Management in April. Columbia ordered two more ships, but the Reserve Bank refused to sanction the deal. However, leads were being pursued for the building of a barge and an offshore production platform at the shipyard, Dorbyl's statement said.

In the meantime, core shipbuilding skills that had been built up over the years would be retained by placing people in other departments pending shipbuilding-related work in the future.

Dorbyl planned to focus its marketing on traditional repair facilities, major ship conversion and steel repairs.

MD Dawid Mostert said negotiations were also under way to expand ship repair facilities to the West African coast.

prises (MHE).

Dorbyl mothballs shipyard as orders dry up

B/Day 8/7/93

EDWARD WEST

DORBYL Marine said yesterday its decision to mothball SA's last shipbuilding yard still in operation followed confirmation from a merchant bank that it was no longer possible to finance further vessels for one of its major clients.

Durban-based Dorbyl Marine delivered the last of three R100m ships built for Europe-based Columbia Ship Management in April. Columbia ordered two more ships, but the Reserve Bank refused to sanction the deal. However, leads were being pursued for the building of a barge and an offshore production platform at the shipyard, Dorbyl's statement said.

In the meantime, core shipbuilding skills that had been built up over the years would be retained by placing people in other departments pending shipbuilding-related work in the future. (332)

Dorbyl planned to focus its marketing on traditional repair facilities, major ship conversion and steel repairs.

MD Dawid Mostert said negotiations were also under way to expand ship repair facilities to the West African coast.

Taxi: Seven shot

Shadowy Crossroads 'Big 8' group involved in Zolani Centre killings?

PKG 8/7/93 332

Staff Reporters

AT LEAST seven people were shot dead and several vehicles torched as violence, apparently related to the taxi war, erupted in Peninsula townships overnight.

Residents claimed that a shadowy group known as the Big 8, whose members are alleged to live in Section 4, Crossroads, was involved in some of the shootings.

A peace worker, who asked not to be named, said "people on the scene saw them shooting at Zolani Centre (Nyanga)".

He said the group comprised former Western Cape Black Taxi Association members who were against unity in the minibus taxi industry.

Two men were shot dead and another was wounded by gunmen who opened fire at the Zolani Centre opposite the taxi rank in Terminus Road, Nyanga.

Two men, aged about 26 and and 34, were fatally shot in the head at a taxi stop in Lansdowne Road Extension, Khayelitsha.

Later the body of a man with a gunshot wound in the back was found nearby.

Two bodies with gunshot wounds were taken to the State mortuary in Salt River, one from Nyanga and the other from Khayelitsha.

Cars were burnt out and many were damaged by bullets during the violence.

Violence at the Zolani Centre erupted about 5pm as mourners gathered for a memorial service for Mr Super Nkatazo, treasurer of the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco), who was shot dead near Khayelitsha earlier this month.

Sanco assistant secretary (Western Cape) Mr Newton Adams was there when the shooting started.

"We were speaking to people who were complaining that they couldn't find the keys to open the door when these shots started ringing out," he said.

"We dived for cover. There were these volleys coming from the terminus."

None of the attackers had been wearing masks or balaclavas, Mr Adams said — "They weren't faceless."

Mr Adams said at least two of the attackers had been identified and he questioned why they had not been arrested.

According to a Webta taxi owner who asked not to be named, fighting began in the afternoon in Site C, Khayelitsha when three Webta members in a bakkie were shot at by gunmen from a taxi rank.

He said about 5pm, "three Codeta people" in three cars drove up Terminus Road from the direction of KTC.

"Our men were standing next to their minibuses when the three Codeta people opened fire at them.

"Some of us took cover while some our men fired back and two of the Codeta people were hit and died," the driver said.

He said there had been simmering discontent among Webta members since the formation of Codeta a year ago.

City taxi war

(332) CT 8/7/93

Four die in latest flare-up

By DALE GRANGER

GUNMEN shot four people dead as taxi-related violence exploded in Nyanga, Khayelitsha and Crossroads last night.

The latest flare-up comes just two months after the taxi war last erupted when leading Codeta taxi members Mr Siphiwi Mooi, Mr Tiki Mxhosana and Mr Michael Gubayo were gunned down in separate incidents.

Mr Gubayo was on bail, after appearing in court in connection with taxi-related deaths, when he was killed in Nyanga.

Last night's bloody resurgence started at the Zolani Centre, Nyanga, memorial service for slain Mr Super Nkatazo, SA National Civics Association (Sanca) Western Cape treasurer.

Codeta members and mourners, including UCT architecture Professor Julian Cook, were forced to flee when they were ambushed by gunmen coming from the direction of the Nyanga taxi terminus.

A Webta member and another man, both aged about 30, were shot dead.

Police liaison officer Captain John Sterrenberg said last night the identities of the men had not yet been established and their next of kin had not been informed.

During the shooting the gunmen burned three private vehicles used by Codeta members to travel to the service.

Describing the attack, Prof Cook, who had worked with Mr Nkatazo on the Umzamo development project, said: "As we neared the centre a woman ran out of a shack yelling at us not to go in as 'terrible shooting' had erupted from opposite the taxi rank. She appeared to have been injured during the violence and said people were falling all around her."

Mrs Val Rose-Christie, of the Network of Independent Monitors, said she could hear the gunfire in Nyanga from Crossroads, where she was finalising statements for the Goldstone Commission into the Crossroads conflict.

"It sounded like a virtual war to me. We could quite clearly hear semi-automatic gunfire and it just went on and on. People in Crossroads said to me: 'That's from the (taxi) terminus and that's the Big Eight'."

Captain Sterrenberg said that 12 minutes after the Nyanga shooting shots were fired from a moving taxi at a private vehicle in Yankee Block, Khayelitsha. A woman passenger in the vehicle was killed and the driver was wounded.

Ten minutes later on the corner of Lansdowne Road and Meeu Street, Crossroads, shots were again fired from a moving vehicle, killing one man and wounding another.

In another incident a shot was fired at the Diep River police station from a passing vehicle.

TORCHED ... A vehicle used to transport Codeta members to a Nyanga memorial service for slain SA National Civics Association treasurer Mr Super Nkatazo erupts in flames after being sprayed with gunfire and set alight. **Right:** An SADF soldier takes cover at the Zolani Centre, Nyanga, last night. Codeta members were ambushed by gunmen and two men died.

Picture: FANIE JASON

WINTER ...
'RE
LE!
adials:
R108.89
R119.89
R139.89
ials:
R139.89
R149.89

BUSINESS His client list reads like Who's Who of the consumer goods industry

Mgcina ... the engine behind Black Moses.

Formula for success

Sanlam 75

Sowetan 8/7/93

BUSINESS SURVIVAL Strategic planning and identifying priorities is crucial, says Black Moses

By Mzimkulu Malunga

STRATEGIC planning and identification of priorities are crucial to the survival of any business, says Mr Moses Mgcina of Black Moses Distributions.

When an opportunity to venture into business presented itself in 1985, Mgcina did not allow the excitement to take control of him.

Instead, planning and choosing the right form of business became the dominant factors of the moment.

"As one who has dealt with transport matters for 15 years and with an understanding of the laws of the industry, it made sense to venture into distribution," says Mgcina, called "Black Moses" by friends.

With 17 delivery trucks, including three horses and trailers, Black Moses' client list reads like a who's who of the consumer goods industry.

Among his clients are Robertsons, Tastic Rice, King Kong Foods, SA Oil and Monate Achar.

(332)

The company has acquired rights not only to distribute Monate Achar products but to sell them as well.

Next week Black Moses will be opening a big warehouse in the Orlando West industrial park which will be packed with all sorts of consumer goods.

"What I need from black business people all over the country is to tell me what products they are looking for and I will go an extra mile to get it for them," says the man who believes black business underestimates its power.

"The future of black business in this country is unbelievably bright. All we have to do is pool our resources," said Mgcina.

When one of his delivery vehicles was burnt in one of the Reef townships in 1987, Mgcina, who was then operating under the name Send-A-Part, realised that he needed to alter his marketing strategy, which led to the company name being changed to Black Moses.

He never forgets to mention that his business success has its roots in the famous Sullivan Code, which encouraged American companies operating in South Africa to help prospective black business people in addition to eliminating discrimination at their work places.

Mgcina was given a sub-contract by computer company Rank Zerox to distribute its products and he has never looked back since then.

"The growth was so phenomenal that I had to add a new delivery van every month," he said.

With the slogan "reliability and peace of mind" Mgcina believes bigger times are still to come for Black Moses.

Moses Mgcina qualifies for the *Sowetan*-Sanlam Entrepreneur of the Month competition.

The winner will compete with other monthly victors at the end of the year.

Drivers deny Big 8 exist

(332) CT 9/7/93

MAYOR Mr Frank van der Velde yesterday pledged to call an urgent meeting of taxi drivers after a bitter dispute within Codeta burst into the open.

The death toll from shooting incidents in the townships on Wednesday has risen to five. Two people were wounded.

While the ANC has called for "immediate and decisive action", police said witnesses were not prepared to repeat allegations under oath.

Mr Van der Velde said he was urgently trying to get representatives of the taxi group to meet with the local peace committee so that "the talking can start and the shooting can stop".

It had been alleged that a group, called the "Big 8" who are all members of Webta, which merged with Codeta, has been behind the violence.

But a committee elected to represent some of the former-Webta drivers met with the Cape Times yes-

To page 2

From page 1

Taxi War

(332) (75)

terday and claimed:

- The shadowy "Big Eight" group did not exist and was a term coined by Codeta. CT 9/7/93
- Repeated attempts by them to get feedback on Codeta developments had failed.
- They had identified the attackers but did not pass on the information to police because they had little faith in them.
- That it was not a renewal of the taxi war but a fight between Codeta and its members.

However Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magwayi also claimed the organisation knew the identity of the killers and had 11 eyewitnesses. A meeting was planned with police last night, he said.

He said: "This is not a taxi war, drivers are not attacking each other, they (the BIg Eight), are attacking the entire community."

In a statement, Dr Allan Boesak, chairman of the ANC in the Western Cape, said: "The abysmal failure of the police to take action against this gang is alarming."

However, Lieutenant-Colonel Raymond Dowd, a police liaison officer, said the killing of mourners at the Zolani Centre was receiving top priority by the crack violent crimes investigation unit.

Go to Goldstone, taxi drivers urged

☐ Codeta's call on disgruntled members after fresh upsurge in violence

332

ARG 9/7/93

EDWARD MOLOINYANE
Staff Reporter

THE Congress for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) says it is disturbed by the new upsurge in taxi-related violence and has appealed to disgruntled members to approach the organisation through the Goldstone Commission to iron out differences.

The chairman, Mr Kidwell Magwayi, said this in an interview after the killing of at least eight people in Khayelitsha and Nyanga on Wednesday night and yesterday morning.

The killings have shaken township residents, who fear a taxi war could engulf the community in large-scale conflict.

At least 13 people, most of them taxi operators, have died in taxi-related violence since the beginning of the year.

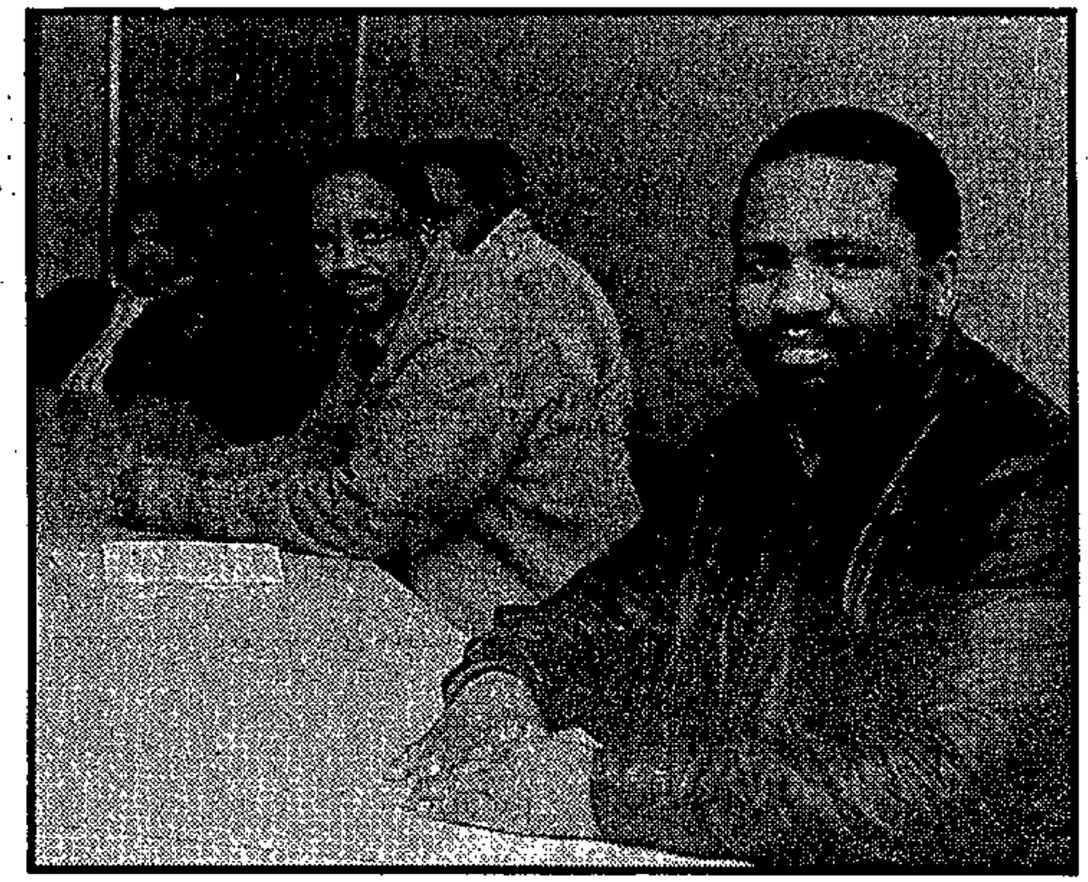
Flanked by members of his executive committee at the Codeta offices, Mr Magwayi maintained that Codeta as an organisation was still intact.

Although the 30-member executive committee had dwindled because some members had left "voluntarily", the organisation was continuing its activities, which were running smoothly, he said.

"Because we are not paid to be in the executive, some members from both sides leave for business or other reasons. We are still able to function because constitutionally those still here form a quorum," he said.

Mr Magwayi said the conflict was not between former Lagunya or Webta members, but members of either group could be wishing to break away at the instigation of a group known as the "Big Eight".

He said the "Big Eight" broke away from Codeta last year after the organisation condemned their activities in the community.



Picture: OBED ZILWA, The Argus.

TAXI BOSS: Codeta chairman Kidwell Magwayi with some of his executive members at the organisation's offices yesterday.

Asked why former Webta members complained that most of those killed were their colleagues, he said the killings were random as they included innocent residents.

"Codeta has actually buried all those drivers killed regardless of which organisation they belonged to."

Membership of an organisation had ceased to be a factor since Codeta was formed, he said.

Allegations that former Webta members were barred from operating in Khayelitsha were untrue.

"We have a working document which regulates routes and which everybody in the idustry has been adhering to and is happy with.

"When they have problems, why don't they approach us?

"We are actually prepared to discuss anything related to our industry.

"The best alternative in the light of the current killings would be for dissatisfied members, including the Big Eight, to approach us through the Goldstone Commission so that this senseless conflict is sorted out," Mr Magwayi said.

Mourners shot at in new Cape taxi violence

(332)

W/M mail 9/7 - 15/7/93.

Police and soldiers deployed after gunmen opened fire on mourners at a Nyanga memorial service focused on those under attack while their assailants — said to be members of a notorious balaclava gang dubbed the Big Eight — allegedly stood and watched.

By **GAYE DAVIS**

CAPE TOWN's endemic taxi violence took a vicious twist this week when mourners attending the funeral service of a murdered civic leader were themselves fired upon.

In what seems a planned attack on high-ranking members of the taxi organisation, Codeta, two men died when gunfire sent men, women and children waiting outside Nyanga's Zolani centre on Wednesday evening running for cover.

Hours after the Zolani Centre attack, which claimed the life of an executive member of Codeta, another man died when shots were fired on a minibus taxi in Khayelitsha. Two more men died later when their car was fired on in Lansdowne Road, Khayelitsha.

Suspicion of police and their apparent inability to arrest people perceived as sowing instability in Cape Town's townships is boiling over into civic anger.

Mourners were gathering for a service in memory of slain civic leader Super Nkatazo, 55, found shot head in Khayelitsha a day after he disappeared from Nyanga on July 27. Nkatazo is believed by ANC and civic leaders to have been killed by a gang called the Big Eight, whose members are said to include taxi drivers unhappy with Codeta's new dispensation.

Sanco's Newton said mourners were waiting outside the Zolani Centre when shots were heard. "When the shooting stopped I just saw people running towards us with guns."

When police and army troops arrived, "they thought we were the ones doing the attacking", Adams said. "I heard people shouting from the other side, 'It's them, it's them', but the guys with us only shot back after five or six rounds of gunshots.

"They (police and soldiers) ran towards us, pointing their rifles at us, shouting '*Bly waar julle is*' (Stay where you are).

"It was total and absolute confusion — but what I do know is the attackers hadn't run away, they were still standing at the taxi rank. We told police we're not shooting, they're shooting — but they came inside the fence round the centre and stayed there. The police were more concerned about whether or not people inside the building had guns.

"Later, I could see a group huddled together in the terminus, like they were waiting for some of us... Every time a Casspir went in their direction, they'd move away — then slowly walk back to their original position."

Peace monitors had meanwhile identified some of the attackers and informed police, Adams said. No arrests were made, however.

Western Cape police liaison officer Captain John Sterrenberg dismissed Adams' account as a "wild allegation".

"In the midst of all the chaos one would have to start somewhere and that's where the bodies are lying," he said. "If people have information that there were any irregularities, they should put them in affidavit form and then we can investigate them."

He said he had no information to confirm or deny the involvement of the Big Eight, names of whom Codeta has given to police, along with affidavits.

TRANSPORT FM 9/7/93

End of the road

(332)

Money troubles forced the National Association of Private Transport Operators to suspend operations at the end of April, leaving 300 paid-up members in limbo and former executive director André Jacobs out of a job.

The association was a respected voice in the industry and represented the interests of those who transport their own goods, such as manufacturers, retail chains and even farmers.

Kobus Louw, immediate past chairman, says it hasn't died and he hopes it will rise again. "It isn't closed down, the name hasn't been deregistered. It stopped activities only for the moment." He adds that a task group has been formed to plan strategies and identify possible new members.

"Jacobs is not officially out of a job," he says. "We have come to a private arrangement with him. But we'll advertise his job if, when we restructure, we find that a different management style is needed. It will be up to him to determine whether he wants to apply for the post of CE."

Louw cannot predict a date for this reincarnation. Task group members are busy negotiating wages and budgets, and will have to wait another week or two until they can find enough spare time to straighten out the association's affairs.

He says the organisation fell on hard times "and couldn't incur more costs," not because of bad management, but because many of its smaller members, hurt by the recession, could not pay their dues.

Its current predicament must also be due to its policy of trying to make membership as cheap as possible. The maximum any mem- cont

FM 9/7/93 (332)

ber could pay was R5 000 a year for 125 vehicles even if the owner had many more.

Louw hopes to rebuild the organisation around a core of big fleet owners who will pay enough on their own to keep it going. They obviously will have to pay more than they did. Small operators will be welcome to join, but will be regarded as the cherry on top. He does not want to have to rely on the contribution of a multitude of small operators who are usually the first ones to pare all but the most essential transport costs when the economy dips. ■

Taxi war deaths rise to 9

THREE more people have died and two people been injured in the new flare-up of the city's taxi war, bringing the death toll to at least nine, a police spokesman said yesterday.

More than seven people have been injured in the taxi war which erupted again on Wednesday.

In the latest incidents, three people on the Cape Flats were shot dead: An unidentified taxi driver, taxi-driver Mr Mzini Mbathane and Ms Julia Bokani. Mr Michael Ndludlu was injured.

Taxi-driver Mr Delfus Gilindolo and two passengers were injured when a group of men fired shots at them in Ntlangano Crescent, Nyanga. CT 10/7/93

When asked why police had told the media there had been no violence connected to the taxi feud on Thursday, spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said: "Problems are being experienced with obtaining immediate information from certain areas." 330

These incidents were only brought to the attention of this office this (Friday) morning."

Sinister turn in taxi war

332
ARG 10/7/93

■ As the taxi war threatens once again to engulf the embattled Peninsula townships, the scenario is like a rerun of a horror movie.

Weekend Argus Reporter

FEAR stalks the townships as the taxi conflict rears its ugly head — again.

Seven people, including University of the Western Cape student Mr Mati Mqamelo who was on his way to attend a memorial service at Zolani Community Centre, were shot dead.

And three people were shot and injured by gunmen who randomly opened fire at taxis in Khayelitsha and at the Nyanga terminus.

As in the previous battles, passengers have become afraid to use minibus taxis.

Industry officials have left their families to seek refuge elsewhere. The marauding gunmen are once again ruling the roost.

After 13 months of peace, what has gone wrong?

In March last year the township residents sighed with relief when Codeta, an amalgamation of the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) and Lagunya Taxi Association was formed.

The birth of this organisation that united two bitter rivals should have signalled an end to a long and bloody conflict that had claimed more than 65 lives and destroyed vehicles worth more R1 m.

Codeta officials, buoyed by support from community organisations, spared no effort in implementing peace protocols.

Importantly, the new body drew up proposals for the joint plying of routes — a former source of conflict because Webta had steadfastly refused to share its lucrative township-central business districts — and set up disciplinary measures to deal with dissenters.

However cracks within the Codeta alliance started appearing when a dissatisfied sinister group — dubbed Big Eight — comprising hitmen who were active during the previous taxi war, objected to the alleged democratic nature of the new body.

The dissenting group, made up of former Webta members, claimed the Webta side of the Codeta committee had broken faith with them and were serving the interests of their former enemies.

The Big Eight soon showed it would not hesitate to have things their own way — at whatever cost.

The group strategy got directed at individual leaders within the Codeta executive — particularly the former Webta members.

The first prominent murder attributed to the Big Eight was the killing of Mr Siphiwo Mooi, a deputy president of Codeta, who was shot in the head and died in Groote Schuur in April.

Towards the end of April another top Codeta official, also formerly with Webta, Mr Eric Majola, died after being shot in the head.

Things got worse when a group of irate taxi drivers, believed to be aligned to the Big Eight, stormed the offices of Codeta and trashed equipment which included fax machines, computers and telephones.

The drivers threatened to start another taxi war if one of them was arrested. Knife battles among the angry taxi drivers also broke out.

Chances for peace gradually faded as the Codeta officials, fearing assassinations, left their houses and sought refuge at safe havens.

As at the height of the previous 13-month conflict, police were accused of collaborating with the Big Eight by not arresting any of them in connection with the death of any of the seven Codeta members.

In a bid to muster support against the Big Eight, Codeta organised a march to demand that police arrest the gang and stop "supporting a violent balaclava gang of crminals".

Meanwhile, a hate campaign was launched against the Big Eight and pamphlets were distributed in the townships, urging the residents to "eliminate the gang from the society".

In an emotional speech Mr Kidwell Magwayi claimed "criminals are working closely with the police. Police are behind the violence..."

Police vehemently denied the accusations. They offered R5 000 for information leading to the arrest of the murderers of Mr Mooi and Mr Tikie Mxhosana.

The campaign to expose the alleged police collaboration with the Big Eight gained momentum when Mr Nelson Mandela promised to tell President De Klerk that he should remove a certain "colonel who was always implicated in the taxi war".

The Big Eight became hated in the townships and sought refuge in Crossroads under the shelter of Mr Jeffrey Nongwe, another alleged warlord in the centre of accusations of conducting a terror campaign against the Crossroads residents.

Sources said the Big Eight doubled up as security for Mr Nongwe.

Interestingly, Mr Nongwe, who is still officially an ANC chairman, is giving sanctuary to another alleged warlord, Mr Chris Toise, who was toppled from power in Brown's Farm.

About two weeks ago the rumbling conflict took another sinister turn when the rival groups kidnapped people and victims were later found dead.

This week killings at Nyanga's Zolani Centre fuelled the suspicion that another long taxi war is in the offing, but it is difficult to assess who is to gain.

Peace as taxi factions talk

CT 10/7/93 (332)

Staff Reporter

A TRUCE has been declared between opposing taxi factions following meetings with local peace committees and the mayor, Mr Frank van der Velde.

Codeta's city offices were the scene of lengthy discussions yesterday between Lieutenant-Colonel Leonard Knipe, co-ordinator of the special violent crimes investigation unit, and Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magwayi and other officials.

Later about 15 detectives attached to the unit arrived at the Codeta offices where 11 eye-witnesses to Wednesday's Zolani Centre shootings had gathered.

Both police and Codeta were tight-lipped about what had taken place.

Meanwhile, Mr Van der Velde said a "great deal" had happened between Wednesday's killings at Zolani Centre and yesterday when the death toll stood at eight.

"The parties have got together with the local peace committee and I have had discussions with the 'dissident' group in my office and have also talked to Mr Magwayi on the telephone. I am hoping to go to the next step to bring the parties together.

"Hopefully there's a truce and we should not see violence this weekend," Mr Van der Velde said.

Driver shot dead — taxi truce broken

CT 12/7/93 (332)

Crime Reporter

A TAXI-DRIVER was shot dead and two taxi passengers wounded in separate incidents related to a flare-up of the taxi war at the weekend.

The latest killing brings the death toll to at least nine since the taxi war erupted again on Wednesday and follows a truce declared between opposing factions on Friday.

Taxi-driver Mr Zwandile Luwani, 49, an ex-Webta member, was shot dead when he tried to flee after being forced off the road in Khayelitsha about 1am yesterday.

A police spokesman said Mr Luwani had been travelling along Bishop Tutu Road when the driver of another minibus taxi forced his vehicle to stop and opened fire with a 9mm pistol.

Mr Luwani had collapsed and died after being shot in the head, chest and legs.

In another incident two passengers had been wounded on Saturday after a minibus taxi-driver forced them out of a car taxi.

Mr Ajanda Majeki, 31, was in a serious condition in a city hospital after being shot by the taxi-driver around 5.30pm.

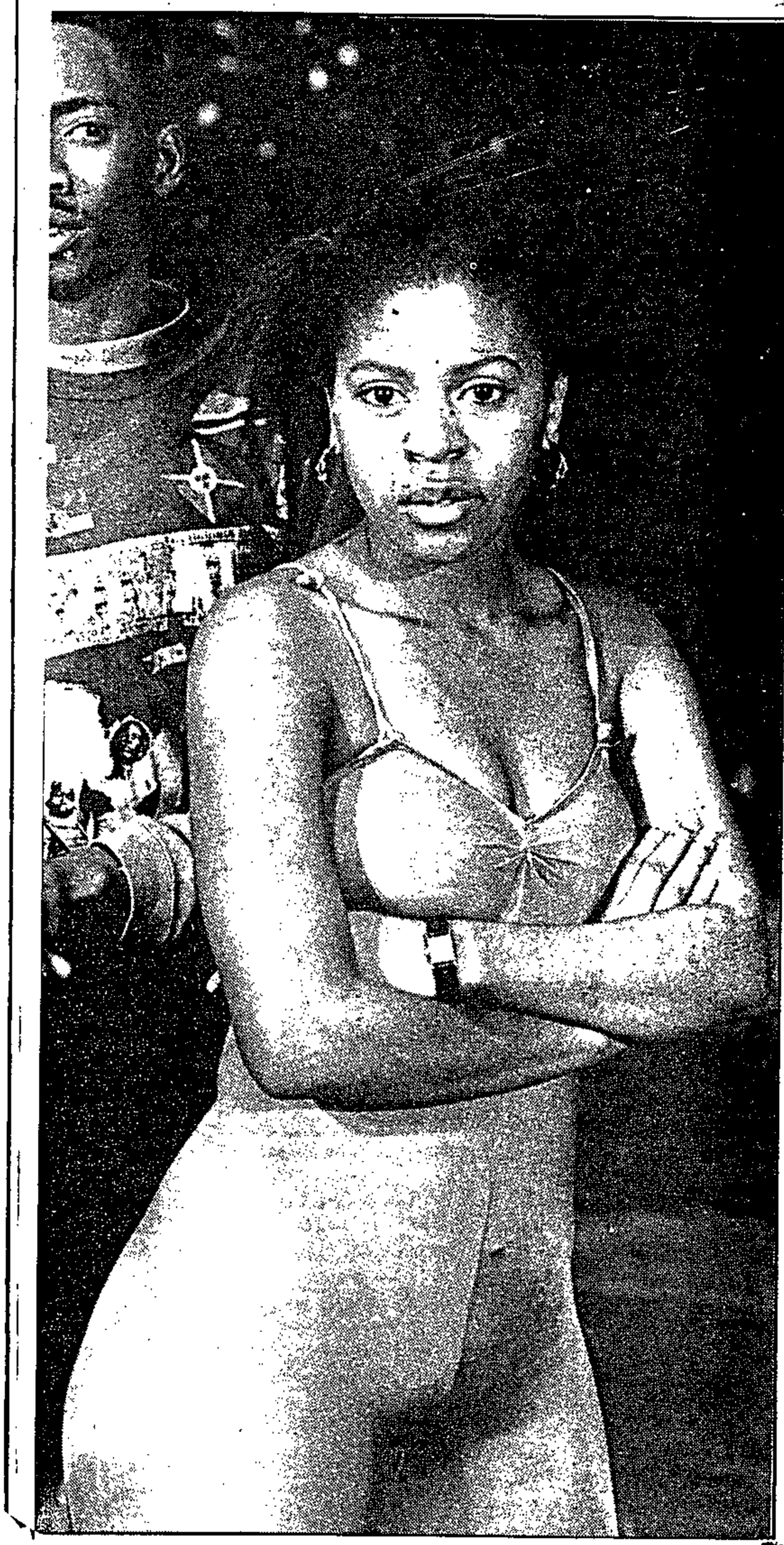
His brother, Mr Mxolisi Majeki, 42, had been taken to hospital with leg wounds.

The two brothers had been in a car taxi when it was forced to stop by the minibus taxi driver who demanded to know why they were not travelling in a minibus and ordered them into his own vehicle.

The taxi driver had opened fire on the men when they got out of his taxi in Site B.

Mayor Mr Frank van der Velde expressed regret at the killings but said he could not comment further until motives for the renewed hostility connected to the taxi war had been established.

NEWS Drivers assualted and commuters left in the cold



Dispute leads to choas

STRANDED Armed men stop taxis from operating:

By Isaac Moledi

Sowetan 15/7/93

THERE was chaos at the Baragwanath Hospital taxi rank in Soweto yesterday morning when armed men assaulted taxi drivers and ordered them to stop operating. Commuters on their way to work were forced out of minibus taxis belonging to Soweto Taxi Services.

Operations came to a standstill at 6am as the men — said to have come from Merafe Hostel — demanded that the taxis stop operating.

STS chairman Mr Walter Maseko linked the disruptions to an ongoing dispute between former STS office-bearers and the new executive, which took over on June 22 after a Rand Supreme Court order had confirmed their election.

He said the conflict followed the lowering of fares on July 5.

(332)

The STS has about 800 members and operates about 2 000 taxis. Among the ranks affected by the dispute are Tshiawelo, Lenz Station, Protea North, Molapo, Naledi, Merafe, Pimville, Zola offices, Nancefield and Senaoane.

"We stand by our word that we will not increase the fares as these hostel dwellers demand. The decrease of 15 percent from Soweto to Johannesburg and 10 percent from Soweto to the Baragwanath Hospital rank still stands," Maskeo said.

Police and members of SA Defence Force were monitoring the situation yesterday.

Maseko accused former office-bearers of the STS of organising hostel dwellers, posing as drivers, to destabilise their routes.

He said his organisation had asked members of other taxi groups to assist commuters stranded in the city.

But by late yesterday many people were seen walking from the Baragwanath taxi rank to their homes in other areas of Soweto.

Commuters stranded in taxi row

Star 15/7/93

Soweto Bureau

Hundreds of commuters last night had to walk home from the Baragwanath Hospital after taxi drivers went on strike over the Soweto Taxi Services' (STS) reduction of fares. (332)

STS spokesman Peter Nkhethoa alleged the drivers were assaulted and threatened to stop them from operating by Merafe hostel dwellers who were "bought" by dissident members opposed to the fare increase.

The attack is linked to an ongoing dispute between former STS office-bearers and the organisation's new executive, which took office on June 22 after obtaining a Supreme Court order authorising elections.

The secretary of the new executive committee, Lameck Monare, was shot dead in his yard a day after the lower fares were announced.

Dispute leads to choas

STRANDED Armed men stop taxis from operating:

By Isaac Moledi

Sowetan 15/7/93

THERE was chaos at the Baragwanath Hospital taxi rank in Soweto yesterday morning when armed men assaulted taxi drivers and ordered them to stop operating. Commuters on their way to work were forced out of minibus taxis belonging to Soweto Taxi Services.

Operations came to a standstill at 6am as the men — said to have come from Merafe Hostel — demanded that the taxis stop operating.

STS chairman Mr Walter Maseko linked the disruptions to an ongoing dispute between former STS office-bearers and the new executive, which took over on June 22 after a Rand Supreme Court order had confirmed their election.

He said the conflict followed the lowering of fares on July 5.

(332)

The STS has about 800 members and operates about 2 000 taxis. Among the ranks affected by the dispute are Tshiawelo, Lenz Station, Protea North, Molapo, Naledi, Merafe, Pimville, Zola offices, Nancefield and Senaoane.

"We stand by our word that we will not increase the fares as these hostel dwellers demand. The decrease of 15 percent from Soweto to Johannesburg and 10 percent from Soweto to the Baragwanath Hospital rank still stands," Maskeo said.

Police and members of SA Defence Force were monitoring the situation yesterday.

Maseko accused former office-bearers of the STS of organising hostel dwellers, posing as drivers, to destabilise their routes.

He said his organisation had asked members of other taxi groups to assist commuters stranded in the city.

But by late yesterday many people were seen walking from the Baragwanath taxi rank to their homes in other areas of Soweto.

NEWS Dispute between rival cab operators over lowering of fares continues

Taxi commuters may be stranded

Sowetan 16/7/93

By Isaac Moledi and Sapa

THOUSANDS of Soweto taxi commuters face the third day of being stranded as the dispute between rival operators over a lowering of fares continues.

A group of concerned taxi drivers has urged the new executive committee of Soweto Taxi Services to meet the former committee to resolve the problem of the fares. (332)

Minibus taxis stopped operating on Wednesday as armed men — believed to have come from the Merafe Hostel — assaulted taxi drivers on Wednesday and ordered them to stop operating. Commuters were yesterday forced to look for other transport to take them to work.

Many had to walk home on Wednesday night when taxis at the Baragwanath Hospital taxi rank were not operating.

STS chairman Mr Walter Maseko said on Wednesday that their problem was linked to an ongoing dispute between former STS office-bearers and the new executive, which took over on June 22 after a Rand Supreme Court order had confirmed their election. He said the disruption followed the lowering of fares on June 5.

Concerned taxi drivers said yesterday the STS' new executive should meet the old committee to resolve the problems over fares as the decision to lower fares was taken without consulting them.

A WINNER'S SMILE ... Soweto schoolgirl Nombeko Thomas, of Mzimhlophe, holds her winning photograph at an award-giving ceremony of the South African Communication Services in Pretoria this week. Thomas (11) was one of many children who attended a SACS photographic workshop which was backed by Ilford and Pentax.

PIC: FANI MAHUNTSI

Taxi row sparks mass action threat

B/Day 16/7/93

THEO RAWANA

THE ANC yesterday threatened mass action over the AWB's alleged involvement in the impounding of 55 black-owned taxis in Bethal during which the vehicles were damaged and drivers teargassed.

ANC eastern Transvaal regional publicity secretary Jackson Mthembu said police and AWB members in Bethal had teargassed and beaten taxi drivers, set dogs on them and damaged vehicle windows before impounding 55 taxis on Tuesday.

He said the town council was demanding R150 for the release of each minibus.

The incident followed a dispute between the local taxi association and the council over rank facilities in Bethal. Mthembu said talks, arranged by the local dispute resolution committee between the ANC, police and taxi drivers, were due to take place today. The CP-led town council had declined to attend the meeting.

"If nothing comes of these talks, and the taximen's vehicles are not returned, the community will embark on the mother of all mass actions," Mthembu said. (332)

He said the trouble began on Monday when the operators, who had been "begging" for a rank for four years, rejected the space allocated by the council and parked outside the town.

"Police came and ordered the taximen to use the allocated site, but when they refused, threatened that there were other people who would deal with them.

☐ To Page 2

Taxi row

B/Day 16/7/93

☐ From Page 1

"The following day police and AWB members with swastikas and flags towed away the taxis, damaging some by hammering the windows. The drivers were beaten up and bitten when dogs were set on them," Mthembu said.

Local dispute resolution committee regional manager Bert van der Walt said he could not comment before today's meeting. The town clerk was not available to comment and police spokesman Capt Theo de Bruyn denied that AWB members were involved in the dispute.

De Bruyn said from Middelburg: "They did not beat up anyone, they just sat in their cars, watching. No one has laid any charge against them, otherwise we would have locked them up. (332)

He said eight AWB men had been in the town to raise money for their organisation. The AWB was not available for comment.

Anger: All-out taxi war threat

(352) ARG 17/7/93

Weekend Argus Reporter

■ The taxi conflict is threatening to boil over into the political arena as allegations of PAC intimidation of Nyanga drivers draw angry retorts from the ANC — and angrier counter-retorts from the PAC.

RUMOURS of imminent attacks on taxi-drivers are threatening to fuel the smouldering conflict in the Western Cape into full-scale war.

On Thursday evening African National Congress (Western Cape) vice-chairman Mr Lerumo Kalako rushed through the southern suburbs' taxi ranks to allay fears of attacks by Umkhonto we Sizwe soldiers on drivers supporting the "Big Eight" faction within Codeta.

The birth of Codeta in March last year — supposedly unifying two arch-rival taxi groupings — promised much, but by all accounts unity lies in tatters.

Former Western Cape Black Taxi Organisation (Webta) members felt deserted by their leaders and were now involved in a bitter struggle to rectify the situation, an unidentified Big Eight supporter said.

Meanwhile, blood is on the streets again. At least seven people lie dead and passengers swindle.

Rumours of the MK attacks emanated from notorious Big Eight strongman Mr Makhaya Tom, drivers told Weekend Argus. Others said the rumours were the work of Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwayi.

Mr Kalako said his information, gleaned from drivers, was that Mr Tom had addressed drivers at the Nyanga taxi rank on Thursday, telling them to join the PAC, who would protect them when MK launched its attack.

Mr Tom allegedly told the drivers that ANC secretary Mr Tony Yengeni had spoken of attacking Big Eight sympathisers at a meeting in Langa on Wednesday, but Mr Kalako said Mr Yengeni was in Taiwan and had been there since Monday.

Meanwhile, PAC (Western Cape) chairman Mr Theo Mabusela said his organisation "certainly do not attribute our growth to intimidatory tactics".

"The PAC involvement in the taxi feud is strictly on the basis of bringing about peace," Mr Mabusela said.

"Our only information regarding the so-called Big Eight grouping is information gleaned from the police."

As Thursday's rumours spread, Mr Kalako said he was forced to go into the field to allay fears.

"I explained to the drivers the rumours were purely designed to create further conflict within the industry."

"I told them that if notorious elements were planning to embark on a series of random shootings, it would certainly not be the work of the ANC.

"Indeed, we have been working for unity within the industry since the conflict first reared its ugly head," Mr Kalako said.

Yesterday Mr Kalako said the ANC was attempting to meet the PAC urgently to "discuss the allegations and attempt to verify their position".

"We want to make sure the PAC is not using intimidation as a means of recruiting membership, or using MK to smear the good name of the ANC," he said.

Meanwhile, at a meeting held on Thursday in the Mayor's Parlour, a Mr Maloney of the Langa PAC allegedly repeated the rumours of imminent attacks on drivers by MK.

The meeting aimed to resolve dissatisfaction in the taxi industry.

An ANC spokesman said he was unsure why Mr Maloney had even been at the meeting because he was not involved in the taxi industry.

Mr Mabusela said the PAC was quite happy to meet with the ANC as a multi-lateral approach to the problems within the industry could avoid it "affecting the broader community".

The PAC could not meet the ANC immediately as its leadership were involved in organising a "major rally". But they would meet "as soon as possible".

He said only when all major organisations, including churches, civic structures and police, could put their heads together the conflict could be resolved.

He also criticised the police for their role in the conflict, saying they could no longer be termed the Third Force, but were the "first and primary force" in fomenting violence.

But chief police liaison officer Colonel Raymond Dowd said the taxi conflict was being investigated by a senior policeman who had discovered no police involvement.

"Anyone with evidence of police involvement should come forward and pass this information on," he said.

Codeta chairman Mr Magwayi refused to be drawn on the issue, saying he had heard of the rumours from drivers but had not heard them first-hand.

□ **REASSURING:** African National Congress (Western Cape) vice-chairman Mr Lerumo Kalako, second left, assures Nyanga taxi-drivers at the Claremont rank that the rumours of imminent MK attacks are unfounded.

Rumours, but no violence

Weekend Argus Reporter

NO incidents of taxi-related violence were reported to police yesterday in spite of rumours of Umkhonto we Sizwe attacks on drivers.

Chief police liaison officer Colonel Raymond Dowd said the investigation into the murder of a driver in Nyanga on Thursday showed robbery to be the motive.

But this week police arrested six men in connection with taxi-related murders and attempted murders.

Three men were arrested in connection with the murder in Nyanga of Mr Wellington Mvu, 38, shot dead last Tuesday night.

Colonel Dowd said Mr Jameson Fafuya, Mr Eric Zektwana and Mr Temba Kunjwa had been arrested by the Unrest and Violent Crimes Investigations Unit. They appeared in court and are on bail.

He also said Mr Michael Kobese had been arrested in connection with an attempted murder at the Khayelitsha taxi rank on June 11.

Meanwhile Mr Patrick Nongwana and Mr Zandile Nongwana have been arrested after murders outside the Zolani Centre, Crossroads, and have appeared in court.

There's no 'Big 8', says disgruntled driver

SOUTH 17/7-21/7/92

By Sabata Ngcai

THERE are no "Big Eight" gangsters disrupting the taxi business, only disgruntled former Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) members, says taxi driver Mr Makhaya Tom.

Tom went to great pains to point out that the "Big Eight" is not a cause for tension in the townships.

He said the name "Big Eight" came about because former Webta members had complaints against the 15 members they elected to form the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) last year.

He said the "Big Eight" name came from those eight Codeta executive members chosen at the time.

Tom, said to be a leading "Big Eight" member, came forward to SOUTH with two other former Webta members to respond to allegations about the existence of the mysterious gang.

He accused Codeta of not reporting back to its membership.

"We were not even invited to Codeta meetings. Former Lagunya (Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga Taxi Association) members were always updated about developments in Codeta," Tom said.

He said whenever the former Webta members arrived for a meeting the Codeta executive members failed to turn up.

Tom said that when the former Webta members occupied the Codeta offices in May, the executive members still refused to talk to them.

He said the fact that the two former taxi rivals were still operating separately was one of the problems they wanted to address with Codeta.

Codeta chairperson Mr Kidwell Magwayi said he would not comment because a meeting between the two parties will be hosted by the mayor of Cape Town this week.

He said Codeta stood for peace and was prepared to listen to whatever the dissident group said.

The mayor, Mr Frank van der Velde, confirmed the meeting was taking place.

Tom said: "We are not warmongers as we are portrayed to be, we want peace. If we wanted to fight, we would have done so long ago."

"We are being smeared by Codeta executive members because they see us as dissidents."

Rikki drivers claim minibus harassment

S/Times CC/Metro J 18/7/93

By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

CAPE TOWN'S novel Rikki service, which operates an alternative low-cost taxi service around the city centre and nearby suburbs, fears it may be forced out of business because of constant harassment by minibus taxi drivers.

When the brightly coloured open-back minibus rikkis first started operating they were perceived as something of a novelty.

But as they increasingly expanded the niche market they had carved for themselves, the harrassment from minibus operators grew.

The owner of Rikkis, Mr Graeme Bell, said this week the situation had been worsened by the fact that the police have refused to intervene.

The continual harrassment had already taken its toll, he said.

There was constant tension among his drivers and one had already resigned. (332)

"My drivers simply cannot take the intimidation any longer," he said.

"Several attempts to talk to these taxi drivers have been unsuccessful, as they have made up their minds — they want us off the road," he said.

He claimed his drivers and passengers were constantly being intimidated by taxi drivers who accused them of taking away their business.

"How can we take away their business when they only moved into the area a few months ago?" he asked.

The rikkis started operating in the central area in 1991 while taxis only came to the area late last year, he said.

Earlier this week, a rikki driven by one of Mr Bell's drivers, Ms Lynne Crossley, was prevented from driving off with a full load of passengers after she was blocked in by six minibus taxis.

Ms Crossley, who has only been with the company for three months, claimed her passengers were ordered off the rikki, while a taxi driver intimidated her.

"He told me not to pick up people at that specific point again," said Ms Crossley, who has since resigned.

Mr Bell claimed his rikkis were strictly operating within the conditions of their permits, which allowed them to move "from point A to point B picking passengers up along the way".

"It was no use complaining to the police, as they want us to lodge a formal complaint, which would jeopardise the safety of our passengers and drivers," he said.

Police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said the police could only act against anyone once a formal complaint had been lodged.

Attempts to speak to city centre minibus taxi drivers were unsuccessful as drivers do not necessarily operate on the same route every day.

UNDER PRESSURE . . . Rikki drivers claim that they're constantly being harassed by pirate minibus operators in the city centre Picture: JACK LESTRADE

Road carriers and union in pioneer pact

CAPE TOWN — The country's five biggest road carriers and the Transport and General Workers' Union have pioneered the industry's first national bargaining agreement, union and management spokesmen said yesterday. B/Day

This was the first time the union had managed to bind employers to national centralised negotiations, said TGWU national organiser for goods and docks Thulani Dlamini. 20/7/93

Management consultant Larry Palk said history was made with the agreement, which binds Auto Carriers, C R G, Motorvia, N R D and the Southern Star Organisation to a national negotiating forum.

Dlamini said industrywide talks covering about 3 500 workers were scheduled to start in early August, following the June 22 agreement between the TGWU and the SA Motor Ferry Association.

"This is a milestone for the union.

"We have been working towards the centralisation of the transport industry and this is the first truly national forum in any of the sectors the TGWU organises," he said.

Palk said the agreement committed the parties to tabling their respective proposals by the end of July each year. (332)

Negotiations would then start in August for implementation on January 1.

The new bargaining forum resulted from talks which started in early 1991.

"It was achieved without any dispute or major hitch, which is exceptional. Both parties also hope that their future ongoing relationship takes place in the same manner," Palk said.

Dlamini said the agreement fell short of setting up an industrial council, but the motor ferry sector could form a sub-sector of the proposed national industrial council for the goods' transport industry. The industry employs 19 500 workers. — Sapa.

Uneasy truce for taxi factions

Sowetan 20/7/93

UNSOLVED PROBLEM The issue of the cost of fares still remains unsolved:

By Joshua Raboroko

THE FEUDING Soweto taxi factions reached an uneasy truce at the weekend, ending a conflict that has claimed the lives of 30 taxi drivers this month.

But still to be resolved is the question of a reduction of fares — the issue that sparked off the conflict between the rival parties.

One faction is believed to be strongly opposed to the reduction of fares and insists that their fare of R3,30 to R3,50 from Soweto to Johannesburg is justified.

The other group maintains that the fares should be reduced to R2,60 as a relief to thousands of commuters who are already reeling under the escalating cost of living.

The assistant secretary of the Soweto Taxi Services, Mr Decker Mjatshana, said yesterday that the two parties had agreed to stop the fighting which has claimed the lives of 30 drivers.

The latest of these killings occurred when Mr Julius Phoku (36) was shot dead in a patrol car in White City, Soweto, last Friday.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni yesterday confirmed the shooting and said police were investigating the incident.

Mjatshana said 70 percent of their more than 800 members stopped work as a result of the taxi feud. (332)

He said the two parties decided at the weekend meeting that all taxis should start operating, adding: "We apologise to our customers for the inconvenience we caused."

But, he said, there was still confusion regarding the fares.

It was also agreed that the newly elected office of the STS be recognised as the legitimate representative body amid protest from the rival group.

"We hope peace will now prevail," he said. "Anybody who has grievances against members should report to the association's offices at the Total filling station, Old Potchefstroom Road, Soweto."

The groups are expected to hold another round of talks to resolve the conflict soon, according to sources.

NEWS Bethal businessmen settle R8

Whites pay taxi fine

Sowetan 21/7/93

By Mzwandile Jacks

FIFTY-FIVE minibus taxis which were impounded by the Bethal Town Council last week were released to their owners yesterday after white businessmen paid more than R8 000 to the authorities as a goodwill gesture.

And in a new twist to the conflict in the Eastern Transvaal town, businessman Mr Piet Kruger has offered to rezone one of his vacant plots for a new rank for black commuters.

Mr Jackson Mthembu, spokesman of the ANC in the Eastern Transvaal, said: "These gestures show that not all whites are racist in Bethal. Some are working towards reconciliation."

The taxis were impounded following the struggle for a taxi rank by the Mzinoni Taxi Association.

The businessmen paid R150 for each taxi after the council decided to charge the taxi owners for towing costs only.

Charges laid against the taxi owners were withdrawn. (332)

Taxi wars scare off whites

THEO RAWANA

VIOLENCE had turned away the flood of white commuters who had resorted to the black taxi as a cheaper, faster and more convenient means of transport, taxi industry leaders said yesterday.

Two years ago, whites who preferred black taxis over municipal buses had been seen in taxi queues in Johannesburg, Randburg and Sandton. (332)

In 1991 the black taxi fare from Johannesburg to Randburg was R2; the same trip in a metered taxi cost between R26 and R36.

Alexandra Taxi Associaion chairman Peter Manamela said the tide had turned and white commuters had reverted to their old modes of transport because of violence in the taxi industry.

"The white passenger volume has been reduced to a trickle." B/Day

He said blacks would also stop catching taxis — "if they had alternative modes of transport".

Manamela atributed the violence to deregulation, which he said had allowed the Transportation Board to issue taxi permits without regard for passenger volumes. 21/7/93

"Deregulation has brought problems because the Transportation Board has been allowed to issue permits without doing research as to the size of the market. This has led to too many taxis vying for fewer passengers," he said.

Transportation Board spokesman Olivia Bizarro said anyone opposed to the the issuing of permits to individuals could lodge an objection with the board.

"All one needs to do is to buy the Government Gazette, look at the list of applicants and lodge an objection stating one's reasons for doing so," she said.

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng said it was a great pity that whites were leaving black taxi transport because "we would have loved the support of everyone, irrespective of colour".

He said white commuters, being ratepayers and voters, could use their power to get local authorities to provide better facilities in their areas.

"Government also formulates transport policy on a mandate from white voters. The voters, instead of leaving, could help formulate policies that would favour better transportation for all."

told to 12/7/93

ndonesia

others.

Idasa warns of election pitfalls

ARG 22/7/93

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

SOUTH Africa could end up in a "terrifying power vacuum" with a headless bureaucracy and armed forces with no central accountability if next year's elections were not well conducted, and the results broadly accepted.

This warning by the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa's (Idasa) comes as political parties prepare for the first democratic elections.

Idasa programme director Mr Paul Graham says in the editorial of the Institute's journal, *Democracy in Action*, that although the elections are "not everything", they could provide South Africa with a kick-start.

"Trusted and representative government, the ending of international isolation, the chance for a new start in human rights, policing, civil service, development projects... these are the tonics we all need to deal with the malady of violence and despair."

But, for these things to be achieved, South Africans need to grasp the opportunity.

"If we do not get these elections right, we could find ourselves in a terrifying power vacuum with a headless bureaucracy and armed forces with no central accountability.

"Nobody should underestimate the dangerous passage we are going through," he said.

Forum for motor ferry industry

Labour Reporter

A NEGOTIATING forum has been established in the motor ferry industry involving the Transport and General Workers Union and five of the biggest companies in the sector. ARG 22/7/93

A joint statement by the union and the SA Motor Ferry Association said: "A feature of the agreement is that the union and the association will submit their demands to one another by no later than the end of July each year, with negotiations commencing in August for implementation on January 1 every year."

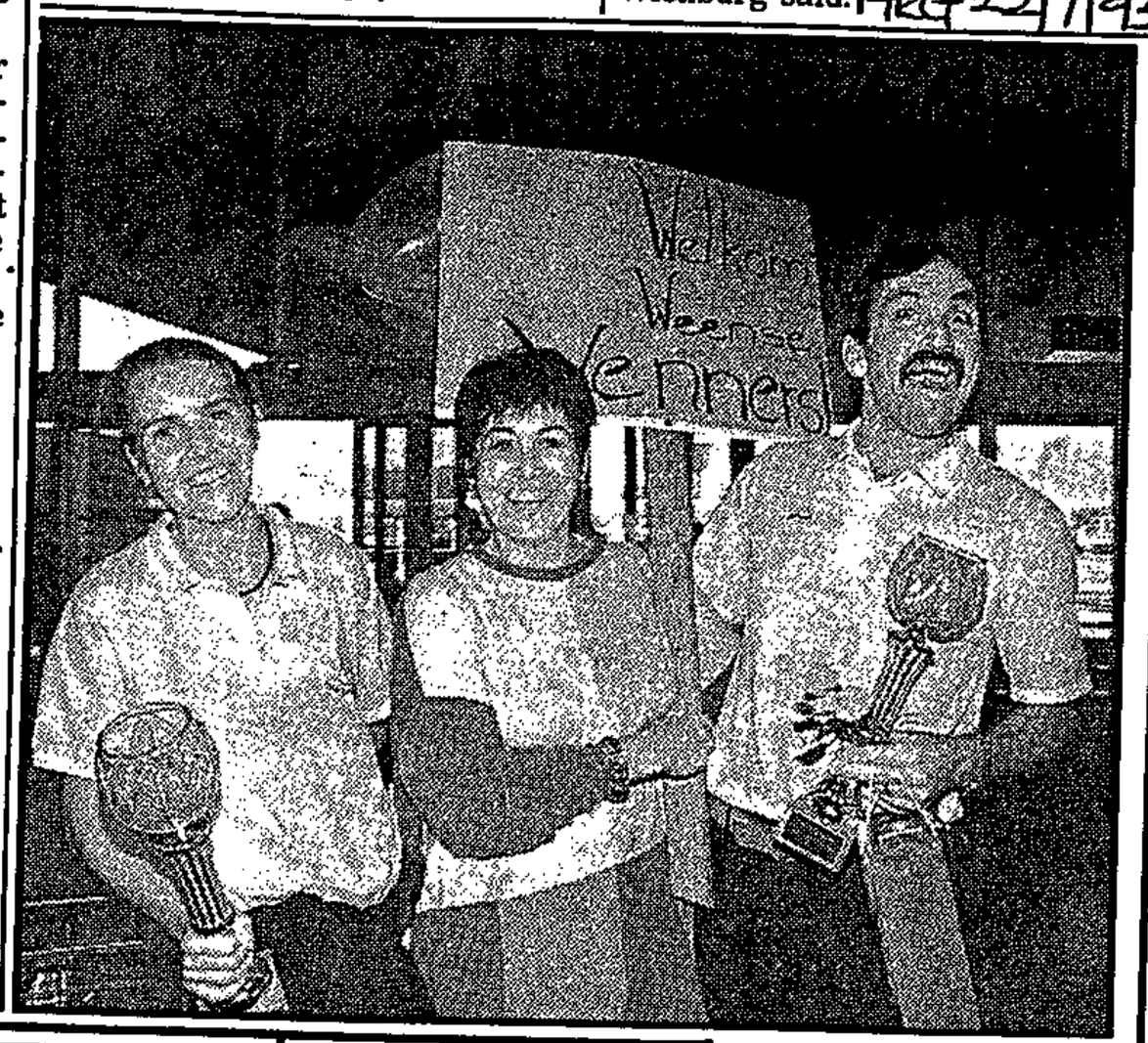
Wienburg slams pension deal

Municipal Reporter

CITY councillor Mr Arthur Wienburg wants colleagues to vote against a proposal to allow three councillors to join the controversial "buy-back" pension scheme.

"I have always been opposed to the principle of buying back service, especially where this will have a negative impact on hard-pressed ratepayers' funds, because the R300 000 will be taken from fast-diminishing reserves.

"I trust councillors will have the common sense and sensitivity to vote against this proposal," Mr Wienburg said. ARG 22/7/93



MUSIC MAKERS: The

Star 22/7/93

Police, taxi drivers clash

Police fired rubber bullets and teargas at taxi drivers in Newcastle yesterday after a tense four-hour drama. The confrontation started when a taxi driver was allegedly assaulted and called a "kaffir" by a member of the Newcastle Protection Services. — Own Correspondent

332

ARG 22/7/93

City's taxi bodies agree to peace

(332)

DENNIS CRUYWAGEN
Political Staff

CAPE TOWN'S warring taxi factions have agreed to cease hostilities which have claimed the lives of at least 13 taxi operators since January.

The agreement was reached at a meeting between the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) and its dissident faction, brokered by mayor Mr Frank van der Velde.

Mr Van der Velde said today Codeta's leadership had agreed to meet its rank and file membership as soon as possible.

He hoped members of the community would also attend the meeting "so they can see what's going on and the dissidents' grievances can aired in public".

He did not know when the meeting would be, but he was "nagging" the two groups to meet as soon as possible.

He said the factions had also agreed that "members from both sides would refrain from violence while talks continued". This in itself was a positive step.

Although he was happy about the truce, Mr Van der Velde said it would be premature to speculate about achieving lasting peace in the taxi industry.

Taximan jailed for five deaths

PRETORIA. — A Brits taxi owner, Ratshipi Philemon Moepye, 42, was sentenced in the Supreme Court here yesterday to an effective 25 years' imprisonment for murdering five men at a taxi rank in Brits in May.

The five dead men were all members of a taxi association in competition with his association in the Brits area.

Mr Justice Eloff said it seemed Moepye had not planned the crimes but acted impulsively. — Sapa

(332) CT 23/7/93

Taxi owner shot dead

Sowetan 28/7/93

By Isaac Moledi

A SOWETO taxi owner was shot dead and two drivers seriously wounded in a fresh outbreak of taxi violence in the township yesterday.

The cause of the fighting, which took place at the Baragwanath taxi rank, could not be established.

But some taxi drivers said the feud was linked to an ongoing dispute between former Bara City Taxi Association office-bearers and the association's new executive.

Former Bara City Taxi Association office bearers are allegedly refusing to recognise the new executive.

Soweto police spokesman Colonel Tienie Halgryn said when police arrived at the Baragwanath rank, the situation was calm but tense.

He confirmed that a taxi owner was shot. The man died instantly.

Halgryn also confirmed that two drivers were seriously injured. One of the drivers was critical at Baragwanath Hospital.

No arrests have been made and police are investigating.

(332)

BOOKINGS NOW OPEN

I HEREBY APPLY TO BECOME A COMPUTER STUDENT AT IBN:
(... and Learn from HOME !)

FULL NAME :

POSTAL ADDRESS

A GATEWAY TO SUCCESS

CODE

PHONE NO.(DAY):

R10332

SEND THIS IN ON A POSTCARD TO: IBN - PO Box 1060, HOUGHTON, JHB, 2041

IBN COMPUTER SCHOOLS

The Bank of Education

Bookkeeping will put cash in your pocket

Minibuses to go to station deck

CT 30/7/93 (332)

Municipal Reporter

ALL minibus taxis plying for trade in Strand Street are to be moved to the station deck, where the council is to provide facilities costing R1,5 million.

The city council also resolved yesterday that the station deck would become the official CBD taxi rank.

Had the Sea Point taxis been allowed to continue plying for trade in Strand Street, traffic officers would have experienced problems with law enforcement, council officials said in a report before the council.

According to the report, passengers should benefit from shelters and a better-organised service on the station deck.

How the taxi operators would react to being forced to operate only from the station deck was "not clear", the report said.

Utilities and works committee chairman Mr Kenneth Penkin said exhaustive discussions had been held.

Not everybody was entirely happy, he said. The Peninsula Taxi Association, which has more taxis in Strand Street in peak hour than any other organisation, has declared that it is opposed to the move to the deck.

● **Allowance increase cut — Page 7**

Criticism was too much for taxi driver

Sowetan 30/7/93

Sowetan Correspondent

AN ARGUMENT about a taxi driver's "bad driving" led to a shootout between four men on the busy Market Square in Maritzburg on Wednesday night.

The taxi driver was wounded twice in the chest during the gunfight and was taken to hospital in a serious condition.

(332)

The shooting was the result of an argument that started after the taxi driver had picked up two off-duty policemen and a prison warder at Westgate.

The warder complained about his driving, saying he was negligent and reckless.

The taxi driver then stopped and ordered the three to get out his minibus, said police spokesman Captain Henry Budhram.

The three men then got another taxi and when they arrived at their destination, Market Square, they found the "reckless driver" waiting for them.

"They reported that the driver was armed and fired at the warder as soon as he saw them," said Budhram.

"The warder then fired a shot into the air. But the taxi driver continued to fire at them.

"Then the policemen opened fire and the driver was hit twice in the chest."

Budhram said the names of those involved would not be released before a police investigation had been completed.

'Milestone' for taxis

(332) ARG 30/7/93

WORK on the station deck minibus taxi rank will begin at the end of the year.

Utilities and works chief Mr Kenny Penkin hailed as a milestone yesterday's council decision to go ahead with moving the Strand Street taxi rank to the station deck.

The R1,5 million project will go to tender soon.

Mr Penkin said there would also be parking for private cars on the deck.

The move would mean an end to Strand Street traffic chaos, he said.

Taxi move fine 'if others agree'

332

Staff Reporter

THE Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) said yesterday it would support the city council's proposal to move minibus taxis to the station deck only if all other organisations representing taxis also moved.

CT 31/7/93

If not, pirate drivers would take advantage, resulting in violence, a senior Codeta offical said.

GDM beats objectives

B/Day 3/8/93

MZIWAKHE HLANGANI

INTERNATIONAL trade finance company GDM Finance had emerged from difficult trading conditions consistently exceeding its objectives, MD John Cowper said in the latest annual report. (332)

Its sound performance in both domestic and international markets over the past six years was a result of careful risk management and retaining profits to control gearing.

Cowper said the company had consistently achieved its goals since its listing six years ago. One of these was to distribute about 40% of attributable income in dividends and to maintain a conservative gearing of less than 5:1.

The company's 64% owned subsidiary African Shipping acquired the clearing and forwarding interests of Fowlie & Whystock Limited and R H Freight Services during 1991/92.

The group's financial position was further enhanced by the rand hedge advantage derived from profits generated by external offices in Europe, he said.

GDM beats objectives

B/Day 3/8/93

MZIWAKHE HLANGANI

INTERNATIONAL trade finance company GDM Finance had emerged from difficult trading conditions consistently exceeding its objectives, MD John Cowper said in the latest annual report. (332)

Its sound performance in both domestic and international markets over the past six years was a result of careful risk management and retaining profits to control gearing.

Cowper said the company had consistently achieved its goals since its listing six years ago. One of these was to distribute about 40% of attributable income in dividends and to maintain a conservative gearing of less than 5:1.

The company's 64% owned subsidiary African Shipping acquired the clearing and forwarding interests of Fowlie & Whystock Limited and R H Freight Services during 1991/92.

The group's financial position was further enhanced by the rand hedge advantage derived from profits generated by external offices in Europe, he said.

Analysts optimistic about Amic recovery

B/Day 3/8/93

MATTHEW CURTIN

ANGLO American Industrial Corporation (Amic) might show the first signs of its recovery from several years of poor commodity prices and the depressed domestic economy when it reports half-year results on Friday, market sources say.

Analysts canvassed yesterday said Amic could show growth in attributable earnings of up to 5% in the six months ended June 30, but even a flat performance would break a four-year run of sharply declining earnings.

Fergusson Brothers analyst Steve Rubenstein said: "Although the commodity and mining supply sectors are still very weak, Amic's results may have bottomed and started to swing up at last."

Analysts' subdued optimism has not been matched by investors on the JSE, where Amic's shares have raced to R80 in recent weeks compared with their most recent low of R51,50 less than a year ago.

The shares' rerating had been sustained by market confidence that the commodity cycle was about to turn.

This, coupled with a good reception of Amic's tie-up with South Korean conglomerate Daewoo and promises of financial restructuring within the group, have also aroused market interest.

Analysts said any significant about-turn in commodity prices would be more keenly felt in the current six months.

Amic's bottom-line profit stood at R160m at the interim stage last year, equivalent to 281c a share, when an unchanged 110c dividend was declared.

Earnings at year-end in December amounted to 617c a share, more than 15% down on those of the year before.

The biggest contributors to Amic's earnings in 1992 were engineering group Scaw, chemicals producer AECI, mining equipment group Boart, Highveld Steel & Vanadium and Tongaat-Hulett.

Analysts said of those only AECI, which turned in a 22% jump in earnings when it announced interim results last month, would improve its contribution.

Results from unlisted Scaw and Boart would reflect gloomy conditions in the mining and engineering industries.

Highveld, which was 51,8% owned by Amic, would show the continued slump in iron, steel and ferro-alloy markets.

Worst hit would be unlisted paper and pulp producer Mondi.

Paper and pulp prices had shown little sign of recovery this year.

Frankel, Pollak, Vinderine analyst Johan Snyman, forecasting a 4% increase in earnings attributable mostly to the improved performance of the group's associate companies, said Mondi would turn in flat results only on the strength of cost-cutting.

Analysts added that the first full benefit of Amic's increased stakes in retailer McCarthy Group and engineering and construction subsidiary LTA, which became a subsidiary last year, would bolster earnings.

Two killed in taxi shooting

Star 6/8/93

Two people were shot dead and three seriously injured when occupants of a minibus taxi parked on top of a bridge, opened fire on another taxi below in Alrode, Alberton, shortly before dawn today.

East Rand police liaison officer Lieutenant Janine Smith said the attack happened on the corner of Dekama Road and James Street.

She said police cordoned off the area and found cartridges at the scene.

— East Rand Bureau.

332

Private airports set to take off

JOHANNESBURG. — In a move towards commercialising the airport industry in South Africa, Airports Company and Air Traffic and Navigation Services both announced an agreement with the government yesterday to take over running airports. (332)

Airports Company chairman Mr Dirk Ackerman said his company would administer day-to-day running of the airports. Licensing, tariffs and air regulations will fall under the Department of Transport. — Sapa CT 6/8/93

National Transport Policy Forum chairman George Negota at yesterday's news conference in Johannesburg where he announced the convening of a "taxi indaba" to tackle taxi violence. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

B/Day 10/8/93

Taxi violence 'indaba' planned

THEO RAWANA

ANC president Nelson Mandela, Inkatha president Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Judge Richard Goldstone will take part in an "indaba" later this month to discuss taxi violence.

Announcing this in Johannesburg yesterday, National Transport Policy Forum chairman George Negota said his organisation had drawn up a code of conduct for all stakeholders in the industry, from owners to oil companies and car makers.

The four-day meeting would be held in Johannesburg from August 23.

Negota said the guest speaker would be Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed who would address delegates on the Transport Department and the restructuring of the taxi industry.

Negota said the forum would also use the conference to call on government to change the taxi permit system, which it saw as a major cause of friction leading to violence in the industry.

Permits were issued without regard for the size of the taxi market and this led to taxis scrambling for fewer passengers, he said. (332)

Prominent speakers at the conference will include PAC leader Clarence Makwetu, national peace secretariat chairman Antonie Gildenhuys, Sanco president Moses Mayekiso, Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo and Nactu general secretary Cunningham Ngcukana.

2 000 municipal workers lose their jobs

ERICA JANKOWITZ

MORE than 2 000 workers had been dismissed, mainly in the Cape, in the course of the week-long strike by municipal workers, SA Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu) spokesman Roger Ronnie said yesterday. B/Day

However, it also appeared yesterday that the strike had reached a "sensitive stage". The union refused to comment further, except to say a comprehensive statement on plans would be released today. 10/8/93

Ronnie said Samwu's decision to suspend the strike stood in all areas except the Cape.

In Pietersburg more than 700 workers were dismissed last week after the municipality issued an ultimatum. They were fined R50 each for trespassing and were told they had been fired. They were prevented from entering work premises.

In Durban all workers had returned to work by yesterday.

Unitrans keeps on top

Star

BY STEPHEN CRANSTON

Despite a poor sugar crop and the loss of timber business, road transport group Unitrans has increased attributable earnings by 15 percent to R37,2 million and earnings per share by 12 percent to 99,5c for the year to June.

The final dividend has been increased by 15 percent to 19,5c and the total dividend from 27c to 30c.

CE Eduardo Garcia says three major contracts were secured towards the end of the end of the financial year, which required a substantial investment and related interest costs.

But he expects this new business to make a significant contribution to future profits.

The business of Greyhound Coach Lines was acquired in February and should make a meaningful contribution, once new coaches on order are commissioned in the first half of the current year.

11/8/92

There was substantial capital expenditure, mostly on new vehicles, of R119 million, funded by increased borrowings.

(332)

Garcia says the Unitrans fleet remains modern, ensuring the company stays in the forefront of the industry.

Pretoria starts rationing electricity in Mamelodi

B/Day 12/8/93

ADRIAN HADLAND

PRETORIA — The Pretoria City Council started rationing electricity in Mamelodi yesterday after the township ran out of money.

Schools, mortuaries, clinics, businesses, hostels, libraries and 27 000 formal homes lost power under a system imposed by the council, Mamelodi Civic Association spokesman Judah Mamabolo said.

The system allows for electricity to be supplied from midnight until 10am and from 5pm to 7pm.

Mamabolo said residents were concerned about a rise in crime and violence.

The security forces had said they would not enter Mamelodi if there were no lights, Mamabolo said.

A meeting on the crisis yesterday between the city council, which administers Mamelodi, the civic association, the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) and the Mamelodi City Council reached stalemate.

"Although discussions were very frank, no conclusion was reached and the discussions will probably be rescheduled for a later stage," a Pretoria council statement said.

Mamelodi Town Clerk Koos Nel said earlier this week that the township was "penniless" with almost R90m owed by residents in arrears services tariffs.

Mamabolo said a mass meeting would be held at the weekend.

The possibility of legal action against the Pretoria council, the raising of the current R50 monthly service levy and the imposition of a consumer boycott against Pretoria's businesses would be discussed, he said.

"We will go to the residents for a mandate on what to do."

SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) president Moses Mayekiso described the decision to cut services as "reckless".

"This kind of arrogant racist behaviour will make it difficult for Sanco to negotiate in good faith, as our base is being scuttled." He said the action was a direct challenge to the future of local government negotiations, in particular the process of establishing nonracial interim structures in October.

The Pretoria City Council also said earlier this week that further cost-cutting measures, including the scaling down of refuse removal services and salary reductions for municipal personnel, would be considered.

Meanwhile, a potential crisis was averted in Thokoza on Wednesday when the TPA agreed to an advance payment to allow electrical services in the East Rand township to continue, Sapa reports.

Thokoza peace committee chairman Phiroshaw Camay said the TPA agreed to cover a backlog in payments for a few more days.

Camay said many residents in the township were unable to reach pay points to settle their accounts, and it was decided yesterday to establish another pay point at the south end of Thokoza.

Taxi indaba organisers hit snags with rivals

THEO RAWANA

THE planned "taxi indaba" called to address taxi violence in SA has driven into snags with a rival group questioning the legitimacy of conveners National Transport Policy Forum.

The Save Our Sabta committee, a breakaway group from Sabta which claims a membership of 400 taxi associations in SA, has written to people and organisations who were to take part in the conference to reconsider and withdraw.

B/Day

The SOS committee said the conference was not convened with its input and might lead to further friction and unrest in the industry.

12/8/93

Among prominent people listed on the conference programme were ANC leader Nelson Mandela, Inkatha president Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Judge Richard Goldstone, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed. (332)

The committee, alleging that the forum had no right to claim to be the sole representative of the taxi industry, complained that it had not been invited to take part in drawing up the agenda.

Questioning the legitimacy of the forum, the SOS committee said: "The end result may well be that, rather than promoting solutions, the indaba will at best be a waste of time, effort and (as we understand it) substantial amounts of money.

"At worst, it may be counter-productive and lead to further unrest and disputes over territory."

Forum spokesmen could not be reached for comment last night.

(332)
15/8/93

A Moses who leads where others fled

By DON ROBERTSON

BLACK Moses is doing great business parting troubled township waters.

With the motto "I go where eagles dare" Bafana Mgcina's company, Black Moses, is a fast-moving transport business with a strong hold on distribution in townships and homelands. S/Times

He started with bakkies, but he now has five rigs with seven trailers of up to 26 tons each and 13 trucks of up to eight tons.

Mr Mgcina has appointed three white partners and two professors who offer engineering advice. Computer systems have been introduced and the staff expanded to 50. Five offices are leased in Orlando Industrial Park. (Buss)

"I now want to buy this double-storey 5 000m² block," says Mr Mgcina.

He is also negotiating to buy a warehouse from Robertsons Spices in Alrode and hopes to hire space in it to other firms. 15/8/93

Many of Mr Mgcina's customers, including Tiger Oats, supermarket chains and Robertson's Spices, seek a bigger share of the black market, but they do not have warehouse or marketing facilities.

He plans to provide them.

Transport is in Mr Mgcina's blood. He began work as a traffic officer in Johannesburg in 1972. (332)

He became a captain "in charge of virtually all of Johannesburg" by 1983.

He then started a distribution company, Send-a-Part, which he contracted to the then Rank Xerox. This involved the delivery of computers, paper, spares and other items throughout SA.

But when Xeratech took over Rank Xerox "there was no room left for me".

Mr Mgcina was awarded the Emergent Entrepreneur of the Year award by the Institute of Marketing Management in 1987.

He decided to market himself and the "turning point came in 1988 when I had a truck stolen from me. It had Team Xerox and Send-a-Part on the panels. It was thought to be a white company and became a target".

His second name is Moses, so he changed the name of his company to Black Moses, which gave the message to potential thieves.

His trucks gained secure access to black townships, something white-owned companies could not do and demand for his distribution services soared.

15/8/93

MOSES MGCINA . . . a change . . . name did the trick Picture: JAMES SOULLIER

Taxi leaders to meet mayor

ARG 17/8/93

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN
Crime Staff

TAXI leaders are to meet Mayor Frank van der Velde today.

Members of Codeta called for the meeting, fearing further bloodshed after two drivers died in a flare-up of the taxi war last night.

The drivers were killed and a driver and a passenger were injured after renewed clashes between rival taxi factions.

A police spokesman said reports of three shootings were received in Nyanga and Gugulethu last night.

During the first attack, soon after 7pm, Sipho Konzi of Site B, Khayelitsha, died of a bullet wound in the head while behind the steering wheel of his minibus in NY78.

A spent cartridge on the front seat indicated that a gunman had probably jabbed his firearm through the passenger window and fired at Mr Konzi at point-blank range.

About 7.30pm police found the second victim, Michael Kobowana of Khayelitsha, who was wounded.

Mr Kobowana was travelling in the Lusaka squatter camp, Nyanga, where occupants of a passing car allegedly opened fire on his minibus, hitting him in the arm.

In the third attack about 9.30pm, Recardo Mjika of Site B, Khayelitsha, was shot dead in his taxi on the corner of Swayelitsha Drive and Miller Road.

The incidents follow the death of a driver on Sunday and an attack on the N1 last Friday which left two taxi owners wounded.

Sowetan 17/8/93

Bid to end taxi violence

332

■ IDENTIFY CAUSES *Plan to end strife and formulate a transport policy:*

By Mzimkulu Malunga

LEADERS OF FOUR MAJOR black political organisations are expected to add their voices to calls for an end to violence in the taxi industry at a conference next week.

Also among the speakers will be Transport Minister Dr Piet Welgemoed, trade unions, civic and church leaders and head of the Goldstone Commission Mr Justice Richard Goldstone.

"We have reached a stage where we bury victims of the taxi violence every day every hour in this country," says George Negota, chairman of the National Transport Policy Forum, the broad coalition behind the conference.

Take place

"The violence that takes place at taxi ranks can't be separated from the violence that is taking place throughout the country."

The three-day-long gathering, dubbed "taxi indaba", will be held at the Johannesburg Holiday Inn Garden Court from August 24.

Negota says they will identify the causes of violence in the taxi industry and possible [illegible]

many budding township entrepreneurs saw the industry as the blue train to instant riches and poured a lot of vehicles in. Eventually, many of them started running empty because of tough competition.

Tension that boiled over into running battles followed and on each occasion, townships caught fire.

Intensifying the dilemma of those who want to bring peace and discipline to the industry, is the fact that there are hardly any regulations in place to enforce decisions taken at conferences similar to the forthcoming one.

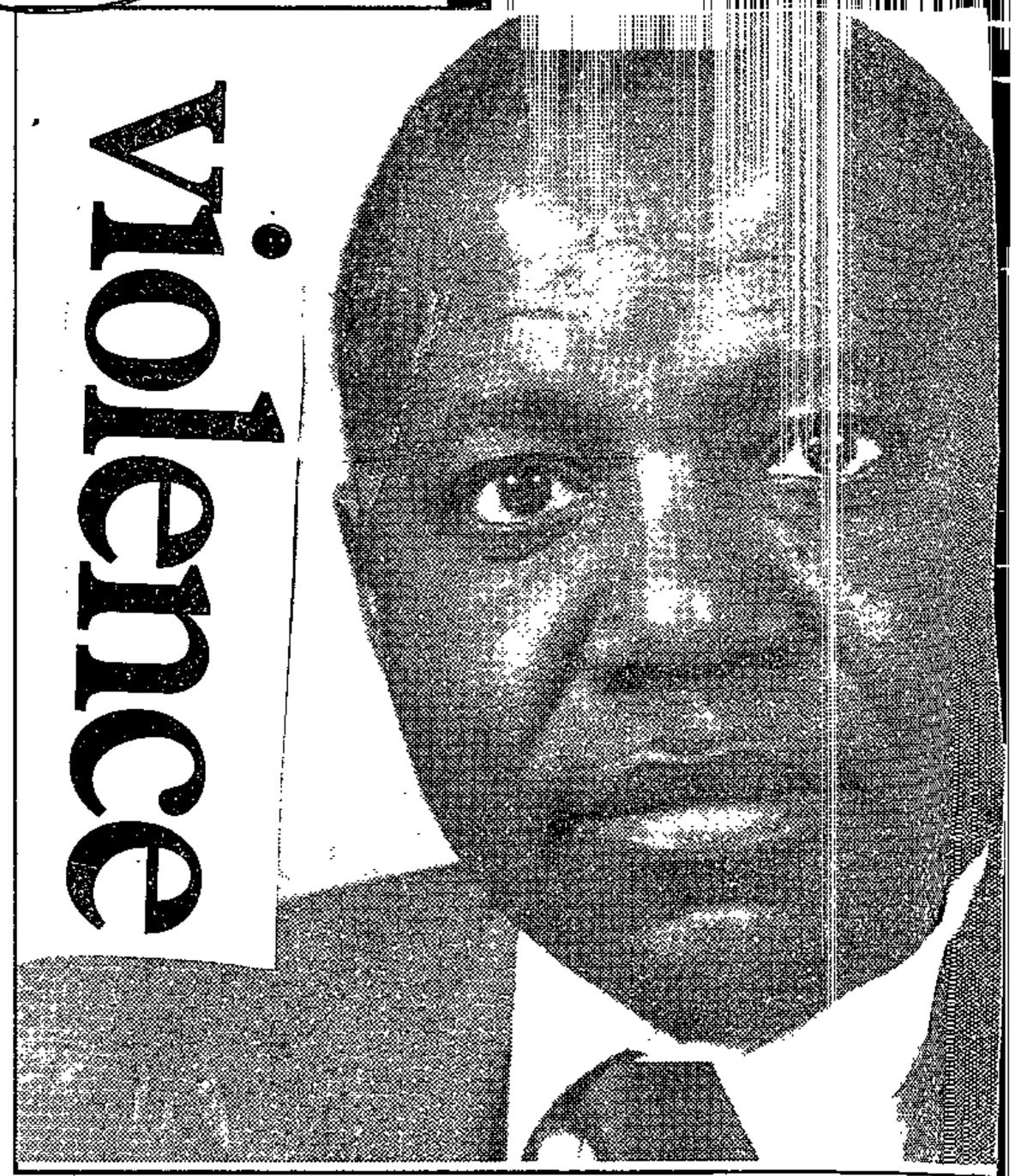
The two main taxi organisations, the Southern Africa Black Taxi Association and the National African Federated Transport Organisation, have in the past made numerous calls for an end to carnage — but to no avail.

Officials of these organisations point to the non-existence of statutory powers to regulate the taxi industry.

Taxi associations are voluntary organisations which makes it difficult for them to institute disciplinary measures against members.

Disciplinary action

A member who is faced with a disciplinary action from an association can simply join a rival grouping.



George Negota ... high hopes for the taxi industry.

will also attempt to formulate a transport policy aimed at restoring viability to the industry.

"Let us make this business meaningful to everyone participating in it," Negota says.

Coupled with a call for a code of conduct for taxi operators, the NTPF is lobbying for an overhaul of the system through which permits are issued.

Like previous attempts to bring peace to this battered industry, the conference is already clouded by controversy, with a splinter group within Sabta — Save Our Sabta — saying it was not consulted.

SOS claims to represent over 400 taxi associations nationally and therefore questions the legitimacy of the Taxi Indaba. However, organisers of the conference are adamant it will go ahead as scheduled.

After a colourful run in the 1980s during which taxis rose to fame as the "success story of black business", the 1990s saw the much talked about prosperity generate into chaos.

At one stage the taxi industry looked set to push the bus and train services out of business.

Status symbol

Then it used to be a status symbol to jump into a "Zola Budd" and forget about the "push-push" associated with trains.

The Sabtas of this world started talking about "smart cards" to counter the coupon system on buses and trains.

But as the cost of living shot up taxis became unaffordable to many people, hence the exodus back to trains and buses.

Another factor which paralysed the industry is that during the success period

"Let us make this business meaningful to everyone participating in it"

Following representations from stakeholders in the taxi business, the Department of Transport is beginning to show signs of flexibility on the issue of statutory powers.

The Minister of Transport has promised to give a sympathetic hearing to the recommendations of a management council which comprises representatives of all major players in the taxi industry.

The council will meet later this month to thrash out a number of issues to be raised with the minister in due course.

Break down

"It is the responsibility of all of us to sit down and talk about how to break down the barriers of division and create an atmosphere where all operators can work effectively and efficiently," says Negota.

Taking decisions on fare increases is another nightmare for taxi associations. Even though it becomes necessary to do so to offset rising costs, the consequences of increasing fares are heavy. Commuters either use other modes of transport or counter with boycotts.

Sometimes decisions to increase fares do not go down well with the drivers who are often subjected to verbal abuse by passengers each time there is a hike.

Perceived ideological disputes at official level also contribute to the tension on the ground.

Some associations are affiliated to Nafto and others to Sabta, while the rest are independent.

And there are not that many taxi rank facilities around.

The three interest groups have to share the facilities, with each having its own demarcated route.

But it does not often work like that because during quieter periods, some operators "pirate" on routes outside defined boundaries of the taxi associations they belong to.

Complicating issues, some associations have various interest groups within themselves and when disagreement arises the violence becomes even more furious.

The blood spilled during infighting among members of the Soweto Taxi Services last month bears testimony to this fact. Many lives were lost in the process.

Meter still ticks over for taxi apartheid

332

ARG 19/8/93

SHARKEY ISAACS
Transport Reporter

TAXI apartheid has reared its head in Cape Town briefly, years after it was supposed to have been buried.

An "over-zealous" traffic officer stopped a minibus taxi in Loop Street recently and ordered white passengers out after reading the driver's papers which said he was licensed to carry only non-whites.

The incident infuriated Christine Provoyer of Gardens whose teenage son was one of the passengers told to get out.

"I was outraged and couldn't believe this had happened in a modern South Africa," she said.

"How is a taxi driver supposed to earn a living ... passengers have the right to buy a fare on an any taxi plying any route."

Deputy director of the Road Transportation Board Piet Gerringe said the incident should never have happened.

"The driver should have had his transport permit amended when restrictions were lifted," he said.

City traffic chief Wouter Smit said the officer who stopped the minibus was a fairly new recruit who had been "over zealous" by applying what he read in a permit which had become obsolete with changes in South Africa.

Mr Smit said he was sorry about the incident and was satisfied there was no racism or maliciousness intended.

C 19/8/93

City taxis may strike today

332

THOUSANDS of commuters could be left stranded this morning as the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) has called on drivers to cease all trade until the executives of Codeta and taxi owners resolve their differences, Codeta vice-president, Mr James Mafuya said last night.

A meeting is to be held this morning.

news in brief

Sowetan 19/8/93

Sabta 'no' to indaba

(332)

THE Southern Africa Black Taxi Association steering committee has decided to distance itself from the "taxi indaba" starting next Monday in Johannesburg.

Sabta said that although it endorsed the idea of a meeting of all taxi associations to take stock of taxi feuds, the final agenda by the National Transport Policy Forum was a far cry from the original concept.

Azapo seeks funds

PRESIDENT of the Azanian People's Organisation Professor Itumeleng Mosala and his personal secretary, Mr Strini Moodley, are to embark on a fundraising tour of Europe and North America in October. Sowetan 19/8/93

Moodley said yesterday Azapo would use the opportunity to explain its position on violence, negotiations and elections to solidarity organisations and other groups.

Cops seize weapons

FIVE men were arrested and an assortment of weapons confiscated after a shootout with police at Nongoma in Zululand on Monday.

KwaZulu police spokesman Sergeant Malusi Mnguni said yesterday police came under fire from gunmen during a joint South African-KwaZulu police crime prevention operation in the area. Police confiscated a .303 rifle with 13 live rounds, a .38 Special revolver, an AK-47 rifle with 30 live rounds, 15 spears, three bush knives and an axe. They also seized five SA Defence Force jackets.

Municipal strike ends

Sowetan 19/8/93

A TWO-WEEK strike by municipal workers in Pietersburg ended yesterday when agreement was reached on the reinstatement of about 700 workers dismissed after their participation in a strike on August 4. — *Sowetan Reporters and Sapa*

● 'Promoting local business will bring growth'

Loner on the move

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY He took the gap and never looked back:

Sowetan 19/8/93

By Mzimkulu Malunga

SIX YEARS AGO ELDRIDGE Mathebula turned his back on the black corporate world and mobilised his meagre resources to start a distribution and warehouse company.

Though aware of the potential the company had, he was surprised by the growth of Vuku'zenzele distributions.

"With the violence in many townships, white distribution companies were scared to distribute there and I saw the opportunity," says Mathebula.

This beefy young man, now runs a fleet of 10 trucks and operates an 800sq m warehouse in the East Rand town of Alberton.

The company's clients include major food companies like Premier Milling, Kellogs and Lever Brothers. He employs 40 people.

Mathebula is now looking at joint ventures with established companies on a number of projects.

"My desire is to see black people acquiring a major stake in the transport industry in sectors like shipping, air transport as well train goods services," he said.

Vuku'zenzele was one of the first black distributors to respond to National Sorghum Breweries' call on black companies to sub-contract their distribution services to it.

The company now transports millions of litres of sorghum beer from the Pelindaba Brewery in Pretoria and Mathebula wants to increase the fleet of trucks within the next two months.

The business has reached the stage where Mathebula thinks he cannot afford to be a loner any more.

(332)

"I am now looking at servicing Africa and I cannot do that as a loner, you need people with additional finance and technology by your side to be able to do that," says Mathebula.

However, Vuku'zenzele is not alone in the township distribution industry. Competition is stiff with the likes of Black Moses around.

"But competition keeps me on my toes which is healthy," he says.

Though he stopped being an official of the various black business organisations over half a decade ago, he still actively takes part in organisations like the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services and the National African Federated Transport Organisation.

Aldridge Mathebula qualifies for the Sanlam-*Sowetan* Entrepreneur of the Month competition. He will compete with other weekly nominees at the end of the month.

Eldridge Mathebula ... moving into Africa.

Sabta pulls out of taxi conference

Star 19/8/93

■ BY MOKONE MOLETE
SOWETO BUREAU

The Southern African Black Taxi Association has pulled out of a major taxi conference planned for next week. (332)

The conference, convened by the National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF), will address violence in the taxi industry.

Sabta spokesman Paradise Mahlangu said Sabta had withdrawn because "although it endorsed the idea of a meeting of all taxi associations in the country to take stock of the continuing taxi feuds, the final agenda by the NTPF was distant from the original concept".

Mahlangu also said Sabta had never been invited to take part in the conference, even with observer status.

Madam & Eve

Madam & Eve, our popular cartoon, usually on the Briefing page, is on Page 9 today.

Hospital 'scabs' challenge TPA

Star 19/8/93

■ BY PAUL BELL

More than 2 200 Transvaal Provincial Administration hospital workers, hired to replace those fired during last year's hospital strike, will challenge in court the TPA's decision to retrench them at the end of this month.

The TPA hired the workers, brought in and organised by the Hospital Personnel Association of South Africa (Hospersa), to replace members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu).

But the TPA was recently forced by the Industrial Court to rehire the Nehawu workers, and now finds its monthly wage bill has been inflated by some R4 million. As a result, it has decided the new workers must go.

Hospersa spokesman Luke Rautenbach said the TPA had agreed to extend the retrenchment deadline by two months to August 31, and had made an improved retrenchment offer. But Hospersa was determined that the workers should remain on the payroll.

Nehawu assistant general-secretary Neal Thobejane was unsympathetic yesterday. His union regarded the workers as "scabs". Rautenbach countered that they had originally worked for nothing and that the accusations had offended many.

He said Hospersa had advised the TPA yesterday that it would go to court.

"If they don't agree to keep these people in employment, we intend taking them to court. We will apply for an interdict immediately.

"They started as voluntary workers, working for nothing. They were hired off the street without experience, and we had to give them on-the-job training. But they were very, very keen.

"Then the TPA agreed to pay them a nominal daily payment, about R5 a day. They looked very well after their jobs. Hospitals had never been so clean or so quiet," Rautenbach said.

"From June 1992 they were appointed to the payroll without conditions. They were under the impression that these would be permanent jobs."

elezi said. 20/8/93
ile, ANC president Nelson Man-
day told the Transport and Gen-
rs' Union's national congress in
irg SA faced the very real dan-
ight wing opposing a democrat-
ent.
was going to speak to the right
t it to join negotiations.
take countries such as Angola
ibique had made after indepen-
fighting instead of negotiating
pposition, Mandela said.
, liberation would happen with
the right wing.
said the ANC had to find ways
sing whites' concerns. They
fear a "tit-for-tat" policy when
ame to power, he said.
issed calls for the dismantling of
SACP/Cosatu alliance, saying
made the calls had not been part
ggle.
l fight the election together and
ether." — Sapa-Reuter.

Women calm angry squatters

WOMEN for Peace defused a potentially explosive situation in Phola Park on the East Rand yesterday, moving through the tense squatter camp to calm residents.

The women arrived in five busloads as policemen, an ANC delegation, peace observers and a large media contingent arrived to visit the area. Angry residents gathered outside their shacks as police Nyalas followed by a convoy of about 15 cars arrived. B/Day 20/8/93

The policemen formed a cordon around the contingent as it moved towards a house where alleged police informer Bongani Mbatha claimed he was tortured by ANC members. Police have said the house still contains bloodstains.

Women for Peace forced the contingent back towards the entrance of the squatter camp, singing and shouting for peace. ANC Youth League members tried to quell growing anger as residents hurled abuse.

Police tried to assure Phola Park residents they were there to protect the Press, but the contingent was forced to withdraw.

The ANC earlier yesterday accused police of damaging property and assaulting residents during house searches.

Police spokesman Capt Wikus Weber said police would react formally to the allegations.

Statistics indicated there was "some kind of orchestrated force" in the area.

☐ Police said yesterday the bodies of two men with gunshot wounds were found in Thokoza. One had been shot 18 times. Four men were arrested after police found a 12-bore shotgun at a Tembisa house.

In other incidents, a security guard was stabbed to death at a railway station in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, and a train commuter was found dead on the tracks at Longdale station. — Sapa.

Goldstone says greed central to taxi violence

B/Day 20/8/93

A COMMITTEE of the Goldstone commission has listed intolerance, selfishness, provocation and greed by taxi operators as the immediate cause of taxi violence.

Among other causes were the effect of apartheid laws on urbanisation, commercial factors, the Transport Department's role, a lack of law enforcement and the absence of facilities.

Political rivalry and affiliation were not causes of taxi violence, the report said.

The committee's fifth interim report was released yesterday, more than a year after it began hearings into taxi violence.

The authorities' failure, because of apartheid laws, to provide even rudimentary transportation facilities to masses of people on a daily basis, was an important factor in the violence buildup.

Among the commercial factors in the violence were the inability of the free market to operate because of the cost and delays of the permit system; the absence of business skills in operators; the effects of unfair competition by the state-subsidised bus and train services; the deterioration of the economy; and the inflationary effects on running expenses leading to overloading; and the necessity for high speed to increase passenger turnover.

On the role of the Transport Department, the report was scathing, noting an absence of anticipation and lack of communication with taxi operators.

It said secrecy in the issuing of permits by local road transporation boards and, more particularly, the absence of reasons for refusals of permits and high fees for appeals, had led to a perception by taxi operators of corruption among officials.

The committee's report noted that where sufficient manpower and facilities existed, effective policing reduced violence and intimidation.

"(But) the absence of proper law enforcement in most areas has brought the legal system and the efficiency of the whole system of control into disrepute."

It also said the taxi industry should not be deregulated in the foreseeable future, and not before informal townships and settlements had become established and peaceful communities.

The report, which is not final as the committee still has to investigate the SAP's role in the Cape Town taxi violence, is now in the hands of President F W de Klerk. — Sapa.

SAP counsel accuses ANC

THE ANC was bent on discrediting police to hasten joint control, SAP senior counsel Flip Hattingh told the Goldstone commission's inquiry in Johannesburg yesterday. B/Day

He referred to a commitment made in Sebokeng last year that the police, the ANC and the civics would patrol "to identify the enemy", but nobody had come forward from those organisations. 20/8/93

Cross-examining ANC Vaal subregion chairman Kaizer Klaas, Hattingh said: "I'm putting it to you that you are not the least bit interested in co-operating with the police ... so you can discredit the police and get joint control."

Klaas said it was the police who were trying to discredit the ANC by releasing thugs turned over to them by the organisation.

Hattingh said: "Often you bring the person but not the evidence. The police need evidence." — Sapa.

Township taxi protest

CT 20/8/93

By IVOR CREWS

THOUSANDS of Peninsula township commuters were stranded yesterday after taxi-drivers ceased operating because of the taxi violence there.

Drivers said the violence stemmed from the unification of the Lagunya and Webta taxi associations to form the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta). They said their lives were on the line while the owners were unaffected.

Codeta vice-president Mr James Mafuya said minibus-drivers met taxi-owners yesterday to protest against them being shot at. Drivers were not on strike but were pressurising Codeta and taxi owners to assure them that shootings and attacks would not happen again, he said. (332) (295)

Five drivers had been killed in the past two months, he said.

Mr Mafuya said about 2 000 taxis were not running yesterday in Guguletu, Nyanga and Khayelitsha.

Taxis: 'Don't deregulate yet'

CT 20/8/93 (332)

JOHANNESBURG. — A Goldstone Commission committee says the taxi industry should not be deregulated before informal townships and settlements have become established, peaceful communities.

This is one of the recommendations in the committee's fifth interim report on taxi violence after it heard evidence for more than a year.

The report, which is now in the hands of President F W de Klerk, is not final, as the committee still has to investigate the role of the police in taxi violence in Cape Town.

The report notes that political rivalry and affiliation are not causes of taxi violence.

Rivalry not the cause of violence

It says the existing regulation should be replaced by a system that acknowledges the place of the minibus and seeks to protect the interests of passengers, taxi operators and the public.

"The Local Road Transportation Boards are discredited bodies and their replacement with other statutory bodies will not be likely to provide greater success," it says.

The committee presented the following guidelines for future regulation of the industry:

- A genuine partnership should be formed between taxi associations and the controlling authority.
- The controlling body should be statutory, with powers to set the necessary criteria for admission to the minibus taxi industry.
- Permits should be issued at local level with due regard for prevailing conditions.
- Criteria should be introduced for the granting of permits.
- Every decision of the issuing body should be subject to a simple, inexpensive form of appeal.
- An independent, accessible means of handling complaints at the local level.

The committee is chaired by Mr D J Rossouw, SC. — Sapa

'Gloom for taxi industry'

Star 20/8/93

■ BY BRENDAN TEMPLETON

Future conflict in the violence-racked minibus taxi industry was inevitable, an interim Goldstone Commission report stated yesterday.

It blamed greedy taxi operators, inept and archaic officialdom, and the lack of facilities and mediation procedures for the ongoing violence. (332)

The report, the commission's fifth, said this heady mixture had become explosive because of rapid urbanisation and the declining economy.

The commission slammed taxi operators as being one of the biggest causes of violence, describing many of them as showing intolerance, selfishness, provocation and greed.

"In the final analysis, use of violence by taxi operators is the most immediate cause of the violence," the commission said.

Respect

Tensions had arisen between established and pirate taxi operators in the '80s when influx control was removed and informal settlements mushroomed during large-scale urbanisation.

Relations with police, traffic officers and Transport Department inspectors "left a lot to be desired", and it was hoped a new dispensation would usher in law enforcement agencies which commanded respect.

No justification could be found for charges that police were involved in the violence. Many prosecutions of people accused of committing taxi-related violence had failed because witnesses were intimidated or simply disappeared, the report stated.

Violence would not be solved through deregulation. Rather, a faster, transparent system of permit allocation should be started with an independent ombudsman and a cheap, efficient appeal procedure.

A controlling body with statutory powers to set criteria needed for entry to the industry needed to be established.

Taxi rank facilities were a pressing problem and should be established by local authorities as soon as possible.

TRU
FOR A
At Panaso
about the supe
advanced busir
That's why
our Copiers or
servicing and n

New talks aim to end taxi turmoil

(332)

Municipal Reporter

ARGUS 20/8/93

NEW talks to end the minibus taxi strife are to be held on Tuesday.

Mayor Frank van der Velde said there was cause for hope because representation at recent talks had been good and the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association management seemed to be working well.

It was hoped that grievances of a dissident group, linked to recent violence, would be investigated.

Minibus taxi services have been disrupted for two days.

Local airlines fly into trouble

WM 20-26/8/93 (332)

When the skies were opened last year many operators rushed to take on new air routes. But they've had a bumpy ride and even giant SAA has had its problems, reports **Mondli Makhanya**

SOUTH AFRICA'S airline industry may be in for a shake up in the next few weeks. While competition heats up, there are signs that all is not well in some sectors of the industry. One major airline is in the red and a few smaller ones are in danger of closure.

The government is expected to step in to help the private airlines compete with state-owned South African Airways.

One of the country's two biggest private airlines, Flitestar is in serious trouble. Negotiations between it and aviation authorities are at an advanced stage and Flitestar has been publicly calling for the playing fields between SAA and private airlines to be levelled. A major announcement in this regard is expected within the next two weeks.

"We are going through a learning curve in a deregulated environment," says Bert van der Linde, commercial director of Comair Citijet, one of the few successful private airlines.

While Flitestar's woes continue, Comair has been involved in a robust expansion programme. The "few-frills" flyer is to begin flying to Durban at the beginning of next month, at fares 30 percent lower than both Flitestar and SAA.

This can only mean more trouble for Flitestar, which is sandwiched between the two and has to compete on price with both and on service with giant SAA.

Clearly, deregulating the skies has not been as rosy as was anticipated. Flitestar, on its part, relished the prospect of competing with SAA. Converting from being small niche flyers on protected routes to robust competitors was never going to be easy for the smaller fry, but deregulation 1st year coincided with the South African Transport Services' commercialisation process. This process spawned SAA's mother, Transnet, and involved a revolution within SAA which now had to actually deal with the unfamiliar concept of making money.

The worst recession in decades has taken its toll on growth in passenger levels, essential to the private airlines as they could not simply rely on luring away SAA's existing customers. Then there is the issue of the weak rand which has been detrimental to all the players because spare parts have to be paid for in US dollars.

The only airline that seems to be weathering the storm reasonably is Comair. Comair seems to have identified its niche well and worked hard to hold on to it. Because the airline lacks many conventional airline frills like hot meals and has only economy class, it has been able to keep fares 30 percent below its competition. Initially the favourite for tour group and small businessmen, tough economic times have now also attracted more affluent executives.

"Rationalisation in companies has included cuts in travel expenses and a lot of employers are telling their executives that frequent flyer benefits should go to the companies rather than to individuals," says Van der Linde. A new travel package to circumvent this was introduced by Comair and has been popular with businessmen.

After starting off with a Boeing 737 leased from SAA, Comair now owns one jet and leases another. SAA still does maintenance and SAA pilots fly its aircraft. Van der Linde wants to sell Comair's comparatively low fares to the middle class black market.

Even SAA itself has had its fair share of problems. The airline is having to cut back its international routes due to the recession and political violence, which have both hurt tourism and travel. SAA has just completed a rationalisation programme involving the voluntary retrenchment of over 2 000 ground staff, which cut the wage bill by 20 percent. Spokesman Leon Els says there have been a number of profitable months this year, indicating the company may be emerging from the red.

The one area of consensus among the major players is that a fare war is not yet a possibility, mainly because of the small size of the market. Of the three big players, only Flitestar is a direct threat to SAA's market. SAA is prepared to tolerate competition from Comair.

"They are in a different market level from ourselves and Flitestar and we are actually pleased that they are stimulating the market by bringing in people who would otherwise not fly," says Els.

Van Der Linde is equally positive that a price war is not yet in sight, since South African operators have watched closely the bitter experiences of America's domestic airline industry which nearly committed suicide in the 1980s through price competition.

Goldstone slams council

Poor reply to taxi chaos condemned

CT 21/8/93

By BARRY STREEK and GUY OLIVER

THE Cape Town City Council has been slammed by a Goldstone Commission committee for its tardy response to "the utter chaos" of taxis in Strand Street and the absence of ranks in the city.

In its fifth interim report on taxi violence, the committee said it was "astounded that after the lapse of more than a year, a debate continues in the council about where CBD ranks should be established.

"The situation is too serious to be bogged down by bureaucratic delay or local politics."

Nor are the Traffic Police spared by the commission.

It found that traffic officers were being intimidated into not enforcing regulations against taxi-drivers and were too scared to enter black townships.

Witnesses were too afraid to give evidence, so even if taxi-drivers who broke the law appeared in court they were not convicted.

The committee found politics had not played a role in the taxi conflict, which it discovered to be a struggle for power that included the assassination of leading figures in opposing groups.

It concluded that the violence was rooted in apartheid and historical divisions.

Commenting on the report, which he said he had not yet seen, deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby agreed the Strand Street taxi rank was "a mess", but said the era of consultative politics had brought delays.

"Gone are the days of dictatorial rule," he said. The council shared Mr Justice Goldstone's frustrations, "but things don't happen overnight".

"Realistically, the rank (to be built on the railway station roof) won't be operational before the beginning of next year," Mr Dolby said.

Traffic manager Mr Wouter Smit, who also had not read the report, said: "It is well known that law enforcement is not as effective as it should be."

He promised no short-term solution.

Mr Smit said the solution lay in a sound system of permits, action against violations and a "change of attitude" among the operators.

In the past 12 months the traffic authorities have increased "substantially" the policing of taxis and have assigned 20 full-time officers to this task.

The Goldstone committee, chaired by Mr D J Rossouw, former attorney-general of the Cape, strongly criticised the Local Road Transportation Board and the Department of Transport. It said they had not played a role in trying to resolve conflict in the taxi industry.

The evidence of board chairman Mr B I Miskey "spoke of an appalling lack of concern and appreciation for the needs of the community".

The committee also contradicted police claims made on television and elsewhere, that the ANC had tried to take over during the Western Cape taxi war and had favoured one side. It praised the ANC for launching the commuter boycott that led to the formation of the Committee of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta).

It said it had been estimated that in Cape Town last year, violence cost more than 70 lives, more than R4 million in damage to vehicles and more than R25 million in damage to other property.

"This in turn resulted in arrears in payments in the Western Cape of R10 million. At the height of the boycott 90 to 100 vehicles a month were repossessed."

The committee said the Golden Arrow bus service had had to move from the Nyanga bus terminus.

Bus drivers had been attacked many times and buses stoned and burnt.

"If intimidation and violence are to be avoided in this extremely volatile industry, self-examination by everyone involved will be essential in finding a solution to the many problems," the committee said.

Taxi leaders 'in hiding'

332

Staff Reporter

THE leadership of Codeta was alleged to be hiding out in a Sea Point flat for fear of reprisals from taxi-drivers who ceased operating earlier this week, according to unconfirmed reports last night.

A source close to the leadership, who did not want to be identified, said that Codeta leaders had fled the townships.

The taxi-drivers ceased operating earlier this week in protest against escalating township taxi violence. They claim that the unification of the Lagunya and Webta taxi associations into Codeta, the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association, has failed to stop the violence. CT 21/8/93

Thokoza taximen are forced to take sides

By MOSES MAMAILA

AS the undeclared war between Inkatha and ANC followers in Thokoza rages on, taximen in the area have been forced to take sides – there are taxis which transport pro-Inkatha commuters and others for the sole use of pro-ANC commuters. C/Press

According to Phola Park ANC official Themba Dludlu, ANC-supporting residents decided to separate the taxis following complaints that township residents were being abducted to the hostel where they were left at the mercy of pro-Inkatha hostel dwellers. 22/8/93

Dludlu said taxis which transport pro-ANC residents operate along the end of Khumalo street and join the tarred road which passes next to Phola Park. (332)

He said taxis that catered for the "people" were known to the township's residents and those of Phola Park.

Phola Park residents told City Press that they had no difficulty in identifying the "correct and safe" taxis because those that co-operated with the attackers based at Thokoza hostel never ventured into Phola Park.

"Taxis which transport hostel dwellers and Inkatha members use the other route," said a resident, adding that they operated just before the hostel, up Khumalo road and towards Thokoza police station.

While residents maintained that they were being attacked by hostel dwellers, the pro-Inkatha hostel dwellers also accused gunmen based at Phola Park of killing Inkatha supporters.

Inkatha spokesman in the area Thabang Dlamini confirmed that there had been attacks on taxi commuters from both sides.

He said Inkatha members had been ambushed and killed next to Phola Park.

Although Dlamini admitted that taxis in the area had been divided, he emphasised that this would not resolve the problem.

"The only way we can resolve the crisis in the area is for the ANC and our organisation to sit down and sort out our differences in a peaceful manner.

"It is not only the taximen and commuters who have been caught in the crossfire but pupils too. Pupils from Phenduka section cannot go to schools in other parts of the township because they are said to be from an Inkatha area," explained Dlamini.

Speaking on behalf of the hostel dwellers, "Chief" Mpisendlini Mthethwa said he was able to control his followers but was sometimes powerless when his poeple were provoked and attacked.

Approached for comment, Thokoza Amalgamated Taxi Association deputy chairman Elliot Zondo said taximen were caught in the crossfire.

"Taximen are not political. We appeal to the warring factions to leave commuters alone.

"We must emphasise that we do not transport people to their deaths," he said.

BIRDS OF PEACE ... Sabta Women's League PRO Lizzy Ndaba, left, and assistant chairwoman Augusta Mthombeni. ■ Pic: TLADI KHUELE

Ms is as good as a male in taxi world

C/Press 22/8/93

By NOMVULA KHALO

WOMEN in the taxi industry are now in the driver's seat in more ways than one, with this month's launch of the South African Black Taxi Association Women's League.

The women claim they formed their own organisation in order to get to know one other and to help combat violence.

(332)

Initially there was resistance from most of the male members of SABTA to the idea of a women's taxi organisation but last year James Ngcoya, Sabta president, gave them the go-ahead.

At the launch of the organisation in Alexandra, Sabta Women's League president Thelma Msimango said: "We have been trying since 1990 to start our own organisation, and now that it is a reality we hope to go from strength to strength."

Msimango, a taxi-owner from Vosloorus, said the main reason for forming a women's league was that women were tired of being robbed by male drivers, and were hampered by not knowing what to do with their businesses when their husbands died.

"We want to be involved, and we want to know what to do when a car has problems; what to do with the taxi certificates that have been kept in cupboards for years."

"The image of the taxi industry must be improved, and if we can do this maybe the killing of owners and drivers will come to an end," she said.

Former taxi driver Norah Ndaba of Alexandra said: "I joined the industry in 1972 when times were really bad. The men were jealous and told us that instead of invading their territory we should be in the kitchen looking after the children."

The authorities too were apprehensive when she applied for a licence, but she perservered.

"It pays to be patient," she said, "because I now own eight taxis."

Maria Huma, in the taxi industry since 1978, said the business had its ups and downs, but her job had taught her how to deal with people.

Three Codeta men in court

THREE executive members of the taxi association Codeta appeared briefly in the Mitchells Plain Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with murder and attempted murder.

The accused are Mr Eric Xeketwane, Mr Themba Konjwa and Mr James Mafuya. The case was remanded to 23 September and bail of R1 500 each was extended. (332) CT 24/8/93

Sabta boycotts taxi indaba

B/Day

THEO RAWANA

THE indaba on taxi violence begins today without Sabta, the country's largest taxi organisation. 24/8/93

Sabta and related body Save our Sabta refused to attend because they said the convener, the national transport policy forum, did not represent the industry and Sabta had been excluded from organising the conference. (332)

They also said single taxi representatives were not among the speakers.

ANC president Nelson Mandela will open the conference. Speakers will include Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed, SA Council of Churches general secretary Frank Chikane, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Inkatha Freedom Party president Mangosuthu Buthelezi, national peace secretariat chairman Antonie Gildenhuys, PAC president Clarence Makwethu and Judge Richard Goldstone.

The three-day conference ran into snags when the taxi organisations said delegates would not solve the taxi violence because they were not representative.

Save our Sabta wrote to the proposed participants questioning the legitimacy of the forum and asking them to withdraw.

It said a solution to the crisis in the taxi industry lay in determining, through a commission, who represented the industry.

The commission should have representatives from the Transport Department, the provincial administrations, the National Road Safety Council, the trade unions, the consumer unions, taxi consultants and the legal profession.

Leadership identified by the commission would then be able to convene a conference on the problems of the taxi industry.

Forum chairman George Negota said the indaba would go ahead as planned "with the support of all taxi associations and community-based organisations".

Negota said the Sabta, the National African Federated Transport Organisation and the SA Long Distance Association had been party to organising the conference. The forum, as neutral convener, had been charged with invitations.

Sapa reports ANC PWV chief Tokyo Sexwale welcomed the indaba, saying: "People must not be driven to war, they must be taxied to peace."

Taxi peace drive 'welcome'

JOHANNESBURG. — People must not be driven to war, they must be taxied to peace, Mr Tokyo Sexwale, the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal chief of the ANC, said yesterday.

He was welcoming this week's "taxi indaba", organised to discuss taxi violence.

ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela will open the meeting today, according to the organisers, the National Transport Policy Forum.

IFP president Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Judge Richard Goldstone and PAC leader Mr Clarence Makwetu among others are expected speak at the meeting. CT 24/8/93

Mr Sexwale said the taxi industry was struggling to overcome problems brought about by the legacy of apartheid which forced the majority of workers to live far from the cities.

"It is critical for the future of South Africa that the problems within the taxi industry be resolved," he said. — Sapa (332)

Flitestar passenger loads 'highest ever'

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

FLITESTAR'S domestic passenger loads in July were the highest ever — averaging 66% — and so far those in August have been even better, MD Jan Blake said yesterday.

"Our passenger loads in August have been 68% cumulative. Our occupancy rate and market support have been excellent."

Flitestar's service between SA and Europe will be increased from Friday, September 3. The number of flights to Luxembourg will rise from two to three a week, on Fridays, Sundays and Wednesdays.

And the airline will introduce a new service to Munich. The Friday and Sunday flights to Luxembourg from Jan Smuts airport will stop there en route.

Blake said the load factor to Luxembourg at present was 75%. The introduction of the service to Munich should improve this.

"The market reaction to our new destination has been very positive, and we have established a permanent office in Munich."

Commenting on recent reports that Flitestar's existence might be in danger as a result of price-cutting on domestic routes by SA Airways, Blake said: "These rumours started three weeks after we came into existence.

(332) CT 24/8/93

"We don't know how to counter these allegations which seem to come from no visible source. There seems to be a concentrated effort to discredit us. No decision has been taken to stop operating.

"But I have been saying for the past two and a half years that the playing field between us and SAA should be levelled. The Competitions Board said in their report that it could not be established beyond all doubt that SAA's domestic services were not being subsidised by its international services.

"SAA says this is not happening. But we need to see audited accounts of SAA's domestic services."

● Meanwhile Comair, which undercuts both Flitestar and SAA on its service between Cape Town and Johannesburg, will introduce a new one between Johannesburg and Durban on Wednesday, September 1.

Comair commercial director Bert van der Linde said his airline, which has economy class only, relies on a high volume of passengers — and on keeping costs down while maintaining a high standard of safety — to make profits.

"We need load factors of between 65% and 70%, and business has been good even in what is normally a slack period.

"We have been in business a long time, since 1946, and we have always run it on profitable lines. We are very conservative in the way we run things and think twice before we spend money.

Comair has applied for licences to fly to Windhoek and Harare.

Its normal return fare to Johannesburg from Cape Town is R791. But if the seat is booked seven days ahead this comes down to R661 and if it is booked two months ahead it comes down to R511.

Caltex says it can't be sued by widow

CALTEX OIL South Africa brought an urgent interlocutory application in the Supreme Court yesterday alleging claims of R7,5m against it are invalid because it cannot be directly sued.

The case follows an explosion on a French barge in Cape Town harbour in December last year which resulted in the death of a shipyard worker, Mr Lionel Jones.

Caltex said that under French law any claims should be brought by the insurers of the barge, not the owners of the Barracuda, and Mr Jones' widow. — Sapa

Shill: 1,4m homes needed

Own Correspondent CT 24/8/93

DURBAN. — About 1,4 million housing units are needed for the lower income groups and more than 330 000 houses will have to be provided every year if the backlog is to be eradicated over the next 10 years.

This was announced by National Housing Minister Mr Louis Shill, who visited KwaZulu yesterday for talks with KwaZulu Chief Minister Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi on housing issues and to acquaint himself with local conditions.

The chief minister was accompanied by other senior KwaZulu officials.

Mr Shill, recently appointed to ministerial rank, is visiting housing areas throughout the country. He will also inspect overall housing needs the better to assess the different requirements of the various regions and population groups.

He said housing was one of the government's top priorities.

No frills domestic airline hopes to be roaring soon

Own Correspondent CT 24/8/93 (232)

DURBAN. — A new "no frills" domestic airline, Lionair, hopes to introduce half-price daily flights between Durban and Johannesburg before the end of the year — with tickets available at local supermarkets and airports.

At R150 one-way to Johannesburg, the proposed fare is exactly half the price of a normal economy-class ticket on SAA or Flitestar, and also cheaper than Comair's R211 single fare introduced recently.

On the Durban-Cape Town route, single fares will be set at R299 (economy), R200 (standby) or R100 (Z-class).

The Cape Town-based airline group applied for an operating licence yesterday.

The group says landing slots at Jan Smuts have already been approved.

Negotiations are under way with a large supermarket chain to enable passengers to book tickets and alter reservations using a self-service automatic teller machine.

Airline president Mr Neil Robertson said yesterday Lionair hoped to get off the ground in early November, although this could be delayed if Flitestar and SAA lodged objections with the department of transport.

"Both airlines have already stated they welcome the competition from us — and it will be interesting to see whether that welcome extends to not opposing our application."

Camanongue taken from Unita rebels

SAO TOME. — Angolan government forces have retaken Camanongue in eastern Angola from Unita rebels, according to Angolan state radio.

The radio, monitored on Sao Tome and Principe, said government troops inflicted dozens of casualties on Unita fighters in the weekend battle for Camanongue, 52km from the previously besieged city of Luena.

Camanongue is on the road north from Luena, capital of Moxico province, to Saurimo, capital of Lunda South province, which has also been under rebel siege for several months.

Unita occupied Camanongue last October.

State radio and Unita radio both reported that government and rebel representatives were due to take part in a series of meetings in Harare today to resurrect the peace process. — Sapa-Reuter CT 24/8/93

Star 25/8/93

Govt approves taxi plan

■ BY KAIZER NYATSUMBA
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

The Government has accepted the Goldstone Commission's recommendations to curb violence in the taxi industry, Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed announced yesterday.

Addressing the controversy-plagued three-day National Transport Policy Forum "taxi indaba" in Johannesburg, Welgemoed said the Government accepted all the recommendations of the commission's interim report on taxi violence, on condition that adequate funds were made available to finance the recommended improvements to facilities and law enforcement measures.

However, he also called on local authorities to devote urgent attention to the provision of badly needed facilities for taxis and their passengers.

(332)

Causes

The conference has been dogged by controversy, with at least one of the key players in the industry, the Southern African Black Taxis Association, refusing to attend.

Given this dispute, the PAC's Clarence Makwetu did not arrive to address the conference. IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who was also scheduled to address the forum, was not there.

In its report, the commission said the causes of violence in the taxi industry included the effect of apartheid laws on urbanisation, commercial factors, the role of the Department of Transport, the lack of law enforcement, absence of facilities, and intolerance and power struggles on the part of taxi operators.

The conference was also addressed by political leaders such as ANC president Nelson Mandela, his Azanian People's Organisation counterpart Professor Itumeleng Mosala, and SA National Civic Organisation leader Moses Mayekiso.

o members
nt each at

se Eastvaal
98.

ie attention
eously with
Exchange
itly for the

listing for
he Options

ie basis of
ord date.
s retained
sis of one
en 7 July
extent of
ay further
ior to the

issued by

1993

7 August

0 August

ptember
ptember
ptember
ptember

Crisis talks in Thokoza after three die in army shoot-out

JOHANNES NGCOBO

THE SADF, ANC, SA National Civic Organisation and Phola Park residents held crisis talks in Thokoza yesterday in an attempt to defuse tensions created by the shooting of three people on Monday night.

Two men and a three-year-old child died in what the SADF said was a shoot-out between soldiers and armed civilians in Phola Park. B/Day

Phola Park residents accused soldiers of shooting without provocation, while the SADF said a patrol had been fired upon.

SADF area commanding officer Maj Mike Claassens told yesterday's meeting that the talks were long overdue. He regretted the deaths, but was grateful the meeting could be held. 25/8/93

He said the army was apolitical and its role was to serve the community.

ANC PWV chairman Tokyo Sexwale said it was important for the parties to thrash out their differences in preparation for the deployment of an envisaged peace-keeping force. (278)

Meanwhile, a trade unionist said yesterday the massacre of 14 people outside Scaw Metals' Wadeville hostel on Sunday could be attributed to "third force" action.

ERICA JANKOWITZ reports National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) regional organiser Bethwell Maserumule said the attack was aimed at destabilising a workforce which had shown its ability to live and work in harmony despite different ethnic origins and political affiliations.

Scaw holding company Anglo American said yesterday two more victims of the attack had died in hospital, bringing the death toll to 14 with 18 injured.

Maserumule said Numsa, which represented about 2 000 workers at the plant, had consulted Scaw management yesterday about security arrangements. The union had presented proposals to ensure security was beefed up in a way which had the backing of all parties, especially hostel residents. He said Numsa had often complained about inadequate security.

An Anglo spokesman said the attack had taken place outside the hostel in an area not controlled by company security officers. Numsa said the burial society meeting had taken place on company premises.

Taxi conference well attended

THEO RAWANA

THE taxi indaba got off to a tense start yesterday after it was boycotted by the PAC, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi failed to arrive and Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed said he had been pressed not to attend.

However, the first day of the three-day conference on taxi violence was well attended, with ANC president Nelson Mandela, Azapo president Itumeleng Mosala and national peace secretariat chairman Antonie Gildenhuys addressing a full house of delegates. B/Day 25/8/93

Before he spoke to delegates, Welgemoed said he had been urged by certain parties not to address the conference because only half the taxi industry was involved. He had ignored the call as he felt the conference was a worthy cause.

PAC president Clarence Makwetu failed to turn up at the conference. The organisation's transport secretary, Mark Shinners, said the PAC decided to stay away because "significant players in the industry were not taking part".

This was a reference to Sabta, which had decided to distance itself from the "unrepresentative" conference. (332)

Sabta spokesman Mike Ntlatleng said his organisation had nothing to do with asking Welgemoed not to attend.

Ntlatleng said Sabta took a conference on taxi violence seriously. However, Sabta felt that it should come from the "grassroots" of the industry — "the taxi people".

Sabta would convene a meeting of taxi associations to look at the issue of violence.

Mandela told delegates success in ending violence in the taxi industry would be an immense boost to the quest for peace.

Core divisions help lift Trencor income

Star 25/8/93

Solid performances from its core divisions lifted Trencor's attributable income by over R30 million to R163,4 million in the year to June.

Executive chairman Neil Jowell said yesterday all contributions of the main divisions (manufacturing tankers, containers and trailers, transport, exports and trading) had exceeded those of the previous year.

Conditions

"Sectors of our transport and trailer manufacturing operations did, however, suffer from adverse trading conditions, emphasising the importance of a stable socio-economic environment for satisfactory levels of performance."

Earnings a share rose by 24 percent to 112,5c from 90,5c, despite an increase in the average tax rate.

A final dividend of 15,5c a share has been declared, compared with 15,3c previously, bringing the total payout for the year to 24,5c a share from 19,5c.

Jowell said the contribution to earnings from overseas operations and exports continued to increase.

He said pressure on container prices had continued, but the effect of this had been countered largely by the decline in the value of the rand against the dollar.

"The weaker rand has also impacted positively on the value of our long-term receivables, many of which are denominated in dollars."

The Textainer group, a major operator in the container leasing industry, and in which Trencor has a substantial interest, had a successful year and contributed satisfactorily to earnings.

(332)

Operations

Jowell said that most of the operations of the W&A group in which Trencor has a joint controlling interest, performed in line with budget, despite difficult trading conditions.

"While the W&A group expects to return to profitability and dividend payment in 1993, it remains our view that the full potential of W&A as a whole will only be realised in the longer term." — Sapa.

New domestic airline hunts for partners

(332)

CT 25/8/93

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

CAPE Town businessman Neil Robertson, who hopes to start a new domestic airline targeted at lower income travellers, is looking for partners to invest R50m in buying second-hand aircraft with which to operate the service.

Robertson applied to the Department of Civil Aviation this week for a licence to operate a service between Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban.

He said yesterday that he was looking for partners to buy five Boeing 727 200 aircraft from the US for R10m each. The aircraft were used by Braniff Airlines, which went under.

There would be separate partnerships to own each aircraft, which would be leased to Lion Air. "I am in the process of setting these up at the moment.

"Some people have already agreed in principle to invest just under 50% of the money we need, but they are naturally reluctant to enter into a firm commitment until we have the licence.

"Those who do invest will have a dollar asset, since aircraft are sold in dollars.

"If there is no opposition I think the application will just be rubber-stamped and we could be flying by November. But if there are objections it could be delayed until next year."

Robertson said he would employ air crew and some experienced cabin crew who had been retrenched by other airlines. There was "a glut of pilots at the moment," including some who had been retrenched by Safair earlier this year.

He said he was confident that a "no-frills", low-cost airline could compete successfully in spite of complaints of over-capacity on the route.

"SAA and Flitestar are using the wrong aircraft on these domestic routes. They are too expensive.

"I am not competing in their market. We will attract passengers who travel now by coach or minibus."

Inquest told of 'specific targets'

Sowetan 25/8/93

A CHANNEL FOR HANDLING the "elimination of specific targets" was set up during the 1985 unrest in the Eastern Cape, the Port Elizabeth Supreme Court was told yesterday.

A document outlining the South African Defence Force's involvement in the Civil Co-operation Bureau was handed in at the inquest into the death of Cradock activists Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkhonto and Sicelo Mhlawuli, whose burnt bodies were found near Blue Waters Bay in 1985.

Authentic document

According to an affidavit by Major-General AJM Joubert, the document was an authentic record of a meeting held in the north-eastern Transvaal to discuss the CCB.

The then SADF chief General Jannie Geldenhuys was present and so were CCB director Colonel Joe Verster, Colonel Chris Meerholz and a Brigadier Sonnekus.

Geldenhuys saw the CCB as a long-term project and did not foresee it becoming a formal structure.

Referring to the elimination of "enemy targets" Geldenhuys had confirmed that non-standard issue weapons would be used in an unconventional manner so that innocent people were not affected and CCB operatives identified. Joubert said not all "enemy targets" were necessarily human.

BOOKINGS NOW OPEN

I HEREBY APPLY TO BECOME A COMPUTER DIPLOMA STUDENT, at IBN Computer Schools in JOHANNESBURG

FULL NAME : _____
(Write in BLOCK letters)

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

R11128

A GATEWAY TO SUCCESS

CODE _____

DATE to START _____

IBN COMPUTER SCHOOLS
Educating the Nation

DIPLOMA in COMPUTER OPERATOR and / or SECRETARIAL

SEND THIS IN ON A POSTCARD TO : IBN - PO Box 1060, HOUGHTON, JHB, 2041

ELECTRICIANS

REQUIRED URGENTLY

Exciting Career Opportunity!

Are you an electrician
or
Experienced in Low Voltage Reticulation (3 years +)?

Requirements:

1. Soweto residence.
2. Driver's licence.
3. N2 / N3.

R11091

Contact Hantie immediately
Tel: 711-2950

Political intolerance 'is a stumbling block to peace'

Sowetan 25/8/93

(332)

By Mzwandile Jacks

POLITICAL intolerance and the use of covert forces to destabilise black communities were the causes of violence in the taxi industry, speakers said at the summit of taxi associations yesterday.

The conference, aimed at searching for lasting solutions to the violence in the industry, was held in Johannesburg.

African National Congress president Mr Nelson Mandela told the taximen that success in curbing taxi violence would boost initiatives for peace and democracy in the country.

"Violence cannot bring peace. Inkatha will never defeat the ANC and the ANC will never defeat Inkatha," Mandela said.

The only solution to the violence was to ensure that black policemen had a role to play in peacekeeping structures, he said.

Mr Justice Richard Goldstone said there had been no evidence of political strife during his investigations into the taxi violence and, therefore, the violence was not politically motivated.

"Power struggles and intolerance between taxi owners are the causes of the violence," he said.

Dr Anton Gildenhuys of the Peace Secretariat said ineffective policing, socio-economic conditions and the absence of a political dispensation that would be acceptable to all population groups were the causes of violence.

Wheelies as Trencor profits roar ahead

MARC HASENFUSS (832)
Business Staff ARG 25/8/93

BLUE-CHIP transport listing Trencor shrugged off a bigger tax bill to post 26 percent gain in attributable income to R163,4 million in the year to end June.

A final dividend of 15,5c was declared, bringing the total payout for the year up proportionaly to 24,5c a share.

Chairman Neil Jowell said all Trencor's main divisions, comprising of manufacturing tankers, containers and trailers, transport, exports and trading, made "excellent" contributions — "exceeding those of last year".

Turnover improved 15 percent to R741 million in the period under review, but a dramatic improvement in margins saw pre-tax profit soar a remarkable 58 percent to R58 million.

However, pre-tax growth was diluted by the higher tax bill, which more than doubled to R58 million, and a smaller donation from associate companies at R23 milion (previously R29 million).

Mr Jowell said the contribution to bottom line from overseas operations and exports continued to increase.

He said that pressure on container prices had continued, but the effect of this had been countered largely by the decline in the value of the rand/dollar exchange rate.

"The weaker rand has also impacted positively on the value of our long-term receivables, many of which are dominated in US dollars."

Trencor's recent container leasing acquisition the Textainer Group had a successful trading year and contributed satisfactorily to earnings.

Most of the W & A Group,operations — in which Trencor has a joint controlling interest — performed in line with budget. Mr Jowell said that for the two month period that Trencor held its interest, W & A traded profitably and made a positive contribution to group earnings.

"While the W & A group anticipates returning to profitability and dividend payment in 1993, it remains our view that the full potential of W & A as a whole will only be realised in the longer term.

■ **Mobile Industries**, whose major investment is a 47 percent stake in Trencor, lifted earnings a share 25 percent to 27,6c a share in the year to end June.

A final dividend of 4c was declared, bringing the total payout for the year to 6,2c.

■ Anglovaal's information technology group **Siltek** boosted earnings 29 percent to R47 million in the year to end June — thanks mainly to the strong showing by subsidiary Q Data.

■ Durban-based clothing group **Ninian & Lester** bucked the threadbare industry trend to post a 14 percent increase in attributable income to R430 000 in the half year to end June.

Operating profit showed a slight decline to R7,8 million — but bottom line was bolstered by reduced finance, interest and taxation charges.

NEWS FEATURE 'The biggest problem facing us is white people'

Public transport outmoded

Sowetan 27/8/93

■ SABTA PROTEST Address to the Taxi indaba in Johannesburg by Professor Itumeleng Mosala this week :

(332)

BEFORE I continue with my address, I am constrained, on behalf of Azapo, to take note of the protest of Sabta against this meeting.

It would be remiss of us to simply ignore an important black organisation such as Sabta, and the concerns they have expressed. In view of Sabta's importance in the black community and their role in the overall struggle for the national liberation of black people, I would like to point out that Azapo feels that no effort should have been spared to make sure Sabta was an important part of the arrangements and planning of this conference.

I am glad that I have been asked to speak on the political perspective on violence. This is not only because I am a politician and represent a political organisation. More significantly, I am pleased with the topic because it is our view that the violence which is ravaging black life at all levels in our country is thoroughly political in nature.

Many attempts have been made, primarily by the white settler regime of Mr de Klerk, and generally by white people locally and internationally, to tribalise the violence, ethnicise the violence, to racialise the violence by calling it Zulu versus Xhosa, black on black violence, etc.

I wish to repeat what I said a week ago at the National Council of Azapo in Durban.

Since 1990 De Klerk has embarked upon a strategy of destabilisation of black communities through the SADF and the SAP using the effective tactic of peace talks and negotiations to get black people and the international allies of the white community to endorse him and his programme.

Deluded fools

Only fools can be deluded about the political strategy behind the violence.

The question, therefore, facing any right-thinking black person or organisation is NOT what kind of black people are these who kill one another, but what is it that white people are gaining from the violence in the black community?

The biggest problem facing us is white people; it is white solutions to our problems; it is white paternalism, white moral superiority, white intellectual arrogance; it is simply white know-all.

The point I am making is simply that there was a time when we had got at least some white people in occupied Azania right. We had got them right, thanks to the sterling work of none other than Steve Biko. At one point, white people came to terms with what they really are or are supposed to be, namely and simply, human beings, not God.

All this has changed again. White people are playing God everywhere. They speak for black people in every forum; they think for us in every context and platform; they generally want to lead and not to be led.

Violence is what you asked me to speak on and not white people. I insist that the social relations between white and black people are a key matter when violence is being discussed. It is so because violence in our country is political. That goes for violence in the taxi industry.

Professor Itumeleng Mosala

On the impact of violence on the transport industry, I make the following observations. Firstly, any violence in the country is likely to have adverse effects on all sectors of the economy. In particular, sustained levels of violence must of necessity impact negatively on the availability, safety, and reliability of the transport system.

Outmoded system

The situation is worse in a country like ours where the transport system is so outmoded, if not non-existent. We clearly have the most backward public transport system compared to other western capitalist economies, an outpost of which we are. We are an appendage of the world capitalist system, yet we display features of a never-developed Third World economy when it comes to transport.

This has consequences for black people whose economic condition demands dependence on a public transport system of some sort. If you add to the inadequacy, and almost non-existence of this system, the sustained and deliberate violence, you deepen the crisis.

Violence therefore, impacts negatively not just on the transport system, but significantly on the confidence of black people in the safety, and dependability of transport for them. There is in fact a sense in which the transport system itself turns out to be part of the enemy of the people. It becomes the place where they die, where they are maimed, where they lose their friends and families.

This poses challenges to policy makers in terms of the future of the industry. It is a distorted industry, it is a racially bifurcated industry, it is one in which the majority of the consumers are harassed and made more and more instruments of designs over which they have no control.

Azapo is planning to take the initiative to formulate and implement a national strategy to eradicate violence. We are tired of being observed by international visitors, by commissions which are intended to deal with the matter after the fact, with accords and agreements that treat black people as subjects of Press conferences.

We are also tired of having our people being studied for purposes of academic treatises. Violence is decimating our people and benefiting white people everywhere.

We challenge all those who claim to be committed to peace to call a moratorium on all processes until violence has been eradicated and irreversibly weakened.

There will be no free elections while violence reigns, no transition to democracy while the nation is caught up in a process of bosnification of our land.

Indeed, there will be no stopping the violence while the aspirations of our people are clearly being betrayed. No return to the land by black people, no peace in the country; no control and ownership of the economy by the people as a whole, no peace in the country.

It is about time we pause to think as a nation. South Africa does not think, we do not think, hence we act wrongly all the time.

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
Auditions for 1994

For those who are talented and serious about the arts, the National School of the Arts welcomes applications for positions from Standard 6 to Standard 9 (13-18 year age group).

The NSA provides a full spectrum of Academic, Art, Ballet, Drama and Music subjects leading to a university entrance level matric. Last year the school posted a 100% pass in the matric examinations, and the number of university exemptions puts the school in the top 10% of TED schools. The school is the largest feeder to PACT and tertiary Arts Faculties.

Scholars are drawn from all over South Africa to this centre of excellence, and a superior hostel accommodates full time and weekly boarders.

The NSA is a unique co-educational open school admitting scholars based only on merit. Auditions for entry in 1994 will be held on 4th and 11th September 1993. Parents of talented children who want to encourage their child's special artistic ability must contact the school as soon as possible to ensure that they are booked for an audition.

R11059

Write, telephone or fax today!
Tel: (011) 339-6539
Fax: (011) 339-6695

17 Hoofd Street,
Private Bag X25
Braamfontein 2017

Ship sales boost Grincor profits

EDWARD WEST

PROFITS on ship sales and a company tax adjustment boosted earnings at Grindrod Unicorn Group (Grincor) in the half-year to June 30 after a poor six-month trading period to end-June for the Durban-based shipping and transport group. B/Day

Chairman Murray Grindrod said another ship sale in July, the profits of which would be reflected in the year-end report, would ensure improved earnings for the full year.

Turnover was 6% higher at R330,77m (R310,86m), but operating profit, boosted by the sale of a ro-ro ship and a supply vessel, climbed nearly a fifth to R26,25m (R22,05m). Lower interest payments left pre-tax income 40% up at R20,43m (R14,60m). The second major positive impact on the bottom line came with a R12,73m tax credit, mainly from an adjustment to deferred tax in prior years.

Attributable income more than doubled to R20,62m (R8,55m). The weighted number of shares in issue rose 16% and earnings a share more than doubled to 57,6c (27,7c). The interim dividend was lifted to 11c (10c). 27/8/93

Grindrod said depressed trading conditions had continued in 1993 and work stayaways and strikes had affected the group's core activities. (332)

Capital expenditure of R26,9m comprised the acquisition of a car-carrying vessel and progress payments on two new ships under construction. Further capital commitments of R87,3m would be financed from cash resources and loan funds.

Interest-bearing debt had climbed to R204,84m from R190,38m at December 1992 mainly as a result of capital expenditure. Cash balances and deposits had increased at a faster rate, with net borrowings falling by R21,8m to R66,9m.

The group's net asset value was 450c (383c) a share at June 30. The group's share price was 470c yesterday.

Slow progress on homelands

BILLY PADDOCK

NEGOTIATORS said yesterday they believed that by Tuesday they would have found a way of dealing with the thorny problem of reincorporating the TBVC states. B/Day

The negotiating council also heard that Inkatha and the KwaZulu government would be bound by the transitional executive council provisions regardless of their participation in the multiparty talks. 27/8/93

Prospects for the reincorporation of Bophuthatswana and Ciskei looked gloomy following the deadlock in the special ad hoc committee set up to find ways of resolving the problem.

The two homelands put forward a proposal to the planning committee asking for associate or observer status on the transitional executive council. They refused to have TEC provisions apply in their territories and would not hold elections in April.

Instead they wanted their respective legislatures/parliaments to nominate associate representatives to the new SA parliament following the elections.

They wanted voting status in the parliament on all constitutional matters and only once the final constitution was agreed and their representatives approved it would they reincorporate. This was unacceptable to the other parties.

However, yesterday a source in the planning committee said "significant progress" was being made in a flurry of meetings on the powers, functions and duties of regions. It would report back on Tuesday.

He said this was inextricably linked to the reincorporation issue.

During debate on the TEC, negotiators mostly agreed that all parties wanting to contest the elections had to be bound by the terms of the TEC and failure to implement the TEC provisions would result in censure, court action and possible police and military action. Three parties — the Afrikaner Volksunie, the PAC and Ciskei — objected and no final decision was taken.

● See Page 10

Abolish board — taxi operators

B/Day

THEO RAWANA

DELEGATES at a taxi indaba called yesterday for immediate abolition of the Road Transportation Board as its "indiscriminate" issuing of taxi permits was seen as a cause of violence.

They called on the Transport Department to set up a tribunal on violence and to replace the board with an interim structure with input from taxi and labour groups. Establishing a passenger transportation board to administer roads and compile a taxi association register was sought.

A training development trust fund should be set up, and the private and public sectors should contribute to it, delegates decided. 27/8/93

They called on financing banks to stop applying the Credit Agreement Act, which delegates were told did not apply to taxi owners. (332)

Sapa reports National Transport Policy Forum chairman George Negota said taxi operators plying seven major routes in the Transvaal declared hostilities over yesterday.

Sir Harry's medicine for airlines

(332)

ARG 28/8/93

■ Harry Tirvengadum, chairman of Air Mauritius and current chairman of the International Air Transporters' Association, has firm views on how the world's airlines can be returned to viability. Weekend Argus Correspondent JOHN SPIRA spoke to him in Mauritius.

SOUTH Africa's airline industry is in disarray, with Flitestar on the brink of closing its runways in the face of the alleged unfair competition posed by SA Airways.

It is no consolation to Flitestar, but the problems it faces are by no means confined to South Africa.

The world-wide trend towards deregulation and liberalisation has produced cut-throat competition, which is not necessarily in the consumer's interest, says Sir Harry Tirvengadum, current chairman of the International Air Tranporters' Association (IATA).

Spira: The world's airline industry has gone through its worst cyclical downturn since 1945. When will the industry revive?

Sir Harry: The problem is not so much one of traffic growth as of poor financial viability.

Forecasts are that the industry may emerge from this turmoil by 1995, although it seems unlikely that booms achieved in previous cycles will ever be witnessed again.

The continuing overcapacity in the market, resulting from both fleet growth and modernisation programmes and the unprecedented fall in passenger traffic at a time of increasing liberalisation has led to the fierce fare wars we are seeing today.

Spira: How can the airline industry go about restoring sustained growth?

Sir Harry: Growth is not only to increase seat capacity, number of aircraft, number of passengers or freight tonnage carried. Often we confuse volume increase with growth.

There can be sustained growth only if ultimate financial results in the long run are positive and meet set targets.

Spira: What is the outlook for airlines operating in Africa?

Sir Harry: IATA predicts that East Africa will experience a 1993 growth rate of 6,4 percent, Central and West Africa 1,4 percent and Southern Africa 3,4 percent. This highlights our geographical imbalances.

Africa's competitive threats are essentially from non-African carriers with considerable competitive advantages.

The market is now flooded with carriers of all sizes and financial shapes willing to sacrifice their profitability, stability and, even, their employees.

Spira: What should the airlines of Africa do to counter these threats?

Sir Harry: We cannot sell our product below cost, nor offer over-capacity. Such sensible policy is obviously not without risks in a market which is no longer sensible.

Most of our competitors can draw from their reserves, state air or cross-subsidisation to support a "below costs" pricing policy. But most of the airlines on this continent do not have access to this kind of luxury.

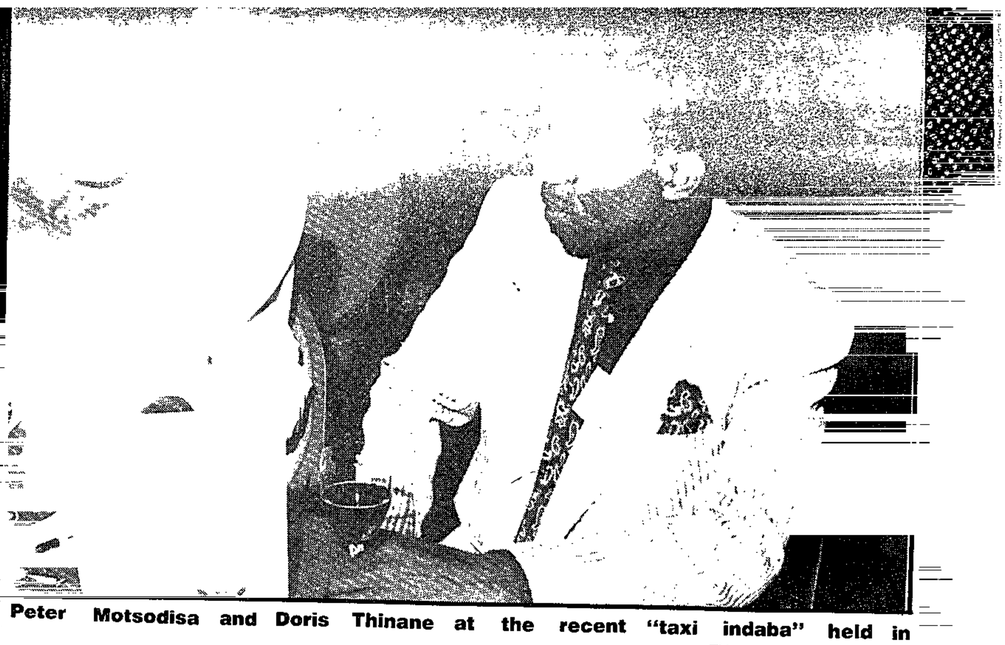
Spira: How do you think competition should be managed?

Sir Harry: In three ways:

- Ensure that the airline provides capacity where required and does not flood the market with wasteful capacity.
- Fares have to be set at economic levels.
- The name of an airline should be associated with quality.

Spira: What kind of government supervision do you have in mind?

Sir Harry: Continued checks on development of unfair, excessive and destructive competition. I stand for a "fostered sustained competition" model.



Peter Motsodisa and Doris Thinane at the recent "taxi indaba" held in

■ Pic: ANDRIES MCINEKA

Taxi violence: source of it all comes from within, says Goldstone

C/Press 29/8/93

(332)

A COMMITTEE of the Goldstone Commission has fingered intolerance, selfishness, provocation and greed leading to the use of violence as the immediate causes of fighting among taxi operators.

The committee's fifth interim report was released on Thursday, more than a year after it began hearings into the taxi violence in various centres.

Saying political rivalry and affiliation were not causes of taxi violence, the report places much of the blame on operators, who it says are plagued by intolerance, selfishness, a need to provocate and greed.

"In few cases were operators or organisations in the industry prepared to accept, let alone recognise, their own faults in relation to the problems. In the final analysis, the use of violence by taxi operators is the most immediate cause of the violence," says the report.

Among other causes, in historical sequence, were the effect of apartheid law on urbanisation, commercial factors, the role of the Department of Transport, a lack of law enforcement and the absence of facilities.

The report says massive and rapid urbanisation and the government or local authorities' failure – because of apartheid laws – to provide even rudimentary transportation facilities to masses of people on a daily basis were a factor in the buildup to violence.

In addition, conflict arose when historical divisions between people mirrored those between operators in the regular taxi industry, who served "lawful" areas in terms of apartheid, and "pirate" operators, who serviced informal or "illegal" settlements.

Among the commercial factors in the violence, the report notes, was the inability of the free market to operate because of the cost and delays of the permit system, the absence of business skills and sophistication by operators, the absence of understanding of market forces, the effects of unfair competition by the heavily state-subsidised bus and train services, the deterioration of the economy and the inflationary effects on running expenses and the consequent overloading and the necessity for high speed to increase passenger turnover.

Turning to the role of the Department of Transport, the report was scathing.

It noted an absence of anticipation and lack of planning, lack of communication with taxi operators, the secrecy and insensitivity (transparency) of local road transporation boards in the issuing of permits and particularly the absence of reasons for refusals of permits and the high fees charged for an appeal.

As a result, there was a perception by taxi operators of corruption and unfairness among department officials.

The department's work was not helped by the serious understaffing of its inspectorate.

On the question of law enforcement, the committee's report noted that where there was sufficient manpower and facilities, effective policing had reduced violence and intimidation.

"(But) The absence of proper law enforcement in most areas has brought the legal system and the efficiency of the whole system of control into disrepute," it was stated in the report.

In many cities and towns, the committee said, there were inadequate ranking facilities, which added to the many problems.

The committee was chaired by DJ Rossouw, SC.

Goldstone hits at taxi wars

A COMMITTEE of the Goldstone Commission says the taxi industry should not be deregulated in the foreseeable future before informal townships and settlements have become established, peaceful communities.

C/Press 29/8/93

This is one of the recommendations in the committee's fifth interim report on taxi violence. The committee sat for more than a year to hear evidence on the taxi violence.

(332)

Scores of people have been killed throughout the country in rival taxi association clashes.

The report, which is not final as the committee still has to investigate the SA Police's role in Cape Town's taxi violence, is now in the hands of State President FW de Klerk.

Stating that political rivalry and affiliation are not causes of taxi violence, the report says the existing regulation of the industry needs to be replaced by one which acknowledges the place of the minibus in the country's transport infrastructure. It must seek to protect the interests of passengers, taxi operators and the public.

Local Road Transportation Boards are discredited, the commission says, and their replacement with other statutory bodies are not likely to provide any success.

The committee presented guidelines for future regulation of the industry:

- A genuine partnership needed to be formed between taxi associations and the controlling authority;
- The controlling body should be statutory.
- Permits should be issued at local level with due regard for prevailing conditions;
- Certain criteria should be invoked for the granting of permits; and,
- Every decision of the issuing body should be subject to a simple, inexpensive form of appeal, and there should be independent, accessible handling of complaints at local level.

The committee also recommended improved training facilities for the taxi industry by asking for assistance from organised commerce and industry. Local authorities and taxi associations should discuss and implement ways of improving ranking facilities.

Representatives from the industry should also be identified and consulted in the formulation of local, regional and national transport policies.

The report further says the functions of transport inspectors should be transferred to local authorities and, in particular, to traffic police.

Every local authority should appoint at least one person to liaise with local taxi associations and community organisations, while dispute-resolving mechanisms should be established.

The present system of appeals from local transportation boards should be simplified.

ON RIGHT ROAD . . . George Negota organised the indaba to discuss the escalating violence and infighting in the taxi industry.

'Taxi to Peace' is slogan for the future

C/Press 29/8/93

(332)

Code of conduct drafted to make service safer

By ALI MPAKI

"PEOPLE must not be driven to war – they must be taxied to peace."

The words belong to ANC PWV regional chief Tokyo Sexwale, and they summed up the mood at the three-day "Taxi Indaba" held in Johannesburg this week.

The indaba, organised by the National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) to discuss the escalating violence and infighting in the taxi industry, attracted about 600 delegates representing close to 70 different taxi associations from throughout the country and neighbouring states.

While ackowledging the fact that causes of taxi violence were complex and diverse, delegates agreed that a conference of this kind was long overdue.

The indaba's long title was "Formulation of Peace and Co-operation Strategy for the Taxi Industry" Those invited to speak included luminaries such as ANC president Nelson Mandela, Judge Richard Goldstone, Prof Itumeleng Mosala of Azapo and Transkei military leader Maj-Gen Bantu Holomisa.

Apologies were extended to Inkatha president Mangosuthu Buthelezi and PAC president Clarence Makwethu, who were billed to address the conference, but failed to appear and did not send representatives.

Conspicuous by its absence at the indaba was the South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) – ostensibly the largest taxi association in the country. The association pulled out a week before the conference, leaving a somewhat bad taste.

Sabta's Mike Ntlantleng said they were not involved in the planning of the indaba, an allegation denied by NTPF chairman George Negota.

A positive note that emerged from the conference was the drafting of a code of conduct for taxi owners and drivers. This, it was stated, would help to professionalise the industry.

Most speakers blamed the government for the violence in the taxi industry, but Cosatu's Randall Howard put forward two central reasons:

- The non-existence of regulations in the taxi industry and the absence of clear public transport policy as a whole; and
- The lack of labour legislation covering taxi drivers which sets minimum wages and working conditions.

He said: "The reality is that taxi drivers are no different from farm and domestic workers. They are hired and fired at any time without legal protection. They work at least 18 hours a day, seven days a week for 12 months of the year. Furthermore, they are also not registered with the Department of Manpower."

He said that the "quota" system, in which the taxi owners set a daily quota for the driver to achieve in any one day, was causing trouble.

"This system forces the driver to speed, overload and ignore traffic signs. Added to that is the fact that a situation develops where the driver becomes a danger to other road users and to his passengers.

"We have also witnessed increasing deaths on the roads as a consequence of this system. In many cases the employer is not affected by this and takes little or no responsibility."

Delegates also heard from Howard that the taxi industry served about 1,6-million people daily while buses and trains carried 600 000 people daily.

He added that with the first democratic elections in the country widely expected to be held next April, it was imperative for the taxi industry to be stable and well organised because they were to be central in providing transport to people in the townships going to the polling stations.

"We need to prepare for this eventuality so that taxi associations and drivers are not used for party political purposes which will result in further conflict," Howard said.

Judge Goldstone, while noting that the indaba coincided with the publication of his report on taxi violence, stressed that the most significant finding was that violence associated with the taxi industry was not political or politically inspired.

He said intolerance, power struggles and greed were the immediate triggers of much, if not all, of the taxi violence.

Warning against the dangers of making judgements without sufficient evidence, Goldstone said that last year, when train violence was rampant, he frequently heard the suggestion that taxi operators were responsible for it.

This suggestion, he said, had its own logic and many people believed it.

"Unfortunately, there is no evidence to support this view," he said.

He emphasised that his commission was of the view that the causes of taxi violence were capable of being removed by appropriate action by the main role players at local, regional and national level.

"However, not one of these parties can acheive any satisfactory result without the full co-operation and support of all the others," he said.

Azapo president, Prof Itumeleng Mosala, was adamant that the violence ravaging black life in South Africa was "thoroughly" political in nature.

He said: "The question facing any right thinking black person or organisation is not what kind of black people are these who kill one another, but what is it that white people are gaining from the violence in the black community?"

He said it was clear that the political nature of the violence required a deliberate political determination to root it out, adding that there was no doubt that while this violence was decimating black people, it was benefiting whites.

"This is a clear and deliberate part of the imperialist strategy which amounts to a deliberate 'Bosnification' of our country," he said.

332
29/8/93

TAXI CONFERENCE

C/Press 29/8/93

Not the beasts they're made out to be

(332)

The information reported on the minibus-taxi industry by the SA mass media is highly distorted, according to a SA Journal for Communication (SAJC) research paper. LEN KALANE compares the paper, which aims to examine the influence this distorted image has on public perceptions, with the realities.

THE growth of the minibus-taxi industry in SA in the past 10 years has been observed with considerable interest.

However, says the *SA Journal for Communication (SAJC)*, this interest has mainly been generated by mass media reports of increasing numbers of collisions and fatalities.

This emphasis has led to public concern about the minibus-taxi industry's safety record, with the result that much of the research effort and many policy decisions have been concerned with this area, to the disadavantage of others.

The *SAJC* says research findings, however, indicate that the number of fatalities and collisions reported by the media involving taxis is exaggerated and the image portrayed by the media is highly distorted.

In it's 1992 report, the *SAJC* notes that:

- The taxi industry comprises between 60 000 to 70 000 minibus-taxis transporting an average of 30 percent (675 000) of all black commuters daily. In terms of road traffic volume, minibus-taxis comprise 12,6 to 25,1 percent of the urban traffic stream during peak hours.
- Collision rates for minibus-taxis for every 100-million kilometres travelled during 1986, 1987 and 1988 were lower than those for buses and cars. Collisions involving minibus-taxis decreased from 13 percent in 1987 to 5,7 percent in 1988 – and 77,3 percent of minibus-taxi collisions resulted in no injuries.
- A fair number (47 percent) of minibus-taxi drivers are experienced drivers having come to the industry from other driving positions.
- A majority of minibus-taxi drivers involved in collisions were in possession of a valid licence; only three percent of drivers involved in collisions had no driver's licences; a majority of minibus-taxi drivers involved in collisions had their licences for more than five years.
- Alcohol abuse was not a significant factor (only 2 percent) in collisions.
- Only 14 percent of collisions involved "illegal" (or "pirate") minibus-taxis.
- Only 10 percent of minibus-taxis involved in collisions were not roadworthy.
- Speeding was the cause of 52 percent of all minibus-taxi collisions.
- Overloading was the cause of 32 percent of minibus-taxi collisions.

To determine media perceptions of the minibus-taxi industry, the *SAJC* analysed some newspaper articles for their descriptive evaluation.

These revealed emphasis on negative aspects of taxis such as criminality and danger. The following, according to the *SAJC*, is a sample of descriptive statements:

- Minibuses mean accidents; Alarming number of accidents; Epidemic; taxi monster; minibus menace; traffic problem; danger on the road; unlicensed drivers; third world drivers; criminal, reckless and unscrupulous; Deadly time bomb; Kamikaze chariots of fire; breaking every rule in the book; mass killer; appalling kill rate; total carnage; angels of death; mobile tombs and taxis are responsible for most of the country's road accidents.

The minibus-taxi industry established itself in the 1970s. But, says the *SAJC*, the mass media did not show much interest in the industry until 1987, when total deregulation of the transport industry was recommended by the government.

Initial media comments hailed deregulation as a move towards free enterprise and a way of overcoming major transport problems besetting black communities.

Although the minibus-taxi industry made its impact on the transport industry, culminating in takeover bids of major bus companies and stimulating a depressed economy, media attention began to focus on the seemingly sudden epidemic of road accidents attributed to taxis.

These reports, says the *SAJC* paper, are linked to attempts by local authorities to eliminate minibus-taxis' competition to local bus services.

It seems the media's attention to the minibus-taxi industry was directed by vested interest groups, such as organised transport which was opposed to deregulation because it meant competition from minibus-taxis and a loss of government subsidy, which totalled R267-million in 1987.

While minibus-taxi drivers may not be paragons of safety, concludes the *SAJC*, they are no better or worse than other drivers. There is scope for improvement – but this applies to all road users.

From the research, says the *SAJC*, it is clear that the SA media have actively participated in distorting the image of the minibus-taxi industry to conform with the perceptions of their informants, themselves and the public.

However, says the *SAJC*, the media are not entirely to blame as in some cases this information is distorted before it is given to the media.

... been arrested in connection with the training.

The SDU were said to be buying firearms from Mozambicans who were probably former rebel Frelimo members.

Brig Abrie said this was one of the main factors leading to instability on the Witwatersrand.

Three SDU members have already been charged and several arrested for murdering policemen. — Sapa

Terror bus attack: Three men released

CT 1/9/93

POLICE released three men yesterday who were detained for questioning in connection with the terror attack on a bus in Beaufort West last week.

A fourth man who was arrested on Monday, has not yet been released, a police spokesman said.

He is expected to appear in court this week in connection with the illegal possession of a firearm.

Earlier yesterday, police fired teargas at pupils who refused to disperse when they protested at the Beaufort West police station, demanding the release of the arrested men. They then stoned at least five cars in the town's main road. — Staff Reporter, Sapa

Homeland cops 'killers'

CT 1/9/93

DURBAN. — KwaZulu Police allegedly assassinated suspected police killers, and failed to cooperate with South African Police in murder investigations of a Natal ANC leader, a Goldstone inquiry heard yesterday.

It also emerged at a Goldstone Commission sub-committee hearing in Westville, near here, that a KZP member charged with murder continued to work in the homeland force for 2½ years after he jumped bail.

The sub-committee also heard that urgent requests for information relating to G3 rifles suspectedly used in the 1992 murder of ANC deputy Midlands chairman Mr Reggie Hadebe were ignored. — Sapa

Govt moves on Lebowa

Political Staff

CT 1/9/93

THE government is taking over the financial administration of the non-independent Lebowa homeland from today after irregularities of "alarming proportions" emerged.

The move is the first decisive step by the government to reintegrate Lebowa into South Africa.

With irregularities and overspending in most if not all of the 10 independent and non-independent homelands — all of whom are heavily dependent on the South African taxpayer — Pretoria's action is a warning to all homeland administrations they could face similar action soon.

Lebowa has a budget of R3 664 billion and requested R360m more.

The Lebowa administration would remain intact till a new dispensation had been implemented.

Taxi war: Suspects given bail

A SUPREME COURT judge warned two Codeta committee members yesterday he would withdraw bail of R10 000 each should there be "as much as a whisper" of intimidation of state witnesses.

Mr Sandile Nonqwana and Mr Patrick Nonqwana are charged with two counts of murder and one of attempted murder, each related to the taxi war.

They were yesterday released on bail by Mr Justice H L Berman following an appeal to the Supreme Court.

The men were previously refused bail by a Mitchells Plain magistrate on the grounds that they may interfere with state witnesses.

(332) CT 1/9/93

Referring to evidence by a state witness that he would refuse to testify if the men were released on bail, Mr Justice Berman said the state could not be held to ransom by this and the men's right to bail should prevail.

Mr Justice Berman said given the volatile nature of the taxi business certain state witnesses might indeed feel in danger.

There was however nothing to show that the danger they feared was promoted by the appellants.

Strict bail conditions were set.

Mr Marius Broeksma appeared for the state. Mr William King, instructed by Mr William Booth, appeared for the men.

Safair clinches Zaire contract

CT 24/9/93

(332)

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

SAFAIR — which recently invested R35m in two hangars to accommodate wide-bodied aircraft — now has a contract to respray, refurbish and upgrade a DC 10 for Shabair, an independent airline in Zaire.

Chris Bester, GM of engineering and maintenance at Safair, said this was its first contract involving a wide-bodied aircraft.

"It indicates that we were correct in our decision to expand our engineering and maintenance facilities.

"It also shows that they are gaining increased recognition in sub-Saharan Africa."

The DC10 was bought by Shabair from an American operator in August.

Bester said it would need extensive refurbishment and maintenance work "as a result of the aircraft standing for a long time and the demands of the passenmger market that the aircraft will be servicing".

Sabta rapped on knuckles

DIRECTOR-General of Transport Dr Coenraad Scheepers yesterday criticised the South African Black Taxi Association for not attending last week's taxi peace indaba.

Speaking at Sabta's annual general meeting at Sun City, Scheepers told more than 500 delegates: "I must express my concern with recent events within the industry when the Sabta executive boycotted the recent taxi indaba held in Johannesburg."

Sowetan 3/9/93

He said the department supported the recent Goldstone Commission findings which pointed out causes of violence within the taxi industry.

(332)

Scheepers also announced that the Department of Transport would co-operate with the taxi industry and local authorities in providing proper facilities.

"The absence of ranking space or the inadequacies thereof in an industry where the competition for passengers is fierce temporarily caused tempers to flare.

"In the majority of towns no, or grossly inadequate, facilities exist," he said. This was causing many problems.

Scheepers added that the department was prepared to help in the training of taxi owners and drivers.

The department was also prepared to subsidise the taxi industry if certain conditions were met. These included an integrated public transport system, allowing a passenger to travel with one ticket on different modes of transport.

Sabta urged to prepare transport policy guide

THEO RAWANA Star

SUN CITY — Development Bank of Southern Africa chairman Wiseman Nkuhlu yesterday urged Sabta to organise SA's passenger transport sector and prepare a credible policy framework. 3/9/93

Nkuhlu told delegates at a Sabta conference the organisation was well placed to undertake the task because it had the experience, strength and reputation of having achieved outstanding growth during the '80s. (332)

"Sabta is therefore advantageously placed to influence the formulation of a passenger transport policy for post-apartheid SA," Nkuhlu said.

"Apartheid can no longer control the environment. The new SA is not yet with us, so we are working in a vacuum. There is no legal framework to deal with this uncertain environment."

He warned Sabta that the economy was not likely to grow until SA had moved to more certain ground. "All of us have to work for a better socioeconomic environment and for peace and stability."

Sapa reports he said it was ridiculous to demand a subsidy for the industry if the national macroeconomic framework favoured a reduced role for the state.

Nkuhlu said countries with strong private sector involvement in transport tended to provide a better service than those which relied on the state.

Transport Department director-general Coenraad Scheepers expressed concern at Sabta's boycott of the recent taxi indaba, which was convened by the national transport policy forum.

"This indaba was intended to address the very real problem of violence in the industry — a matter of great concern to all of us associated with the provision of an effective transport system," he said.

"This industry has within its grasp both the power to accept the exciting challenge to grow and to make its contribution to welfare of everyone involved therein, or, if violence and disunity continues, to destroy itself. The answer is in your hands."

Sabta to revive W Cape links

(332)

JOHANNESBURG. — The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association's management council is to revive its Western Cape membership.

The decision was taken at Sabta's annual meeting at Sun City.

In a statement yesterday the council expressed its concern at the continuing taxi violence and financial difficulties encountered by Cape operators.

CT 4/9/93

The council resolved to do all it could to stop the violence and to seek financial relief for its members. — Sapa

Sabta in cash crisis

By ALI MPHAKI

Cape Times 5/9/93

STRATEGIES to make the taxi industry profitable were the first concerns of most of the 500 delegates who attended the two-day South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) AGM at Sun City this week.

Violence plaguing the industry was high on the agenda, but the current financial crisis was the primary focus of debate.

As part of the solution, Sabta's management council was mandated to seek financial assistance through:

332

- Discussions with the Department of Transport (DOT) for the immediate implementation of taxi subsidies; and
- Discussions with civic and other commuter associations on the crisis facing the industry.

Delegates resolved to urge the Sabta Executive committee to distribute information on running a profitable operation.

The conference also resolved to distance itself from the National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) – which held a taxi indaba on violence last week – until the NTPF clarified its role in transport policy formulation in the present and future.

In dark

Sabta's discontent with the NTPF came to a head over last week's taxi indaba – supposed to be a meeting of all taxi associations – after it alleged it was kept in the dark over arrangements.

Speakers at the AGM included Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu of the Independent Development Bank, Transport Minister Dr Coen Scheepers and Sabta president James Ngcoya.

Taxi conflict inquiry set up

PRETORIA. — The Goldstone Commission is to hold a preliminary inquiry into the tension and conflict in the taxi industry at Rustenburg, Mr Justice Richard Goldstone said yesterday (332) CT 8/9/93

The committee will hold a public inquiry on September 24 to investigate the nature and causes of the conflict and consider recommendations on the steps that are necessary to prevent further violence and whether a justice of the peace may play a role. — Sapa

Latest fuel price hike condemned

THEO RAWANA

BLACK business and road passenger transport organisations have roundly condemned the petrol price increase announced this week. B/Day

SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) president James Ngcoya called for pressure to be applied on Transport Minister Piet Welgemoed for subsidies. 8/9/93

National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) chairman Peter Rabali said his organisation was disappointed because the increase came after Nafto had sought concessions. (332)

The taxi industry was demanding the deregulation of petrol, he said.

Putco director Jack Visser said the bus company was surprised as the increase closely followed the previous one.

DIRK VAN EEDEN reports: Agricultural Union president Boet Fourie said increased fuel prices and government's motivation was unacceptable to farmers who were battling to recover from "unfavourable agricultural conditions".

Taxi probe goes west

THE Goldstone Commission is to hold a preliminary inquiry into the tension and conflict in the taxi industry at

Sowetan 8/9/93 (332)

rief

Sowetan 8/9/93

Rustenburg, Mr Justice Richard Goldstone said in Pretoria yesterday.

Two members of the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Public Violence, Mr DJ Rossouw and Mr MNS Sithole, will hold the public inquiry on September 24 at the community hall, Rustenburg. (332)

Safren profit bolstered by lower tax bill

CT 9/9/93

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Deputy Business Editor

NEARLY R100m off the tax bill helped Safmarine and Rennies Holdings (Safren) stem its drop in attributable earnings to a better than expected 12,3% for the year to end June.

However the group has continued to be negatively affected by the weak international and local economies, with both cargo volumes and freight rates down on the previous year.

In addition, the high level of violence and increased competition from unregulated casinos curtailed leisure group Kersaf's results for the year.

Earnings were further eroded by the group's international and domestic air passenger business. Safair had been hard-hit by the situation in Angola and Flitestar had been under severe competitive pressure during the period under review.

Turnover was up 4,5% for the year at R4,5bn, while operating profit before depreciation was almost unchanged at R953,6m. Depreciation, however was up by a substantial R76,2m due to the completion of major capital projects both in the hotel and shipping divisions while for the same reason the net interest charge for the year was up R30,3m.

Long-term borrowings were up nearly R50m at R1,6bn due in the main to the purchase of new ships at Safmarine and Kersaf's major capital developments at Sun City and the Wild Coast.

Profit before tax was down 17,7% at R576m.

However, offsetting the drop in profits which directors had forecast to be 18% lower at the half year, was the decline in the tax rate to 15,5% from 26,5% in the year. This was attributed to the decline in the company rate of tax and its effect on the deferred tax balance. The tax rate was also influenced by the favourable allowances granted to Sun International on its hotel and resort developments.

The lower tax bill of R89,1m (R185,1m) effectively contributed nearly R100m to the bottom-line.

A final dividend of 190c brings the total payout to the year to an unchanged 255c.

Buddy Hawton, deputy chairman and CE, said in an interview last night that besides the lower tax bill, the sale of two ships which had brought in a "substantial amount" had eased the position of Safmarine, which had suffered from low volumes and competition on its major trade routes together with losses from its aviation interests. At the half year mark, earnings had been down 46% but for the full year were 12% lower at R130,2m.

Losses incurred by Flitestar during the year should be reduced in the current year and the outlook for Safair was also brighter, he said.

Against a background of a high level of unrest, unregulated gaming and the depressed economy, the performance by Kersaf which saw earnings down 9,3% at R124,5m was satisfactory.

Indications

"Although we are in early days yet, indications so far are that things will be a lot better for the group this year."

Occupancies at the group's resorts were averaging about 56% which was higher than the industry average while occupancies at Sun City were 75% last year.

Due to the political situation, the expected international tourism boost to the Lost City had not materialised and a lot of international conferences had been cancelled. In spite of this occupancy rates were around 70%.

Rennies, he said, had a good half year due to the handling and distribution of agricultural imports as part of drought relief.

However this had fallen off in the second half and a strike coupled with reductions in staff had resulted in bottlenecks, together with depressed cargo volumes, had seen earnings for the full year down 5,9% at R42,8m.

Hawton said that despite a continuation of tough conditions, the considerable capital investment made in recent years in ships and extended resort facilities should enable the group to achieve "acceptable earnings" during the current year.

Taxi demos on fuel 'certain'

332

TAXI blockades and "out-of-control" taxi drivers may greet next week's petrol price hike.

There would "definitely" be mass action, the chairman of the South African Black Taxi Association, Mr James Ngcoya, said yesterday.

The fuel hike is almost certain to result in taxi fare increases. CT 4/9/93

The SA Communist Party linked the hike to the use of tax revenues on unviable projects such as Mossgas. — Sapa

21 die in taxi rank carnage

Sowetan 9/1/93

South African Press Association

TWENTY-ONE PEOPLE were killed and 25 others wounded in two attacks in the industrial area of Wadeville near Germiston on the East Rand last night.

In the first attack, which occurred shortly after 6pm at a taxi rank outside the Hokaai restaurant at the corner of Dekema and Lantern streets, a gang of about 10 men opened fire on commuters alighting from two parked minibus taxis.

Nineteen people were killed and 22 wounded.

A senior police officer at the scene, Brigadier TJ Koekemoer, described the attack as "completely senseless".

Police said the attack appeared to have been well planned. The attackers used AK-47 assault rifles and other weapons.

(332)

Two hours later, also in Wadeville, near Black Reef Road and about 4km away from the first attack, two people were shot dead and three wounded in an attack on a minibus taxi.

Witwatersrand police spokesman Major Eugene Opperman said the taxi was travelling from Germiston to Katlehong when it was shot at, apparently by gunmen armed with AK-47 rifles.

Earlier yesterday four people died and another four were injured in a shootout during a taxi association meeting in Orlando East, Soweto.

Police said several gunmen burst into the hall where 60 taxi operators were meeting and opened fire.

Reacting to the killings, Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel said the "horrific atrocities" emphasised the dire need for political leaders to constructively address the climate of violence.

"Atrocities of this nature also highlight the absolute folly of calls to remove police, especially the Internal Stability Unit, from townships on the East Rand," Kriel said.

"I appeal to township residents to co-operate fully with the police to track down those responsible for this outrage.

"But it is the prevailing culture of violence in places such as the East Rand which provides the seedbed for outrages such as these."

Kriel added that unless the leaders of particularly the Inkatha Freedom Party and African National Congress realised this and took steps to address the problem, violence would continue to escalate.

The police were doing everything within their power to combat violence, but this would be an enormously difficult task unless all sectors of the community supported them, Kriel said.

● See page 4.

Four killed at taxi peace meeting

Sowetan 9/9/93

By Abbey Makoe

■ TEMPERS FLARE Police say a group of men burst into the hall and opened fire:

FOUR PEOPLE WERE SHOT dead when two groups of taximen exchanged gunfire during a meeting to resolve a dispute at the Orlando Donaldson Community Centre in Soweto yesterday.

The incident took place inside the community centre, across the road from Orlando Police Station, shortly before noon when tempers flared. The two groups could apparently not agree on certain issues.

Eyewitnesses said three of the victims died inside the hall and the fourth collapsed and died in the yard of the DOCC as he tried to stagger away.

Police rushed to the scene and cordoned off the area. People, including journalists, were barred from going beyond the cordon.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said last night that police were told that the shootings took place while members of the Baragwanath Taxi Association were holding a meeting.

He said a group of men burst into the hall and started firing shots at the taximen.

(332)

Ngobeni said the names of the dead would only be made known when their next-of-kin had been notified.

He said of the dead, two were members of the Baragwanath Taxi Association while the other two were part of the group of attackers.

Police found 50 spent cartridges and two rounds of ammunition at the scene.

Four of the injured people were identified as Miss Nomsa Nhleko (25), Mr Kenneth Nkosi, Mr Jacob Moatla and Mr Hamilton Sibisi.

The clash is believed to be associated with the on-going taxi feud in Soweto which, before yesterday, had claimed the lives of more than 10 taxi operators and commuters since June.

Meanwhile, three passengers were seriously injured when gunmen shot at taxis driving past Leondale bridge on Black Reef Road in Alberton on the East Rand yesterday.

Police said the injured were admitted to Natalspruit Hospital.

In Daveyton, also on the East Rand, Mr Sipho Hlongwane (32) was injured when he was shot in the chest from a passing car while off-loading stones in the township.

He was admitted to Boksburg-Benoni Hospital.

East Rand police said they did not know the motive for either attack.

Gunmen target commuters in series of attacks

Star 9/9/93

Taxi carnage goes on

332

SCREAMING commuters were mown down as AK-47 thugs struck during rush hour

■ BY BRENDAN TEMPLETON

Two more taxi commuters were shot dead on the East Rand early today following last night's cold-blooded killing of 21 people and the wounding of 25 others in Wadeville, Germiston.

The latest attacks, in Black Reef Road near Leondale, bring the death toll in taxi-related violence to 28.

Earlier yesterday four members of the Bara-City Taxi Association (BCTA) were shot dead during an election meeting in Orlando, Soweto, and a queue marshal was gunned down in Noord Street, Johannesburg.

The Germiston commuters were killed in two attacks within 4 km of each other. Police spokesman Major Eugene Opperman said the first massacre at the Hokaai taxi rank on the corner of Dekema and Lantern roads, where 19 people died and 22 were wounded, was one of the "most cold-blooded to date".

Witnesses said two minibus taxis stopped on either side of the rank at 6 pm and about 10 men started firing on commuters queueing to go home.

Pandemonium broke out as screaming people ran from one side of the rank to the other, only to meet a withering hail of gunfire blocking their hoped-for escape route.

Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel called on township residents to help police track down the killers.

Medical attention . . . police and ambulancemen attend to one of the victims shot at the Black Reef Road intersection last night. The man was wounded in the head and leg.

PICTURE: STEPHEN DAVIMES

"It is the prevailing culture of violence in places such as the East Rand which provides the seedbed for outrages such as these," he said.

ANC spokesman Carl Niehaus said last night he believed the massacre of commuters was linked to Tuesday night's breakthrough in negotiations regarding the transitional executive council.

"The pattern seems to be too well established," he said. "We believe there's a very clear pattern of third force activity stoking violence."

The Inkatha Freedom Party has expressed shock and horror at the latest massacre adding that there was still time to save the peace process.

Bodies last night lay beneath morgue sheets at the corner of the small shopping centre where people had desperately tried to find shelter from the gunfire.

Ironically, the shop wall which had failed to protect them belonged to the Good Luck Butchery. An assistant who went home to feed her children, returned to the shop to find that the chair on which she normally sits was full of bullet holes.

Taxi driver Sawu Vilakazi said he was about to drive off when a gunman ran in front of his minibus and fired straight at him. Four others fired from the side.

Vilakazi leapt from his taxi and ran for the shelter of the nearby shops while his passengers desperately tried to jump from windows and the door facing the gunmen. Three of them were killed.

Toni Iglauer was driving into his engineering firm at the centre when he heard the gunfire and saw people flee.

"There were bodies every where. It sounded like a mini war. There was no reason (for the shooting). Most of these people were just going home after a day's work.

"I went into the factory and administered first aid. My wife telephoned the emergency numbers straight away and the only thing we could do was try to give them whatever support was possible."

While police were scouring the scene for clues at about 8.10 pm, news came of another shooting 4 km away.

Police and the press sped off to the scene, where police and ambulancemen were administering first aid to victims. A witness said two men on the side of the road had fired on their taxi with AK-47s. Two people were killed and three injured.

Opperman said it was too early to say if the shootings, which occurred close to the scene where 12 people were massacred at Scaw Metals last month, were linked.

Anna Louw reports that two people were seriously wounded when gunmen opened fire on a minibus from Katlehong in Black Reef Road this morning.

Shortly afterwards the same gunmen opened fire on another minibus travelling on the same road. A passenger was seriously wounded.

Kriel said the killing emphasised the need for political leaders to constructively address the climate of violence.

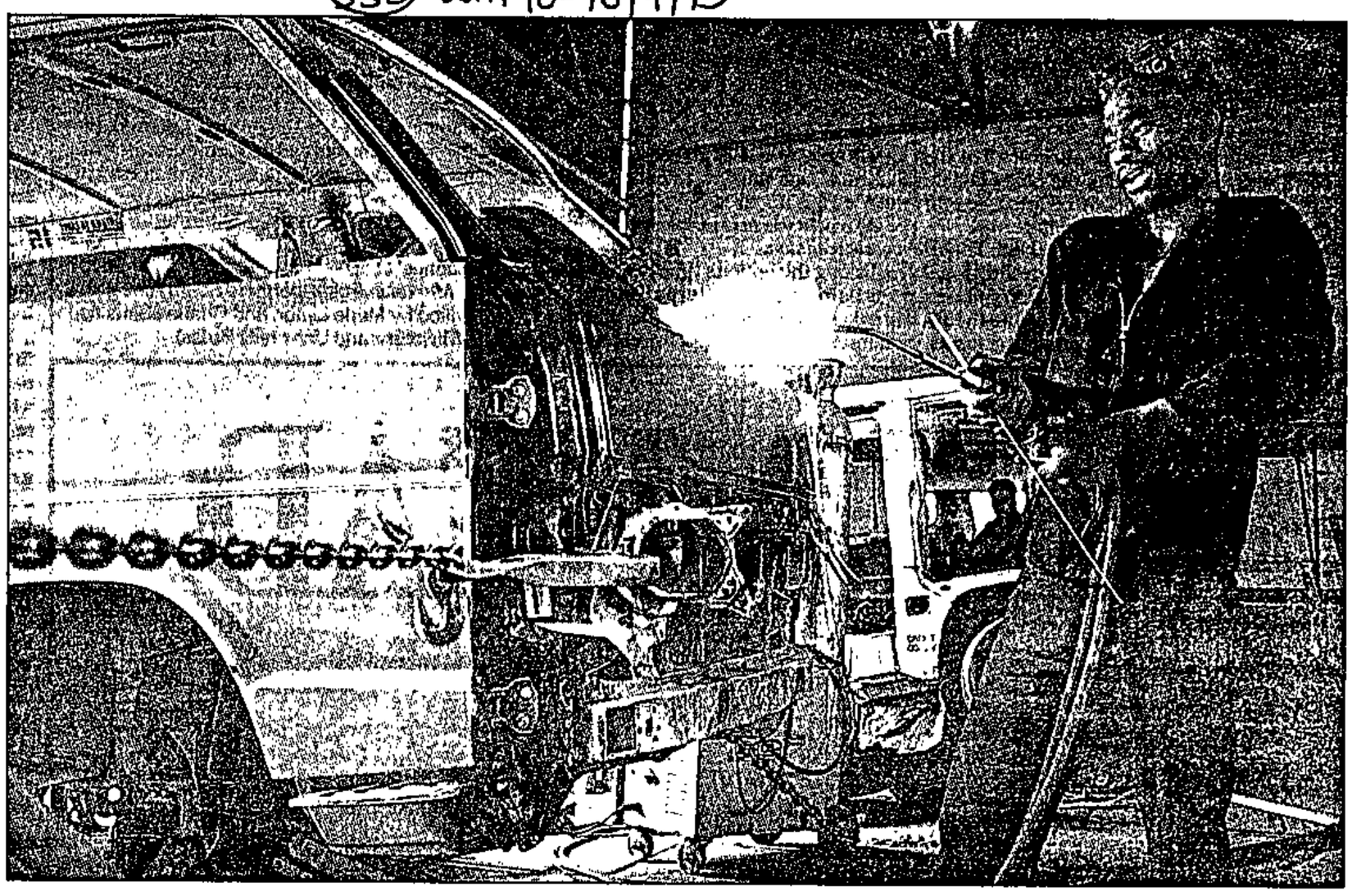
■ The Human Rights Commission reported yesterday that 121 people died in violence in South Africa in the past week.

4/BUSINESS

Riding to the rescue of the taxi industry

(332) WM 10-16/9/93

The cheap fares which saw most commuters change from other modes of transport to taxis have almost ruined the minibus taxi industry itself. Mondli Makhanya looks at what is needed to save the industry



Getting back on the road ... The overhaul being done on this taxi at a Selby panelbeaters needs to be extended to the entire industry PHOTOGRAPH: RUTH MOTAU

THE minibus taxi industry may be saved from certain disaster if various proposals on transportation integration and diversification come to fruition.

Having wiped out the profits of major bus companies and crippled the railways, the taxi business is now in awkward position of being the main public transport provider but not able to make money. Most taxi operators are operating at a loss and the recession has exacerbated this, resulting in an average repossession of 80 vehicles a month.

Because it is the premier mode of public transportation — being patronized by about 50 percent of daily commuters — the taxi industry has become central to the current public transport policy debate.

What policy makers and players in the transport industry recognise is that the longer the taxi industry is allowed to operate at a loss, the more likely taxi wars will explode over routes and passengers. And the longer the taxi industry is treated in the present haphazard way, the more chaotic the public transportation system in South Africa will become.

Taxi operators themselves have noted that overtrading and artificially low fares have virtually wiped out profits in the industry. Recent studies have shown that taxis operating from the furthermost part of Soweto to Johannesburg, and which are charging peak-hour fares of R2,80 should be charging R6,50. The low fares are both a result of community pressure as well as the market.

Taxi owners are also set to come under a lot more pressure in the near future as unionisation gathers momentum in the industry. Present wages and working conditions are atrocious and the industry has yet to wake up to the concept of collective bargaining.

"Taxi drivers are in the same position as farmworkers and domestic workers used to be," says Transport and General Workers' Union organiser Randall Howard.

Seeing that communities would never be able afford such an expensive service, taxi owners are now demanding government subsidies to make up the difference.

There is now a lot of behind-the-scenes haggling, horsetrading and idea-swapping between the various players in the transport industry about the role of the various transport modes.

At its annual conference last week, the South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) issued a desperate call for government subsidies for taxis, in the same vein as that given to bus companies and the state-owned South African Rail Commuter Corporation.

In their call for taxi subsidies, Sabta and other taxi associations are not without allies. Johannesburg councillor Paul Asherson feels they are entitled to them.

"Taxis have saved the taxpayer a fortune, especially since the mid-Eighties. If it hadn't been for them we would have had to subsidise Putco and the other bus companies at two to three times the rate at which they are being subsidised. It's really unfair that taxis should have to compete on the same routes with subsidised companies and not get any relief themselves," Asherson says.

But the proviso, Asherson and others say, is that this should occur within an integrated transport system whereby the various modes would support each other and a single ticketing systems would apply to all of them.

Johannesburg has led the way in this regard, with its Buxi project. This will involve taxis taking over the routes on which municipality buses are not viable and a sharing of subsidies over these routes.

Integration of the different modes is also a precondition that has been set by the government, which has in the past been quite intransigent on the issue. Transport Department director general Coen Scheepers told the Sabta conference integration, along with improved orderliness would be prerequisites for subsdisation.

Furthermore, Scheepers said, this would have to be within the confines of the present budget and would have to take into cognisance of more urgent social spending priorities.

While not opposed to this arrangement, the taxi industry has stated it does not wish to be confined to playing feeder to the other modes.

"What we want is that this should be on a contractual basis. We should be allowed to operate 25-seaters to feed in to the buses and let the 15-seaters continue what they are doing," the National Federated Transport Organisation's Peter Raball says.

Another strong feeling among taxi operators is that the consumer should have a choice as to the mode he wants to use.

Says Sabta representative Happy Mahlangu: "The commuter must have a coupon which he can use on all modes. He will then be able to choose which he wants to use."

The mechanics of implementing the subsidies are also subject to a lot of debate. Options include paying the commuter directly through employers or through government rebates — the taxi industry would prefer to be paid directly.

"If we are working on an average break even costs of R1,76 per passenger-kilometre and a reasonable profit margin is R2 we will charge the passenger R1,76 and the subsidy will go towards the profit margin," Mahlangu suggests.

But that's not to say the taxi industry is sitting back and waiting for manna to fall down on them from Pretoria.

Sabta is studying areas into which taxi operators can diversify in order to become more profitable. Chief among these are shuttling hotel guests to airports and tourist resorts, and freight transportation.

LONGRAIL F-M 10/9/93

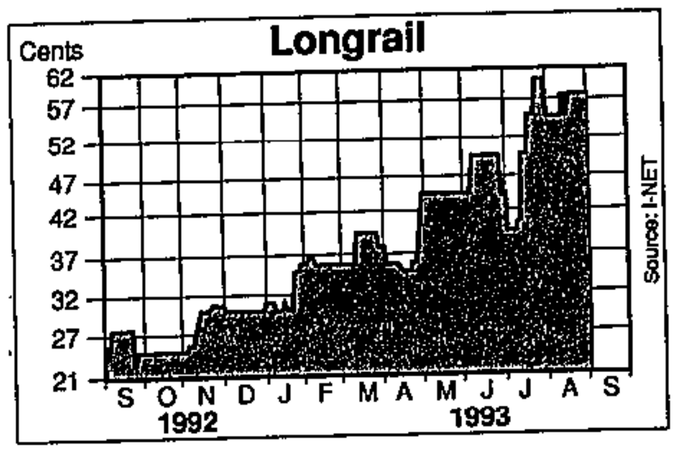
Interest curbing profits

Activities: *Long distance road transportation, warehousing, storage and local distribution of manufactured goods and raw materials.*
Control: *Directors 58%.* (332)
Chairman: *W G Lynch; MD: M H O Els.*
Capital structure: *31m ords. Market capitalisation: R18m.*
Share market: *Price: 58c. Yields: 4,3% on dividend; 13,1% on earnings; p:e ratio, 7,6; cover, 3,0. 12-month high, 60c; low, 23c. Trading volume last quarter, 616 000 shares.*

Year to February 28	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	8,6	5,7	6,1	7,8
LT debt (Rm)	14,9	8,4	9,4	17,7
Debt:equity ratio	1,08	1,07	0,86	1,91
Shareholders' interest	0,32	0,31	0,29	0,23
Int & leasing cover	3,0	2,7	2,9	2,3
Return on cap (%)	17,2	17,7	15,2	13,4
Turnover (Rm)	45,4	53,1	63,1	70,6
Pre-int profit (Rm)	9,9	6,4	6,4	7,5
Pre-int margin (%)	11,9	12,1	10,2	10,6
Earnings (c)	5,5	5,2	7,6	7,6
Dividends (c)	nil	4,5	4,0	2,5
Tangible NAV (c)	30	36	39	41

Diversified transport company Longrail continued to show a steady improvement in performance in 1993, after 1991's slide in turnover. But, with massive spending on new assets, management decided to reduce the dividend by 38% to 2,5c and to offer shareholders a scrip dividend option.

Turnover, in the year to end-February, increased 12% to R70,6m, thanks to a number of long-term contracts secured during the year. Improved operational efficiencies widened margins and saw operating income



up 17% at R7,5m. But profit was whittled away by a 47% increase in the interest bill and a higher tax charge. Attributable income was almost unchanged at R2,3m or 7,6c a share. F-M 10/9/93

Capex of R17,4m, two-and-a-half times that spent the previous year, partly explains the 65% jump in debt to R25,5m. Gearing more than doubled to 191%. But chairman Bill Lynch is confident gearing will be reduced this year. He says lower interest rates and positive cash flow from operations will cut borrowing costs and this will enable strong earnings growth. (332)

Perhaps the most significant development for Longrail is the 25% stake in the group acquired in May by Imperial Holdings subsidiary Regent Insurance for R3,1m (40c a share), with the option to acquire a further 26% before June 1997.

Management, who could not be reached for comment on the more recent performance, reckons the company will continue to grow this year though further mass action could disrupt activities. This, with reduced capex — R3,4m against R5,4m — suggests investors may be content to forgo the dividend and look for growth in 1994.

At 58c, the share now trades above NAV. Though the price has improved steadily over the past 12 months from a low of 23c, any further rerating will depend partly on management's ability to lighten gearing.

Marylou Greig

Tickets clipped at same price

PRG 13/9/93 (3[illegible])

FARES on Golden Arrow buses will not be increased after Wednesday's fuel price rise.

A company spokeswoman said fares would be pegged at their present level for as long as possible in spite of the second increase in fuel prices this year. Z(332[illegible])

The company was aware of the negative impact transport costs had on the poor and hoped that its decision not to increase fares would help all passengers, particularly the jobless, she said.

Taxis blockade fuel outlets

CT 14/9/93 (332) CT 14/9/93

EAST LONDON. — Thousands of minibus taxis blockaded petrol stations and depots in the Border region yesterday to protest against the fuel price increase.

A taximan was shot dead in a confrontation at Mdantsane near here and shots were fired at a Stutterheim garage.

Thousands of commuters were left without transport and employers were hit by absenteeism.

Motorists were unable to get petrol in King William's Town and Stutterheim as taximen stopped filling stations and depots from supplying fuel.

The Engen fuel depot on the West Bank here was sealed off by more than 1 000 taxis. Three taxi associations were to have handed a memorandum to Engen, but called it off when no representative senior to the depot manager was available to accept it.

Protests over the 7c/ petrol increase, which comes into effect tomorrow, were also reported from Queenstown, Aliwal North, Alice and Fort Beaufort.

Taxi industry sources expressed fears that the protest might spread to other centres. — Sapa

Death toll on the East Rand rises to 28

THE death toll in the East Rand townships since Friday rose to 28 yesterday when a man was stabbed to death at a taxi rank near Katlehong. B/Day

This was reported shortly after police said they had found 12 bodies in Thokoza, Katlehong and Vosloorus on Sunday.

Police said they were investigating the possibility of a taxi feud after finding a body at the taxi rank.

More than 1 000 people have died in political violence in East Rand townships since negotiators set a date for the elections in July.

Saboteurs also caused damage worth R1000 000 at the Bedworth Park electricity substation between Sharpeville and Vereeniging yesterday. Police said commercial explosives were used, but no one had been injured. 14/9/93

A man claiming to be Azanian National Liberation Army field commander Smiley Jones phoned Sapa claiming responsibility.

In Durban it was reported at least nine people had been killed in violence in Umlazi, bringing the weekend toll in Natal to more than 22, KwaZulu Police said yesterday.

In the Natal Midlands, Estcourt's Wembezi township was tense after two weekend killings. — Sapa

Dismay at Goniwe inquest

B/Day 14/9/93

Own Correspondent

PORT ELIZABETH — Murmurs of dismay broke out in the Port Elizabeth Supreme Court when a Cradock businessman was quoted as saying that "the only solution" to unrest was to "put Matthew Goniwe against a wall and shoot him".

Former Cradock Command head Cmdt Gerhardus Botha Marais was in the witness box yesterday during the Goniwe inquest. Questioning him about the attitude of Cradock's white business community in 1985, advocate Glen Goosen, appearing for retired SADF Col Lourens du Plessis, quoted a report in the publication Die Zuid Afikaan in which an unnamed businessman recommended that Goniwe and other political activists be shot.

Goosen asked Marais if "this was the attitude of the white business community to Goniwe". Marais replied that "such a proposal was never made to me".

Sapa reports that Marais admitted to being involved in covert operations in the '80s, but refused to give details. He also refused to give evidence on "Operation Katzen", an SADF plan to depose former Ciskei President Lennox Sebe.

Marais conceded that it was possible that security force elements could have killed Goniwe and three other Cradock activists, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkonto and Sicelo Mhlauli, in June 1985.

Circumstances surrounding the murders were such that they could be interpreted as "covert action", he said. While it was unlikely that Azapo members had executed the murders, this could not be excluded as a possibility, he added.

Marais denied that the security forces in Cradock had planned the murders.

Taxi blockade brings towns to a standstill

THEO RAWANA

TOWNS in the Border region came to a standstill yesterday as thousands of taxis blockaded petrol stations and depots in protest against the fuel price increase.

Motorists were unable to get petrol in King William's Town, East London, Queenstown, Aliwal North and Stutterheim as taximen stopped filling stations and fuel depots from supplying petrol to vehicles.

Shots were fired at a Stutterheim service station in the afternoon. No one was injured but a minibus taxi parked on the premises was damaged, Sapa reports. B/Day

Taxi industry sources feared the protest could spread to the big cities.

ANC Border region media officer Mcebisi Bata said after a meeting with the ANC, the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), the action was reduced to a selective blockade in which petrol stations were allowed to supply fuel to essential services vehicles, such as ambulances.

Bata said taxi organisations in the region took the decision to blockade filling stations on Friday.

Army spokesman Col Herman Boshoff said about 600 minibus taxis blocked access to BP, Engen and Total fuel depots in East London. The army had not taken any action and was trying to negotiate a settlement.

"But if the blockade continues, we will have to use force," he said.

Bata said the ANC alliance supported the right of people to protest. "We are concerned at the hike and believe the demands of the taximen are legitimate." He said the alliance's concern was to minimise the effects of the blockade on the people.

National African Federated Transport Organisation secretary Ntise Matlhoko said his organisation had warned government the increase could cause violence in the taxi industry. 14/9/93

Mineral and Energy Affairs Ministry media spokesman Carel du Tois said the price increase would go ahead at midnight tonight.

Border Chamber of Commerce spokesman Errol Spring said business was badly affected. People arrived late for work because of lack of transport. (332)

Cape Town bus company Golden Arrow announced it would not increase commuter fares as a result of diesel price hike.

Reuter reports that Mercedes-Benz of SA halted production yesterday after the taxi drivers blockaded oil companies near its East London plant. It was hoped production would resume tomorrow.

● Comment: Page 10

Hope fades for m

Blood on the tracks (above) a victim of train violence and (right) home can be dangerous as well.

Avoiding the death queue is a tricky business

Sowetan 14/9/93

By Musa Zondi

SAD TIMES *No matter which way we turn, death is never far away:*

332

BLACK COMMUTERS in this country are faced with a very difficult choice every morning they leave home for work or travel from work to home.

The choice is which death queue they pin their hopes on. Will it be safe to be on a train or will it be safe in a taxi today?

Will Putco be the better choice or the bicycle or the motorbike? What about walking or maybe hitching a lift in a private car?

These are the life-and-death questions. A colleague who stays on the East Rand says every morning the question of safety crosses his mind.

"But you can die anywhere. It does not really matter where you are or what mode of transport you are using," he said.

As he enters the taxi he uses every day, he thinks: "This could be your last ride". If you are in a taxi, you can die under a hail of gunfire from faceless attackers who are never caught by the police.

This is what happened in Wadeville on Wednesday last week.

This might sound like a sick idea, but *Sowetan* went to areas where people take transport to work. Looking at the faces of those people, bright and beautiful in the spring morning, we couldn't help but think that they might not make it home.

"You can die anywhere. It really does not matter where you are or what mode of transport you are using."

The crispy clean and expensive clothes might be drenched in blood later in the day as these people bleed for crimes they know nothing about.

Little packets of Smarties and other goodies that these people will bring home might be strewn all over the road after the taxi, or whatever form of transport, has been ambushed.

The waiting husband or wife might have to wait forever. The children might have to wait forever. It is an unending, waiting game.

It does not really matter what form of transport you use or what class of society you fall into. What matters is the colour of your skin.

You can die anywhere. You can also die under a hail of machine gunfire as taxi owners fight it out. You can die while alighting from a Putco bus. You can be shot while waiting for transport to take you home.

If you are lucky enough to get home, a car might just drive up as you walk to the door of your home and its occupants, faceless thugs, pump you full of lead.

Lucky enough

But if you were lucky enough to get into your house and have supper with your family, try and enjoy it while you can, because you and your family might not wake up in the morning.

If your idea of drowning your sorrow is visiting a shebeen, then people in Sebokeng will tell you that this is not safe either. A lot of people have died while playing parley-parley with holy water. You can die in a night vigil while going to pay your last respects to those who died in a hail of bullets.

These days, you can die practically anywhere. It is just a matter of timing.

Be at the right place at the right time and you will survive. Be at the wrong place at the wrong time and you are dead meat — literally and figuratively.

But you will never know what the right place or the right time is — unless the gods are on your side.

Taxi blockade brings towns to a standstill

THEO RAWANA

TOWNS in the Border region came to a standstill yesterday as thousands of taxis blockaded petrol stations and depots in protest against the fuel price increase.

Motorists were unable to get petrol in King William's Town, East London, Queenstown, Aliwal North and Stutterheim as taximen stopped filling stations and fuel depots from supplying petrol to vehicles.

Shots were fired at a Stutterheim service station in the afternoon. No one was injured but a minibus taxi parked on the premises was damaged, Sapa reports. B/Day

Taxi industry sources feared the protest could spread to the big cities.

ANC Border region media officer Mcebisi Bata said after a meeting with the ANC, the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), the action was reduced to a selective blockade in which petrol stations were allowed to supply fuel to essential services vehicles, such as ambulances.

Bata said taxi organisations in the region took the decision to blockade filling stations on Friday.

Army spokesman Col Herman Boshoff said about 600 minibus taxis blocked access to BP, Engen and Total fuel depots in East London. The army had not taken any action and was trying to negotiate a settlement.

"But if the blockade continues, we will have to use force," he said.

Bata said the ANC alliance supported the right of people to protest. "We are concerned at the hike and believe the demands of the taximen are legitimate." He said the alliance's concern was to minimise the effects of the blockade on the people.

National African Federated Transport Organisation secretary Ntise Matlhoko said his organisation had warned government the increase could cause violence in the taxi industry. 14/9/93

Mineral and Energy Affairs Ministry media spokesman Carel du Tois said the price increase would go ahead at midnight tonight.

Border Chamber of Commerce spokesman Errol Spring said business was badly affected. People arrived late for work because of lack of transport. (322)

Cape Town bus company Golden Arrow announced it would not increase commuter fares as a result of diesel price hike.

Reuter reports that Mercedes-Benz of SA halted production yesterday after the taxi drivers blockaded oil companies near its East London plant. It was hoped production would resume tomorrow.

● Comment: Page 10

(332) ARG 15/9/93

Taxi blockade brings city to standstill

(From page 1)

group of drivers in Strand Street after the blockade near the Castle was lifted, Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) president Kidwell Magwayi slated drivers for picking up passengers in the townships and then dumping them at Groote Schuur Hospital without warning.

He said the taxi industry could not win the fight against the petrol price increase by random blockades and by treating commuters badly.

Pictures by Argus photographers DOUG PITHEY and LEON MÜLLER

Traffic officials first reported a convoy of 30 taxis converging on the city about 5.40am and motorists drove into blockades from 6.06am.

Earlier, taxi drivers held a half-hour meeting with General Acker to discuss the arrest of their colleagues and the impounding of their vehicles during the city centre protest.

In a statement, police said 68 people had been arrested for attending an illegal gathering and obstructing traffic.

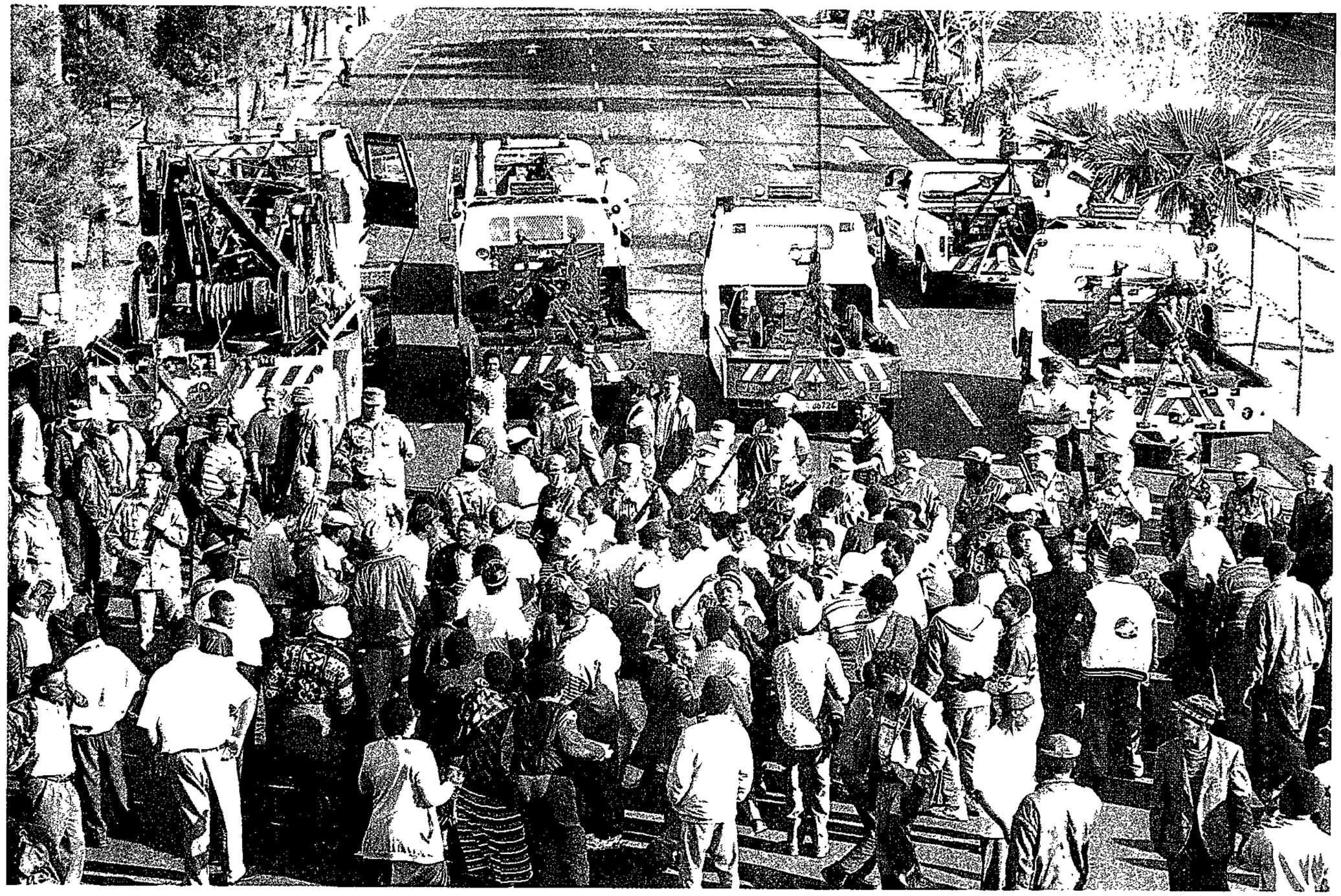
"During the discussions with General Acker, it was decided that no charges would be withdrawn but that where possible persons arrested would be released on a written warning to appear in court and that taxis would be handed back to the legal owners thereof," the police statement said.

At the height of the morning rush-hour blockade, hundreds of motorists had to abandon their vehicles in Woodstock and walk into Cape Town as taxis blocked Sir Lowry Road.

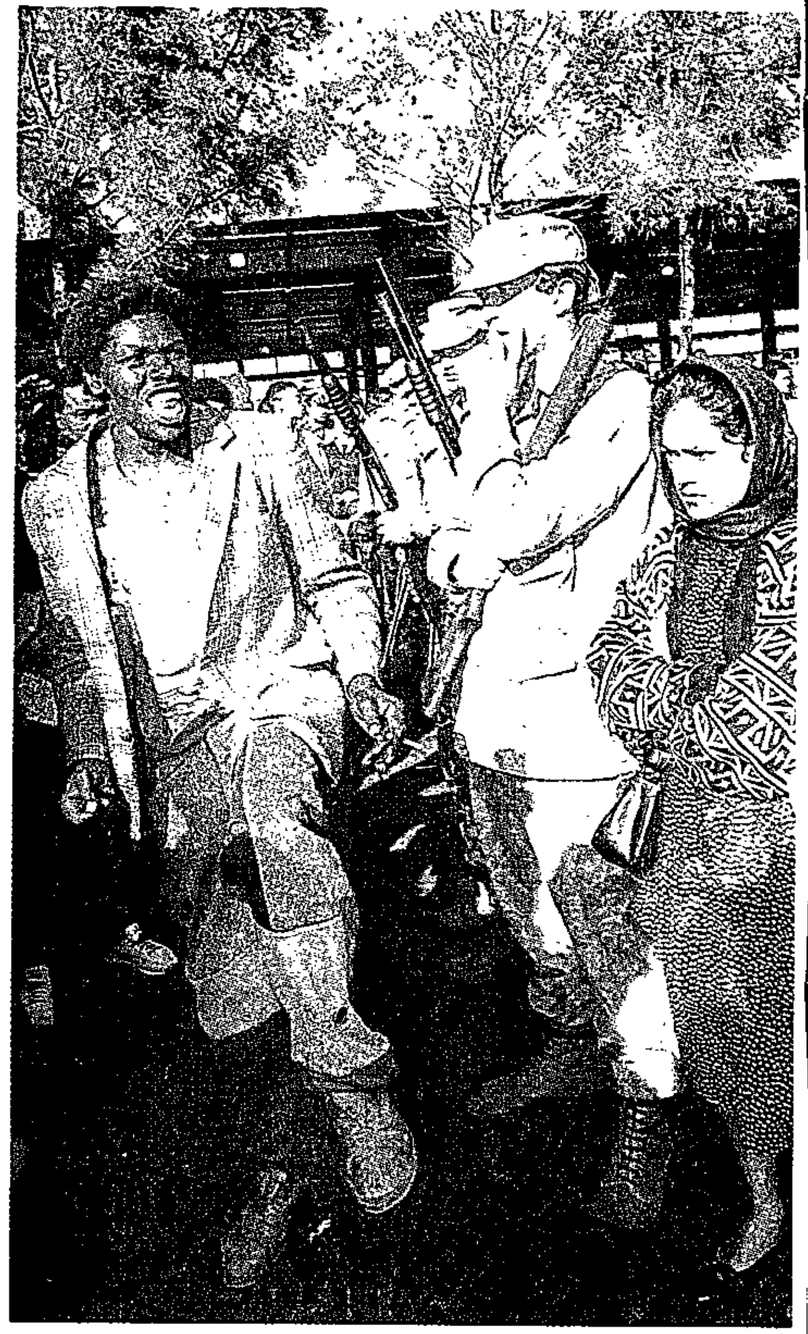
Main intersections leading into the city centre were still blocked at 9.30am and the Eastern Boulevard freeway was closed from Searle Street in Woodstock to the city centre.

Traffic was being diverted into Searle Street and through the Kaisergracht.

Thousands of commuters were caught in kilometres-long tailbacks, while others were trapped as they came off freeways and ran into the blockade.



WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED: Tow trucks line up in readiness to tow away taxis blocking roads into the city this morning.



DANCE OF DEFIANCE: An animated taxi driver toyi-toyis before a group of policemen near the Parade.

Eastern Boulevard and the N2 were closed by traffic officials but thousands of cars already on the road faced long delays as traffic backed up as far as the Athlone power station.

De Waal Drive and the N1 were clear of blockades, but congested with traffic taking evasive action.

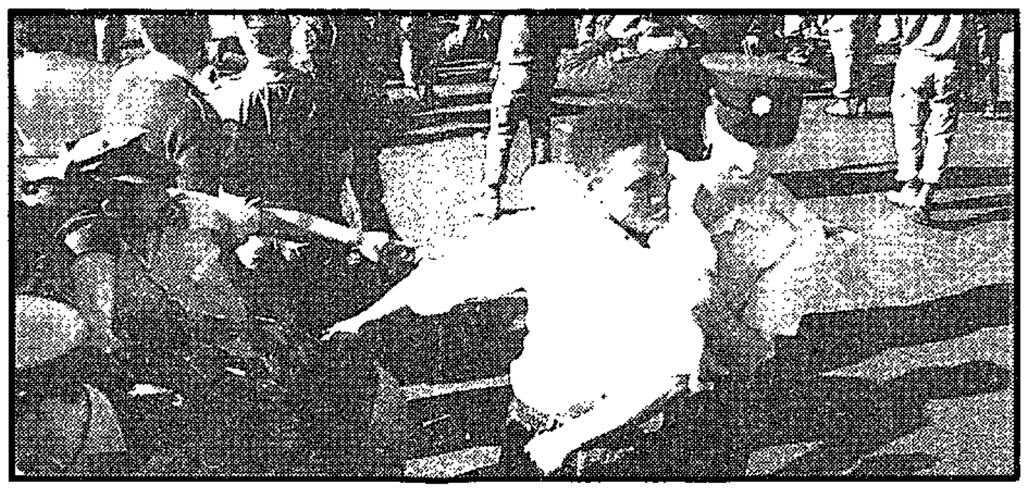
Scores of motorists on Eastern Boulevard turned around and tried to run against the traffic, seeking a turn-off, a move condemned by traffic officials as "extremely dangerous".

Taxi drivers evolved a "chain strategy" to form consecutive blockades at different places in the city after senior police and traffic officers persuaded them disperse at some blockades.

Pandemonium broke out in the city centre about 10am when shots were fired in Strand Street as police moved to arrest a number of taxi drivers and towed away at least 12 vehicles.

Bottles and stones were hurled at policemen who retaliated with birdshot and rubber bullets.

Tow trucks then moved in



WALK THIS WAY: A protester is arrested in Strand Street.

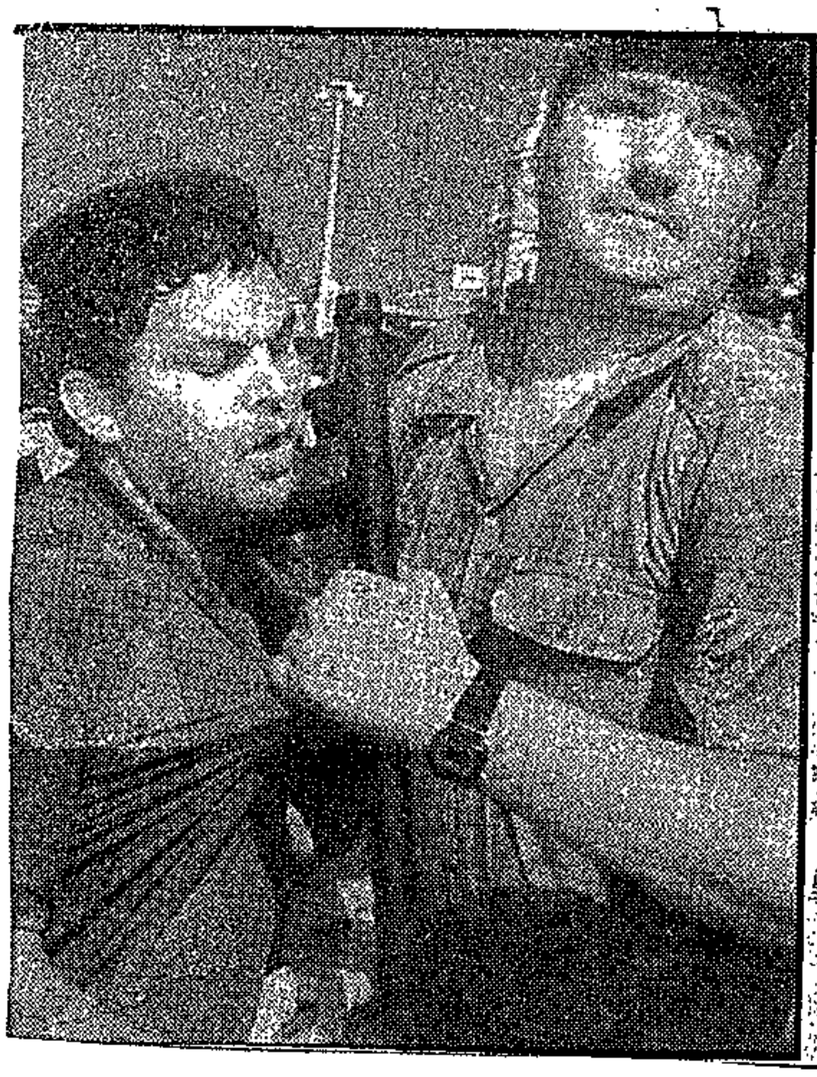
UP AND AWAY: Police carry away one of the demonstrators.

Arg 15/9/93

Pictures: DOUG PITHEY and LEON MÜLLER, The Argus.

FIRING: Members of the Internal Stability Unit, above, open fire with birdshot oh protesting taxidrivers as clouds of teargas drift across Strand Street.

MORE PICTURES PAGE 6



TAKEAWAY: A protester is dragged to a vehicle after police pounced on blockading taxi drivers in the city centre today.

Aeq 15/9/93

Taxidemo chaos

Picture: JOHAN SCHRÖNEN, The Argus.

BLOCKADE: Minibus taxis, right, block Strand Street near the Parade during today's protest against the seven cents a litre rise in the petrol price.

Picture DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

LIGHTER MOMENT: A policeman obliges a nervous smoker from the ranks of protesting taxi drivers shortly before the two groups clashed in Strand Street.

Staff Reporters

POLICE fired rubber bu lets and rubber shot, a rested 68 people and in pounded 25 taxis a drivers blockaded mo of the major routes int Cape Town early toda causing chaos with rusl hour traffic.

Buses were stoned, bu drivers assaulted and number of policemen trea ed for cuts and bruises afte they were pelted wit stones, bottles and tin car in Strand Street.

Service stations and bus te minals in Mitchell's Plai Mowbray and Woodstock wer blockaded by the taxi driver protesting against the 7c rise i the petrol price from midnigh last night.

They demanded the resigna tion of Mineral and Energy Af fairs Minister George Bartlet and threatened to "come bac tomorrow" if the price did no come down.

At a press conference to dis cuss opposition to the petrol in crease, Mr Bartlett said he wa willing to talk to the leaders o the taxi protest.

An earlier offer made t them today had been turned down.

A meeting which began a noon between representative of the taxi industry and the major oil companies, Shell, BP and Engen, at the Civic Centre, chaired by peace monitors was adjourned until 2pm, with the drivers demanding that Mr Bartlett and Western Cape police chief Nic Acker attend.

Their demand was supported by oil company representatives.

At the meeting, Trevor Kempshall of the Western Cape Transport Forum called for a moratorium on fuel price increases and for the oil industry to support the demand for the suspension of last night's price increase.

By 8.45am nearly all main entrances into the central city had been blockaded.

By about 10,30am blockades had been removed and traffic was flowing again, but there were still scores of angry drivers sitting on the grass verge in Strand Street and there were a number of flying blockades operated by drivers who had dispersed and regrouped.

Volunteers for further city blockades were reportedly being recruited at high density taxi terminal areas at Mowbray, Mitchell's Plain, Claremont and on the Cape Flats at Hanover Park and Khayelitsha.

Afternoon commuters were reassured that other forms of public transport were available to get them home.

Both Spoornet and Golden Arrow reported their services would continue according to normal schedules.

A Golden Arrow spokesman said buses had to be diverted earlier today but were later running on schedule, especially with the peak hour in mind.

A spokesman said: "Bus drivers were assaulted, bus passengers were intimidated by taxi

The taxi drivers were slated by their leaders for acting in an undisciplined and disorganised way.

The bus company, Spoornet and the public had to be mobilised to join the protest as well, drivers were told.

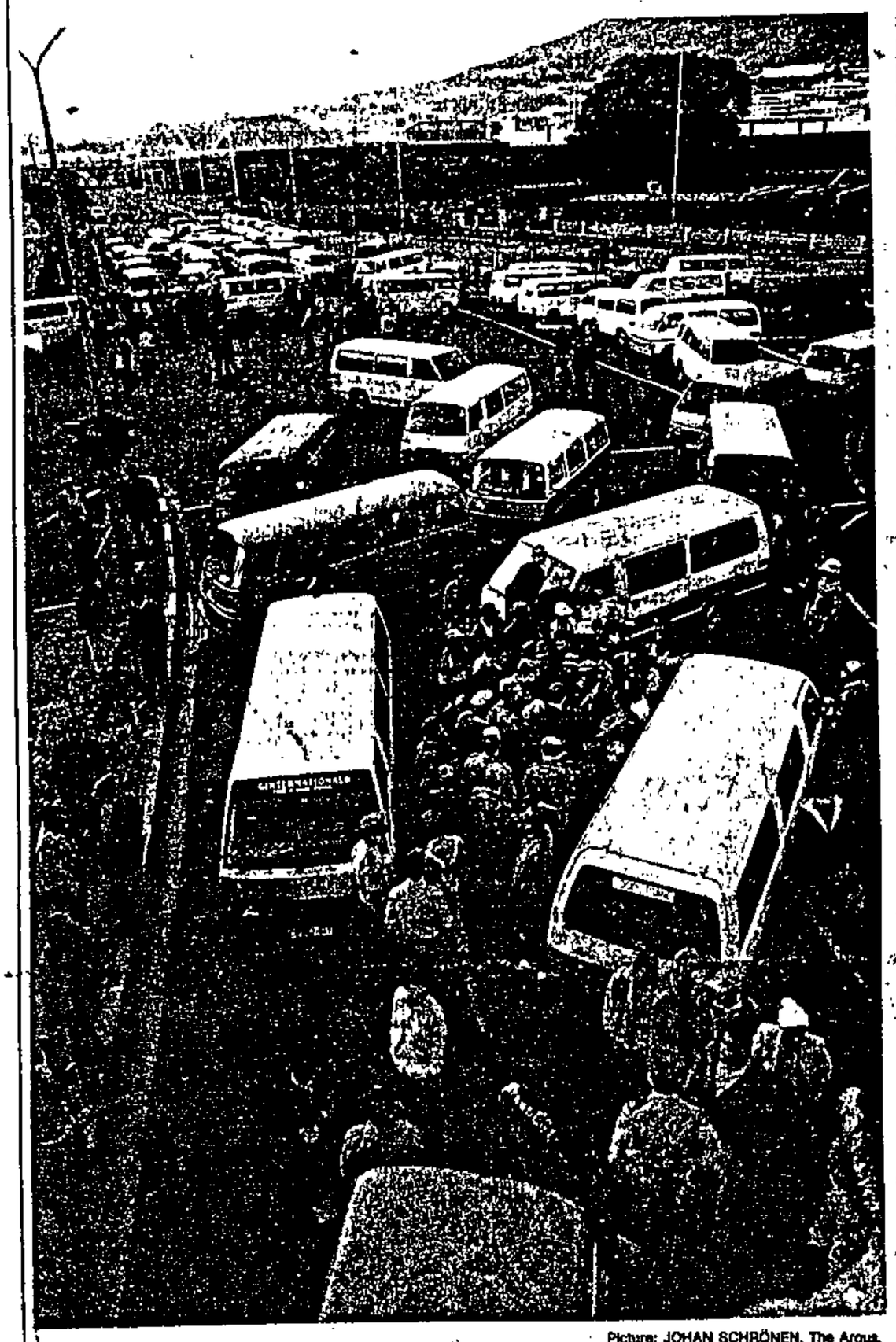
Speaking to an emotional

(Continued on page 6)

Taxi demo

(332) 15/9/93

□ Police fire rubber bullets and arrest 68 as drivers blockade streets i



Picture: JOHAN SCHRÖNEN, The Argus.

BLOCKADE: Minibus taxis, right, block Strand Street near the Parade during today's protest against the seven cents a litre rise in the petrol price.

Picture DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

LIGHTER MOMENT: A policeman obliges a nervous smoker from the ranks of protesting taxi drivers shortly before the two groups clashed in Strand Street.

Staff Reporters

POLICE fired rubber bullets and rubber shot, arrested 68 people and impounded 25 taxis as drivers blockaded most of the major routes into Cape Town early today, causing chaos with rush-hour traffic.

Buses were stoned, bus drivers assaulted and a number of policemen treated for cuts and bruises after they were pelted with stones, bottles and tin cans in Strand Street.

Service stations and bus terminals in Mitchell's Plain, Mowbray and Woodstock were blockaded by the taxi drivers, protesting against the 7c rise in the petrol price from midnight last night.

They demanded the resignation of Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett and threatened to "come back tomorrow" if the price did not come down.

At a press conference to discuss opposition to the petrol increase, Mr Bartlett said he was willing to talk to the leaders of the taxi protest.

An earlier offer made to them today had been turned down.

A meeting which began at noon between representatives of the taxi industry and the major oil companies, Shell, BP and Engen, at the Civic Centre, chaired by peace monitors was adjourned until 2pm, with the drivers demanding that Mr Bartlett and Western Cape police chief Nic Acker attend.

Their demand was supported by oil company representatives.

At the meeting, Trevor Kempshall of the Western Cape Transport Forum called for a moratorium on fuel price increases and for the oil industry to support the demand for the suspension of last night's price increase.

By 8.45am nearly all main entrances into the central city had been blockaded.

By about 10.30am blockades had been removed and traffic was flowing again, but there were still scores of angry drivers sitting on the grass verge in Strand Street and there were a number of flying blockades operated by drivers who had dispersed and regrouped.

Volunteers for further city blockades were reportedly being recruited at high density taxi terminal areas at Mowbray, Mitchell's Plain, Claremont and on the Cape Flats at Hanover Park and Khayelitsha.

Afternoon commuters were reassured that other forms of public transport were available to get them home.

Both Spoornet and Golden Arrow reported their services would continue according to normal schedules.

A Golden Arrow spokesman said buses had to be diverted earlier today but were later running on schedule, especially with the peak hour in mind.

A spokesman said: "Bus drivers were assaulted, bus passengers were intimidated by taxi people at terminals and bus stops and people were physically prevented from using the buses."

The taxi drivers were slated by their leaders for acting in an undisciplined and disorganised way.

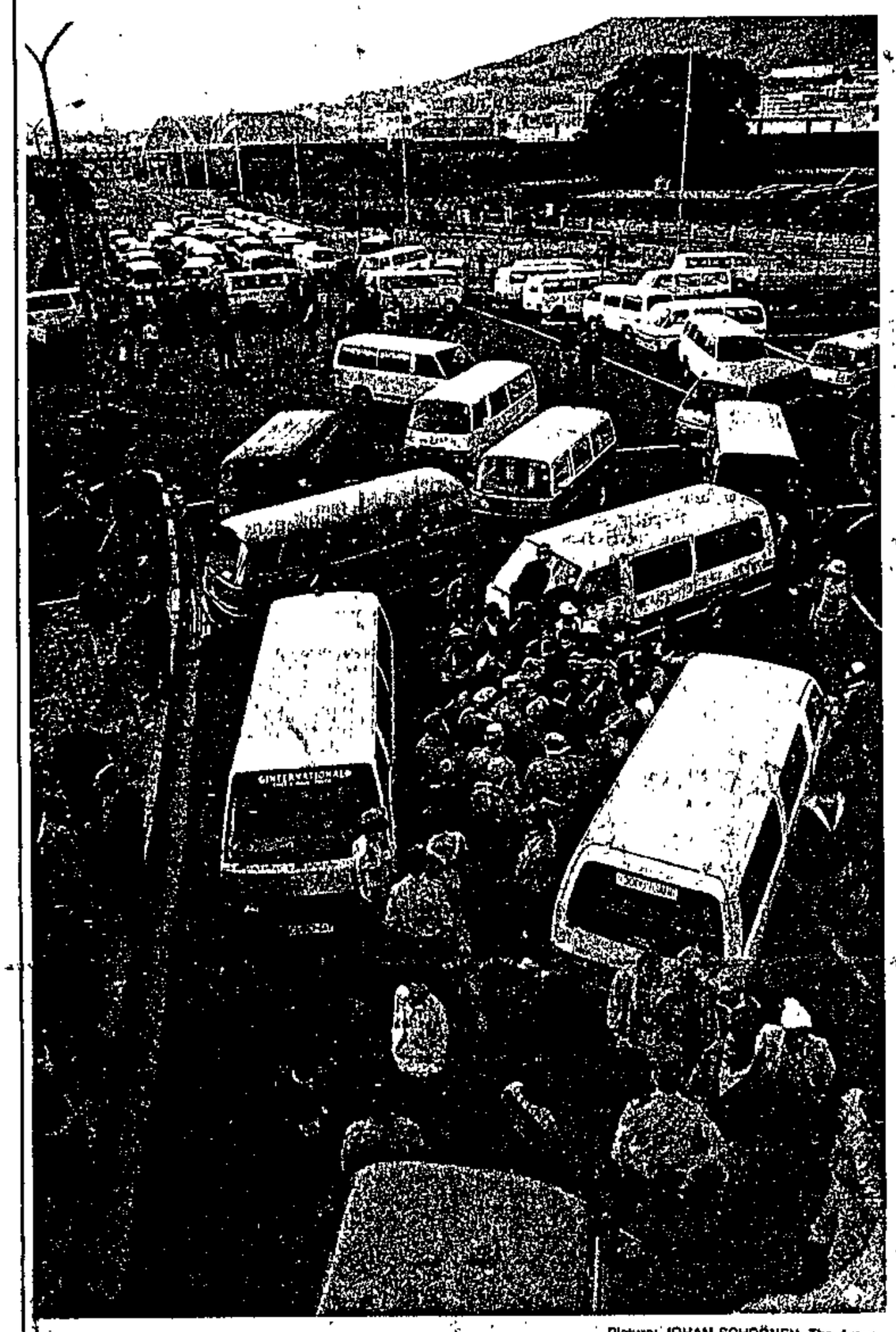
The bus company, Spoornet and the public had to be mobilised to join the protest as well, drivers were told.

Speaking to an emotional

(Continued on page 6)

Taxi demo

☐ Police fire rubber bullets and arrest 68 as drivers blockade streets i



Picture: JOHAN SCHRÖNEN, The Argus.

BLOCKADE: Minibus taxis, right, block Strand Street near the Parade during today's protest against the seven cents a litre rise in the petrol price.

Picture DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

LIGHTER MOMENT: A policeman obliges a nervous smoker from the ranks of protesting taxi drivers shortly before the two groups clashed in Strand Street.

Staff Reporters

POLICE fired rubber bullets and rubber shot, arrested 68 people and impounded 25 taxis as drivers blockaded most of the major routes into Cape Town early today, causing chaos with rush-hour traffic.

Buses were stoned, bus drivers assaulted and a number of policemen treated for cuts and bruises after they were pelted with stones, bottles and tin cans in Strand Street.

Service stations and bus terminals in Mitchell's Plain, Mowbray and Woodstock were blockaded by the taxi drivers, protesting against the 7c rise in the petrol price from midnight last night.

They demanded the resignation of Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett and threatened to "come back tomorrow" if the price did not come down.

At a press conference to discuss opposition to the petrol increase, Mr Bartlett said he was willing to talk to the leaders of the taxi protest.

An earlier offer made to them today had been turned down.

A meeting which began at noon between representatives of the taxi industry and the major oil companies, Shell, BP and Engen, at the Civic Centre, chaired by peace monitors was adjourned until 2pm, with the drivers demanding that Mr Bartlett and Western Cape police chief Nic Acker attend.

Their demand was supported by oil company representatives.

At the meeting, Trevor Kempshall of the Western Cape Transport Forum called for a moratorium on fuel price increases and for the oil industry to support the demand for the suspension of last night's price increase.

By 8.45am nearly all main entrances into the central city had been blockaded.

By about 10,30am blockades had been removed and traffic was flowing again, but there were still scores of angry drivers sitting on the grass verge in Strand Street and there were a number of flying blockades operated by drivers who had dispersed and regrouped.

Volunteers for further city blockades were reportedly being recruited at high density taxi terminal areas at Mowbray, Mitchell's Plain, Claremont and on the Cape Flats at Hanover Park and Khayelitsha.

Afternoon commuters were reassured that other forms of public transport were available to get them home.

Both Spoornet and Golden Arrow reported their services would continue according to normal schedules.

A Golden Arrow spokesman said buses had to be diverted earlier today but were later running on schedule, especially with the peak hour in mind.

A spokesman said: "Bus drivers were assaulted, bus passengers were intimidated by taxi people at terminals and bus stops and people were physically prevented from using the buses."

The taxi drivers were slated by their leaders for acting in an undisciplined and disorganised way.

The bus company, Spoornet and the public had to be mobilised to join the protest as well, drivers were told.

Speaking to an emotional

TAXI BLOCKADE ... Riot police arrest a protester during yesterday's blockade of Cape Town's city centre by taxi owners. The taxi operators were protesting against the increased petrol price which came into effect at midnight Tuesday.

Uproar over fuel

Sowetan 16/9/93

By Mzimkulu Malunga, Ismail Lagardien and Sapa

TWO CABINET MINISTERS are to be summoned to the National Economic Forum to explain the reasons behind the fuel price increase.

Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Mr George Bartlett and Finance Minister Mr Derek Keys have been called to an urgent meeting which will take place within two days to justify why the petrol price went up by 7c a litre yesterday.

The decision follows representations made to the NEF process committee by the Congress of South African Trade Unions yesterday amid widespread condemnation of the fuel price hike.

Cosatu's publicity officer, Mr Neil Coleman, said the organisation would call for the suspension of the increase and agitate for a broader investigation of issues relating to fuel price increases.

He said Cosatu would consult other interested forces to decide on appropriate forms of protest should the meeting fail to produce results.

"We know that nothing will happen without a fight and we know who we are dealing with," said Coleman. Earlier in the day Bartlett reneged on his previous statements on the fuel price and offered to meet representatives of the infuriated taxi drivers to discuss the issue.

He attributed his flexibility on the issue to a pending lifting of the United Nations oil embargo against South Africa.

About 68 people were arrested in Cape Town yesterday when taxi drivers blockaded the city centre in protest. A total of 25 vehicles were towed away and impounded at a police garage in Maitland.

Police later decided that charges would not be withdrawn but, where possible, those arrested would be released with a warning to appear in court and impounded vehicles would be returned.

Meanwhile, organised business has also threatened to join the anti-fuel hike protests with the president of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Mervyn King, warning that such action could turn into an "angry opposition".

The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association has strongly criticised the increase, saying it was done "insensitively".

The organisation's public affairs officer, Mr Isaac Nkama, said they had asked for a meeting with Bartlett to discuss previous increases "but before we could be given a date, the Government came up with another increase. We feel the hike was done quite insensitively".

332

ANC calls on taxi drivers for discipline

Staff Reporter 332

THE African National Congress has called on all taxi drivers taking part in blockades to do so in a "dignified and disciplined manner".

"In principle we support the blockade by taxi drivers who will be seriously affected by the (petrol) price increase and will be obliged to raise their fares, causing further hardship to commuters already struggling to make ends meet," regional vice-chairman Lerumo Kalako said.

Raising the fuel price was an "act of grave irresponsibility" by the government. It would have an impact on the price of food and other commodities.

But he expressed "serious reservations about some of the actions these taxi drivers are reported to have taken".

Meanwhile the Inkatha Freedom Party pronounced itself in favour of the taxi blockade.

Regional organiser Malcolm Bayley said Inkatha saw "no reason why the fuel price has gone up" and supported calls for the deregulation of the fuel industry.

ARG 16/9/93

"The IFP (Western Cape) supports the taxi blockade of Cape Town. It seems that the government is using fuel to prop up a failing economy and to subsidise a failed Mossgas project."

Police said they had no option but to take "action" against blockading taxi-drivers after all efforts at negotiations proved futile yesterday.

Chief police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said the police were "legally bound to maintain law and order and, where necessary, to maintain free-access to the city".

"All efforts (at negotiation) proved futile. Numerous suggested alternatives were met with ridicule and childish retorts like: 'It's now tea-time'," he said.

"Almost all the arrests effected were met with resistance."

● Murray and Roberts Construction has warned that "the construction industry is in no position to absorb any of the cost increases" resulting from the fuel price rise.

"Thus property developers and their clients will be saddled with the higher costs," managing director Arthur Coy said.

Forum in bid to defuse crisis

Petrol protest halts traffic in Cape Town

B/Day 16/9/93

THEO RAWANA

THE National Economic Forum yesterday requested an urgent meeting with Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett and Finance Minister Derek Keys as opposition to the petrol price mounted.

The forum said it had invited the two Ministers to discuss the latest price increase and "the composition of the petrol price more broadly".

As minibus taxi blockades spread from the Border region to Cape Town, Bartlett appealed for calm and said he was willing to meet a delegation of taxi owners.

Cape Town's city centre and surrounding areas were brought to a standstill as hundreds of minibus taxis blocked key intersections in protest against the fuel price rise, Sapa reports.

Morning rush-hour traffic was delayed on major freeways, particularly on the Eastern Boulevard where angry motorists turned around on the freeway and drove into the face of oncoming traffic. A section of the road was later closed to traffic.

Traffic disruptions also occurred on the Cape Flats and in Mitchells Plain.

Police in central Cape Town fired 19 rounds of rubber shot and two 37mm rubber rounds to disperse a crowd which pelted them with stones and bottles. About 68 people were arrested but no serious injuries were reported. A number of policemen received minor cuts and bruises. Three taxi drivers claimed to have been beaten with rubber batons.

Police towed away 25 minibuses. Later, police agreed that arrested drivers would be released on a written warning to appear in court and taxis would be returned.

Bartlett said the taxi industry had not been consulted on the increase because it was a market-related decision.

His media spokesman Carel du Toit confirmed that the Minister would meet a Border region taxi delegation in East London today. A broad forum against the petrol price increase is to be set up in the Border region today, amid reports that a protest blockade by taxi drivers will resume tomorrow.

The SA National Civic Organisation's southern Transvaal region pledged solidarity with the taxi operators. "It is not opportune to increase the petrol price at the time when our economy is beginning to show signs of recovery."

The Southern African Long Distance Taxi Organisation will petition parties at the World Trade Centre next week to protest against the rise.

Our Cape Town correspondent reports that in a fiery debate in Parliament, the DP said motorists were justifiably in revolt at the attempt to milk them in the

□ To Page 2

Petrol

B/Day 16/9/93

□ From Page 1

form of tariff protection payments of R250m a year to Mossgas and R850m a year to Sasol.

The CP said any government which had thrown R11bn of taxpayers' money "into the sea" because of a failed project like Mossgas should resign.

The Inkatha Freedom Party expressed grave concern at the increase and called for the fuel industry to be privatised.

Bartlett said he was happy to talk to all critics and interested parties about the complexities of the fuel industry. However, he was not prepared to allow groups like Cosatu to become involved in fuel price decision-making. "Government has the responsibility to make the decision."

But he invited all interested parties to make representations about how the liquid fuel industry might be restructured. "This is such a complex issue that everybody must have a say."

The lifting of the UN oil embargo, probably at the end of the month, would not mean cheaper petrol.

Bartlett said the country had gradually depleted its fuel equalisation fund by keeping the pump price below landed cost. The motorist had been buying petrol at 6c/l less than landed cost at the time the fuel price went up.

Complete deregulation of the fuel industry could damage the economy considerably if it was not done carefully.

Regarding supermarkets' schemes to discount petrol, Bartlett said supermarkets, if allowed, were likely to sell petrol below cost as "loss leaders" in a bid to attract consumers, who would end up paying for the difference in other purchases.

He said many of the claims being made in advertisements for cut-price fuel were misleading. "You don't get anything for nothing." If supermarkets were allowed to buy petrol on the spot market, SA would risk its massive refinery industry, worth R1,8bn in foreign exchange a year.

□ The Free State Agricultural Union's young farmers' committee called on government to urgently reconsider the price of diesel for agricultural purposes. The increased diesel price would have a detrimental effect on agriculture, and young farmers in particular, it said.

● See Page 5

Bartlett warns 'rash actions' could endanger 111 000 jobs

Star 16/9/93

Fuel: anger spreads

332

■ STAFF REPORTERS

Protests against the petrol price increase flared again today when taxi drivers in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town, blockaded the local bus terminus and blocked roads.

Traffic in other parts of Cape Town was running normally after yesterday's protests and blockades degenerated into violence.

The PWV has so far escaped any protest action and hundreds of taxis are operating normally.

A spokesman for Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett said the Minister would be flying to East London today for a meeting with the Border Taxi Association — responsible for blocking access to fuel depots.

He added that the association had asked for a meeting with Bartlett who was willing to "talk to anybody if he has an opportunity".

Worker, business and consumer organisations have called for a meeting with Bartlett and Finance Minister Derek Keys tomorrow over the 7c/litre increase.

FURIOUS worker, consumer and business groups plan meetings with two Cabinet Ministers

The National Economic Forum yesterday invited Bartlett and Keys to urgently discuss the latest increase with a broad range of industry and consumer organisations.

Labour federation Cosatu was yesterday sending out invitations to the organisations, asking them to meet today to hammer out demands to put to the Ministers.

Their meeting with the Ministers tomorrow still has to be finalised.

At a press conference in Cape Town yesterday, Bartlett said the Government was prepared to discuss the regulatory structure of the petrol price, but would not be bulldozed into deregulation.

He warned that "rash decisions" could endanger the jobs of 111 000 people in the local fuel industry, which saved South Africa about R7,5 billion a year in its balance of payments.

The decision to raise the price had been based on sound business principles.

Bartlett added that the price of fuel would not decrease when oil sanctions were removed because South Africa was already buying fuel at world market prices.

In Cape Town yesterday, police fired teargas and birdshot, arrested drivers and impounded vehicles after drivers blocked major routes during peak-hour morning traffic.

Police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said several people had been arrested and about a dozen taxis had been impounded.

Several taxi association supporters and bystanders stoned police who responded with teargas and birdshot.

▶ Picture — Page 3

Cheaper Durban flight

Own Correspondent (332)

JOHANNESBURG. — Comair have introduced a super-low fare to Durban from Johannesburg of R290 for a return ticket or R145 one way.

CT 16/9/93

The fare, called the T-Pex fare, was an introductory offer and would only be valid until the end of November.

The flight on a Boeing jetliner, with free snacks and beverages, was less than the cost of travelling by car (petrol, tolls on the highway and vehicle wear and tear), Comair said. A cash bar service would be available.

Comair's usual economy Durban fare is R422 return. Senior citizen, youth, military and seven-day advance purchase fares cost R350 for a return ticket.

The only lower fare available on the Johannesburg-Durban route is Comair's own two-month advance purchase fare of R270 for a return ticket.

Accord on taxi protest

Staff Reporter

TAXI DRIVERS and police agreed last night to act peacefully in protests planned for today in Elsie's River.

Police claimed taxi drivers had looted garages and hawkers' stalls in Elsie's River and broken traffic rules.

Taxi drivers admitted breaking some traffic rules, but blamed lootings and robberies on "an unruly element" unrelated to taxi operators.

In meetings between police and taxi operators facilitated by the regional peace committee, it was agreed:

- Only taxi operators would take part in today's protest. They will wear identifiable armbands;
- Taxi drivers will obey the law and traffic rules;
- Police will not interfere in the protest and will be restrained, and
- Three arrested taxi drivers will be freed.

CT 17/9/93

Commuter slams stoning

(332)

Staff Reporter

BUS commuters "are your brothers and sisters" — and have nothing to do with the petrol price hike, a hurt and angry township commuter said in a message to taxi operators yesterday.

Mr Madoda Guwata, a passenger on a bus stoned "by taxi operators" in White City near Nyanga yesterday, said three passengers and the driver of the bus were injured on the head and in the face.

CT 17/9/93

Meanwhile, Golden Arrow Bus Services said at least 23 buses had been stoned on Wednesday and yesterday with some passengers being pulled from their seats.

"There was pandemonium on the bus with wailing women and children. It was unfair to attack us — we are brothers and sisters," said Mr Guwata.

Calling from Guguletu police station — to which the bus raced to avoid further stonings — he condemned the attack, saying the community was not consulted on taxi operators' actions or warned not to use buses.

Security forces prevent taxi blockades

ARG 17/9/93 (332)

☐ Protests around country over petrol price rise

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — Police and the Defence Force today prevented taxis from blockading central Pretoria in protest against the fuel price increase.

As police helicopters flew overhead and SADF and police vehicles patrolled the streets, taxis appeared to be plying their normal routes, with Friday's busy traffic pattern unaffected.

Personnel carriers and other military vehicles were on the streets by 9 am, while the SADF moved in heavy towing vehicles during the night and placed them at strategic areas in order to remove taxi barricades.

The threatened blockade of Pretoria did not materialise by mid-morning, although there were sporadic incidents in the Bloed Street area when about 300 taxi owners protested at a cordon thrown around the taxi rank.

Security vehicles — including casspirs, police vans and armoured cars — lined both sides of Bloed Street from early today, closing two lanes of traffic.

Later, as taxi drivers started their blockade, more security vehicles arrived and blocked off other lanes.

Only one lane was left open for traffic but this too was closed by a large lorry, which could not squeeze through the small opening left by the security vehicles.

Traffic in the street came to a standstill, but the threatened taxi blockade fizzled out when taxi drivers suspended the action.

In Durban, "fed up" Democratic Party members organised a protest meeting at the city hall to call for Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett to be axed from his job.

In Johannesburg a broad range of taxi and other black business organisations, Cosatu, the PAC-aligned National Council of Trade Unions and the African National Congress said they would give the government 10 days to review its position after today's meeting of the National Economic Forum (NEF).

In spite of the growing protests, Mr Bartlett repeated in East London yesterday that the fuel increase was here to stay.

He and Finance Minister Derek Keys discussed the issue today in the forum — an economic consultative body consisting of organised labour, business and the government.

The meeting, closed to the public, started this morning in Johannesburg.

Cosatu spokesman Neil Coleman said the organisation was determined to see the increase suspended.

If this did not happen, the 16 organisations which met yesterday to prepare for today's forum meeting in Johannesburg would hold a summit in 10 days' time to decide on further action.

The ANC said it was unacceptable that "hard pressed" consumers were being forced to subsidise "white elephants" such as Sasol and Mossgas.

"Sasol continues to receive large handouts from the Equalisation Fund while at the same time declaring increasing distributable profits to its private shareholders," the ANC said in a statement.

Nactu information officer Mudini Maivha dismissed the planned forum meeting as a waste of time. It would result only in "economic jargon".

The embattled energy minister met angry taxi drivers in East London yesterday. On leaving the meeting, he told reporters the price increase was a reality.

He said: "They're paying it at the petrol stations", adding that he was "not in a position" to withdraw the increase.

Taxi drivers in East London agreed to suspend their action for four days.

Port Elizabeth police threw a stun grenade to break up a brawl which erupted when protesters, onlookers and police clashed after police had tried to tow away taxis blocking the main street of the city.

Drivers to wear identity armbands

Staff Reporter

NORTHERN suburbs taxi owners and drivers will wear identification armbands today during protests against the petrol price rise. (332)

This is in terms of a deal brokered by the Peace Committee with the police.

Following sporadic incidents of looting and the use of teargas in Elsies River yesterday, the Peace Committee facilitated a meeting of police and taxi operators last night, spokesman Ramotena Mabote said.

Earlier police arrested three men, while one policeman was injured during a confrontation in Halt Road.

Police said drivers were disobeying traffic regulations, driving recklessly, and robbing garages and hawkers.

Taxi spokesmen blamed "unruly elements not associated with the industry" for the robberies — but they agreed the rules of the road had been disobeyed. ARG 17/9/93

The meeting agreed that only drivers and owners be permitted to take part in today's renewed protest, and that they all wear armbands.

The drivers agreed to obey traffic regulations, including stopping at red traffic lights, Mr Mabote said.

The police agreed to exercise constraint, and offered to facilitate the granting of permission to protest from local authorities.

"Where permission is not granted, the police agreed to maintain calm."

Elsies River station commander Colonel Wally MacKaiser would be solely responsible for issuing orders and undertook to investigate allegations of "provocative and unco-operative" behaviour by two of his men.

Colonel MacKaiser agreed to release one of the arrested drivers immediately and said the others would be released after appearing in court today.

Mr Mabote commended both parties for "negotiating in good faith and reaching amicable agreements".

New taxi violence flares

332

(From page 1)

Some taxis were operating in Mitchell's Plain but no taxis appeared to be running in Heideveld or Guguletu.

In Bonteheuwel a roadblock in Bonteheuwel Avenue disrupted traffic and hampered motorists on their way to work in Epping Industria.

In Hanover Park a police spokesman reported that tyres of taxis trying to operate normally were slashed.

In Bellville about 50 angry taxi drivers congregated at the police station this morning, demanding the release of an impounded taxi.

They said police seized the taxi after they fired teargas into it and the driver jumped out.

They also protested about other incidents of alleged police violence, including a taxi window shattered by a teargas canister yesterday and several birdshot injuries.

In Elsies River, where yesterday scores of taxis charged from filling station to filling station demanding that they close down, taxis were congregating.

Early today the major access routes into the city centre were open, but taxi drivers were using "rolling blocks", blockading areas briefly and then moving on.

Paul Kutu of the Peninsula Taxi Association and the Transport and General Workers Union warned last night that unless the petrol price was dropped to Tuesday's level, "we will disrupt the whole town".

The Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Mr George Bartlett, is to meet taxi associations in Cape Town at 3pm today, after an inconclusive meeting with taxi drivers in East London yesterday.

At an angry meeting of taxi drivers on the Grand Parade shortly before 5pm yesterday one driver said: "We don't want them in our locations any more. They are taking our business away."

Taxi violence flares again

Buses stoned, commuters injured as petrol price anger grows

ARG 7/9/93 (332)

Staff Reporters and Sapa

Pictures: WILLIE DE KLERK, The Argus

STANDOFF: An irate taxi driver remonstrates with a member of the Internal Stability Unit negotiating at a "face-to-face" standoff at a taxi road block in Mitchell's Plain.

TYRES SLASHED: A minibus taxi driver who defied the taxi boycott and picked up passengers in Highlands Drive, Mitchell's Plain, had his tyres slashed.

AT LEAST 24 commuters have been injured as taxi violence flared in the city for the third consecutive day, with buses being stoned and taxis blocking routes leading into Cape Town from high-density areas on the Cape Flats.

Thousands of commuters were stranded as township taxis did not run and buses were prevented from operating.

Taxi ranks at Guguletu and Khayelitsha were deserted as hundreds of drivers converged on the Nyanga rank for a meeting.

Bus services were forced to withdraw from Khayelitsha, Bonteheuwel and Manenberg, and had to avoid other areas, including Lansdowne Road, between Elsieben Road and Duynefontein Road.

About 11am hundreds of taxis were reported to be converging on the city centre from the southern suburbs.

Golden Arrow buses became a major target of angry taximen protesting against the seven cents a litre increase in the price of petrol.

They claimed the buses were cashing in during the blockade. They also claimed, incorrectly, that the price of diesel, bus fuel, had not been increased. (It was increased by 5,5c a litre.)

Buses braving township hell-runs were stoned and ambulances were called to take eight bleeding bus commuters — hit by glass from shattered windows — to hospitals.

Buses were stopped at Claremont station, Wynberg station and Sheffield Road depot in Philippi.

Emergency service staff treated two injured patients at Claremont and another two at Wynberg before rushing two people to Victoria Hospital.

Four injured women were taken from Philippi to Groote Schuur Hospital.

A bus company security guard was stabbed in the back and hit on the head by a stone.

Yesterday 14 injured people were taken to hospital after a stone-damaged bus stopped at Palotti Road, Montana.

At Nyanga, many taximen who assembled at a taxi rank said today the fuel increase only affected their business and not that of the "white establishment".

The drivers said they would hold a meeting in Guguletu to decide on a course of action. They would also "warn" the community not to board buses.

In Mitchell's Plain there was commuter chaos with taxis surrounding the bus terminus.

Two taxi drivers were arrested at a 30-vehicle blockade at the intersection of A Z Berman Road and Spine Road.

The taxi encirclement from 6am at the town centre prevented buses from entering or leaving the terminus and many irate commuters rushed to the adjacent station to board trains.

Random road blocks shut off traffic in the main arterial roads at the intersections of Vanguard Drive and Highlands Road and at A Z Berman Drive and Trampoline Roads.

A Colorado Park resident said there was "absolute chaos" at the Highlands and Vanguard intersection where taxi drivers formed a roadblock.

"Passengers were pulled out of buses. People stood around like lost sheep."

Scores of workers were hiking in Spine Road. In the Town Centre, workers were milling around a temporary bus terminus erected opposite the police station.

(To page 4, col 1)

Four held over Spur killing

JOHAN SCHRONEN
Crime Staff

FOUR men have been arrested after the killing of a part-owner of the Rocky Mountain Spur in Tokai.

Jeff Lomax was stabbed to death early yesterday.

Police spokesman Raymond Dowd said clues at the steakhouse led detectives to believe that robbery was not the only motive for the attack.

Colonel Dowd said Lieutenant Vossie Vos and Warrant Officer Mike Barkhuizen worked around the clock and arrested two men in Langa at 5pm yesterday.

A bloodied knife and clothes and a car, believed to be the getaway vehicle, were seized.

Colonel Dowd said two more men, including a person involved in the business, were arrested early today.

The suspects are expected to appear in the Wynberg Magis-

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS: Iris Natan shows off the official Seeff/Argus Gun Run T-shirt that will be on sale at next Sunday's half-marathon through the streets of Cape Town

Entries hover around the 3 500 mark

ENTRIES for next Sunday's Seeff/Argus Gun Run half-marathon rocketed through the 3 000 mark this week, and the 3 500 mark is under fire.

The original estimate was 2 500 but entries are coming in thick and fast and should exceed 3 500 by tomorrow's deadline.

Herbie Rehder, chairman of host club Atlantic AC, said today: "To my knowledge there's no other inaugural road running event in the country that has attracted this type of response."

Organisers have urged participants to register early and not leave it until Sunday morning.

"Although we are equipped to deal with large numbers registering at one time, we would prefer runners to collect their entry packages on Friday," says Mr Rehder.

Registration hours at Green Point Stadium next Friday will be between 8 am and 7 pm and on Sunday between 7 am and 9 am.

● See page 5

P.T.O.

Protest fouled the air

CT 17/9/93 Staff Reporter (332)

THE taxi blockade in central Cape Town on Wednesday is likely to have contributed to the unusual air pollution pattern on that day, council spokesman Mr Derrick Oxley said yesterday.

With traffic backing up along major routes for several hours, the nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) reading exceeded its guideline level, while the nitrogen oxides (NOx) remained within the limit.

Much of the NOx pollution is from motor car exhaust fumes, while NO_2 is formed from sunlight acting as a catalyst with NOx.

This was the first time in the Cape Times' recorded figures that the nitrogen dioxide reading exceeded its guideline level on a day in which the other indicator, the nitrogen oxides, remained within the limit.

Blockade threat halts taxi trial

(183) (332)

CT 7/9/93

Staff Reporter

COURT appearances for the 68 taxi drivers arrested on Wednesday for obstructing traffic and constituting an illegal gathering, were postponed yesterday to mid-October, to prevent a taxi blockade outside the Cape Town Magistrate's Court.

Senior public prosecutor Mr John Rebine said he had been warned early yesterday morning by Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwayi that "the whole town could be disrupted again" if the drivers appeared in court while emotions ran high.

"It would have been unreasonable to have proceeded in the light of today's meeting between Codeta and the state, as well as the likelihood that Codeta will want to make representation to us," Mr Rebine said.

Confrontation

He stressed that the court was "not backing down" but rather providing a breathing space for tensions to cool, to avoid any possible confrontation between taxi drivers and the public outside the court.

The execution of the warrants of arrest would be held over until the 18, 19 and 20 of October and the drivers would appear on those days in groups of 20, he said.

Speaking outside the court, Mr Magwayi said: "We don't want to allow the drivers to disrupt the traffic. That should be a last resort. You should knock on the door before you kick it down."

He appealed to drivers to delay any protest action until after the outcome of today's meeting with a representative of Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister, Mr George Bartlett.

Minister grilled over fuel price as taxis threaten to renew blockades

B/Day 17/9/93

THEO RAWANA

MINERAL and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett was grilled for two hours yesterday about this week's 7c/l petrol price hike, but East London taxi operators said his argument was unsatisfactory and threatened to renew their protests.

The Minister is set to face a similar gruelling session in Cape Town today.

And the National Economic Forum confirmed that he and Finance Minister Derek Keys would face the forum over the issue today. The Ministers' acceptance of the forum's invitation came as taxi operators threatened to extend blockades to Transvaal cities, and drivers warned they were set to renew their blockade of Cape Town.

The forum asked for the meeting to discuss the composition of the petrol price after an outcry over the price hike from labour, business and consumer interests.

Sapa reports that the South African Taxi Drivers' Union said traffic in Pretoria would be disrupted today. The union said it planned to launch a national campaign with groups including transport organisations and trade unions.

Union federations Cosatu and Nactu, the SA Black Taxi Association and the ANC met yesterday to discuss the increase. The ANC called for the increase to be suspended, saying it backed the campaign to persuade government to negotiate the regulation of the fuel price.

Our East London correspondent reports that taxi operators vowed to resume their protest after Bartlett angrily rejected their demands for the withdrawal of the fuel price hike. They gave Bartlett four days to report back in person and scrap the increase. Bartlett left the meeting early, saying he had expected "a degree of realism". "The increase was due entirely to market forces. Either you understand them or you don't."

(332)

National peace secretariat chairman Antonie Gildenhuys, who chaired the meeting, said the Minister had got a "very clear message that such an increase is not acceptable in the Border region". All parties were waiting to hear the outcome of today's National Economic Forum meeting.

Cape Town taxi operators threatened to renew their blockade after Bartlett postponed yesterday's meeting to this afternoon. A spokesman said they were still prepared to meet the Minister, but felt government was "playing hide and seek".

Sporadic blockades had been set up in and around Cape Town yesterday and 22 taxi drivers and supporters appeared in absentia in the Magistrate's Court on charges of illegally protesting and obstructing traffic. The case was postponed to October 18.

A second group is to appear on October 19 and a third on October 20. A total of 67 protesters were arrested during Wednesday's blockade.

Gunman kills 3

Sowetan 17/9/93

By Mzimasi Ngudle and Sowetan Correspondent

THREE commuters were killed and another five seriously injured when a gunman opened fire on them with an AK-47 rifle as they alighted from a taxi in Daveyton on the East Rand at dawn yesterday.

And in another attack in Daveyton yesterday morning, a man was killed and another injured when they were shot in an alley in the township.

The injured man was taken to Boksburg/Benoni Hospital.

Taxi attack

Police spokesman Sergeant Michelle Erasmus said the taxi was attacked when it stopped at Daveyton Station shortly after 5am and its passengers alighted.

The names of the dead have not yet been released.

Mr Thomas Baloyi (52) sustained minor injuries and was later discharged.

Mr Steven Mohapi (20) sustained gunshots in his buttocks while Mr Gabriel Msiza and the taxi driver Mr Peter Mtshali (38) were shot in their arms.

Police found 45 spent AK-47 rifle cartridges at the scene.

Meanwhile in Soweto, knife-wielding men attacked six commuters and flung them from a train at Dube station on Wednesday night.

Head injuries

Three of the injured, who suffered head injuries, were identified as Miss Victoria Zungu of Zone 2, Meadowlands, Mr Soso Nkokenono and Mr Fana Nkomo, both of Zone 10, Meadowlands.

Police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said Mr Pudumo Mthembu of Naledi was stabbed in the back and Mr Isaac Mthombeni of Zondi was stabbed in several parts of his body. Another man with head injuries was not identified.

At Inanda, north of Durban, five people were killed and two injured early yesterday.

The dead have been identified as Mr Khani Twala, (56), Mr Wandile Mhlongo (27), Mr Phumelele Mchunu (25), Mr Armstrong Dube (23) and Mr Nkosinathi Makathini (30).

Violence continues in the Cape

Pretoria braced for taxi protests

Star 17/9/93

(332)

STALEMATE in the fuel price war goes on. Bartlett says the increase will stay. The taximen promise more blockades

■ STAFF REPORTERS

Thousands of people went to work early in Pretoria today in the face of a threatened taxi blockade of the city centre and major roads.

Many shops — including some major department stores — opened for business up to 45 minutes earlier than usual.

Roads into the city centre carried heavier traffic than usual for a Friday morning, an indication that warnings by taxi drivers of a blockade were not being taking lightly.

Marred

The imminent blocking of Pretoria streets comes as taxi protests in the Cape continued for the third day today.

Drivers are disrupting traffic to protest against the 7c/litre petrol price increase.

Cape Town taxi protests were once again marred by violence today.

A spokesman for the Golden Arrow Bus Service said three bus commuters were injured this morning when buses were stoned in Mitchell's Plain, Bonteheuwel and Hannover Park.

And in Johannesburg, a broad range of taxi and other black business organisations, Cosatu, the PAC-aligned National Council of Trade Unions and the African National Congress said they would give the Government 10 days to review its position after today's scheduled meeting of the National Economic Forum (NEF).

Despite the growing protests, Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett repeated in East London yesterday that the fuel increase was here to stay.

He and Finance Minister Derek Keys are to discuss the issue today in the NEF — an economic consultative body consisting of organised labour, business and the Government.

The meeting was due to start this morning in Johannesburg.

Cosatu spokesman Neil Coleman said the organisation was determined to see the increase suspended.

If this did not happen, the 16 organisations which met yesterday to prepare for today's NEF meeting in Johannesburg would hold a summit in ten days' time to decide on further action.

The ANC said it was unacceptable that "hard pressed" consumers were being forced to subsidise "white elephants" such as Sasol and Mossgas.

"Sasol continues to receive large handouts from the Equalisation Fund while at the same time declaring increasing distributable profits to its private shareholders," the ANC said in a statement.

Nactu information officer Mudini Maivha dismissed the planned NEF meeting as a waste of time.

He said it would only result in "economic jargon".

The embattled Bartlett met angry taxi drivers in East London yesterday.

Agreed

On leaving the meeting, he told reporters the price increase was a reality.

He said: "They're paying it at the gas stations," adding that he was "not in a position" to withdraw the increase.

Taxi drivers in East London agreed to suspend their action for four days.

Port Elizabeth police threw a stun grenade to break up a brawl which erupted when protesters, onlookers and police clashed after police had tried to tow away taxis which were blocking the main street of the city.

After the NEF meeting, Bartlett is due to fly back to Cape Town to meet more taxi drivers.

Freight boom brightens Micor's year

EDWARD WEST

FREIGHT, travel and industrial products group Micor Industrial Corporation more than doubled earnings off a low base in the year to end-June 1993. B/Day

Turnover climbed by more than a fifth to R560,3m (R462,4m), but pre-tax profit more than doubled to R2,31m (R1,03m). A tax write-back of R4 000 was reported due to deferred tax compared with R34 000 tax paid last year. Attributable profit was 135% higher at R2,32m (R984 000).

Earnings a share amounted to 9,8c (4,2c). The group's earnings climbed off a low base after slumping to 3,1c a share in the 1991 financial year from 13c in 1990. The dividend was lifted to 3,5c (2c).

The ratio of interest-bearing debt to total shareholders' funds was 0,67:1 (0,59:1). Shareholders' interest climbed to R24,8m from R23,34m in 1992. 17/9/93

MD John Barradas said the profit improvement was mainly due to a healthy turnaround in international freight activities. Profit from the group's travel operations were virtually in line with those of last year. (332)

The share was untraded yesterday at 32c, slightly lower than a 12-month high of 35c in February, but up on its annual low of 20c in November 1992.

Your lives in danger if the taximen attack, Golden Arrow bus drivers warned

'Standstill' threat by cabbies

ARG 18/9/93 (332)

DALE KNEEN,
EDWARD MOLOINYANE
and MICHAEL MORRIS
Weekend Argus Reporters

TAXI organisations have been asked to join a government, business and union task force to investigate the fuel industry in the face of the growing petrol-price crisis.

But the taxi strike is expected to continue.

Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs George Bartlett met a small group of taxi leaders at D F Malan airport yesterday, but scores of others claimed they could not find the venue at the airport and returned to the city and organised "moving blockades" on various roads in the city and southern suburbs.

At meetings at the Civic Centre, Hartleyvale soccer stadium and Guguletu community hall, taxi operators from Elsies River, Bellville, Mitchell's Plain and other areas resolved to continue the strike.

Chairman of the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) Kidwell Magwayi warned at the Guguletu meeting that the taxi industry could bring South Africa "to a standstill" if they remained united. The taximen slammed Golden Arrow bus service for running during the strike.

Transport and Bus Workers' Union spokesman Mogamat Soeker expressed fear that bus drivers could be targeted by taxi-drivers and that their lives were in danger.

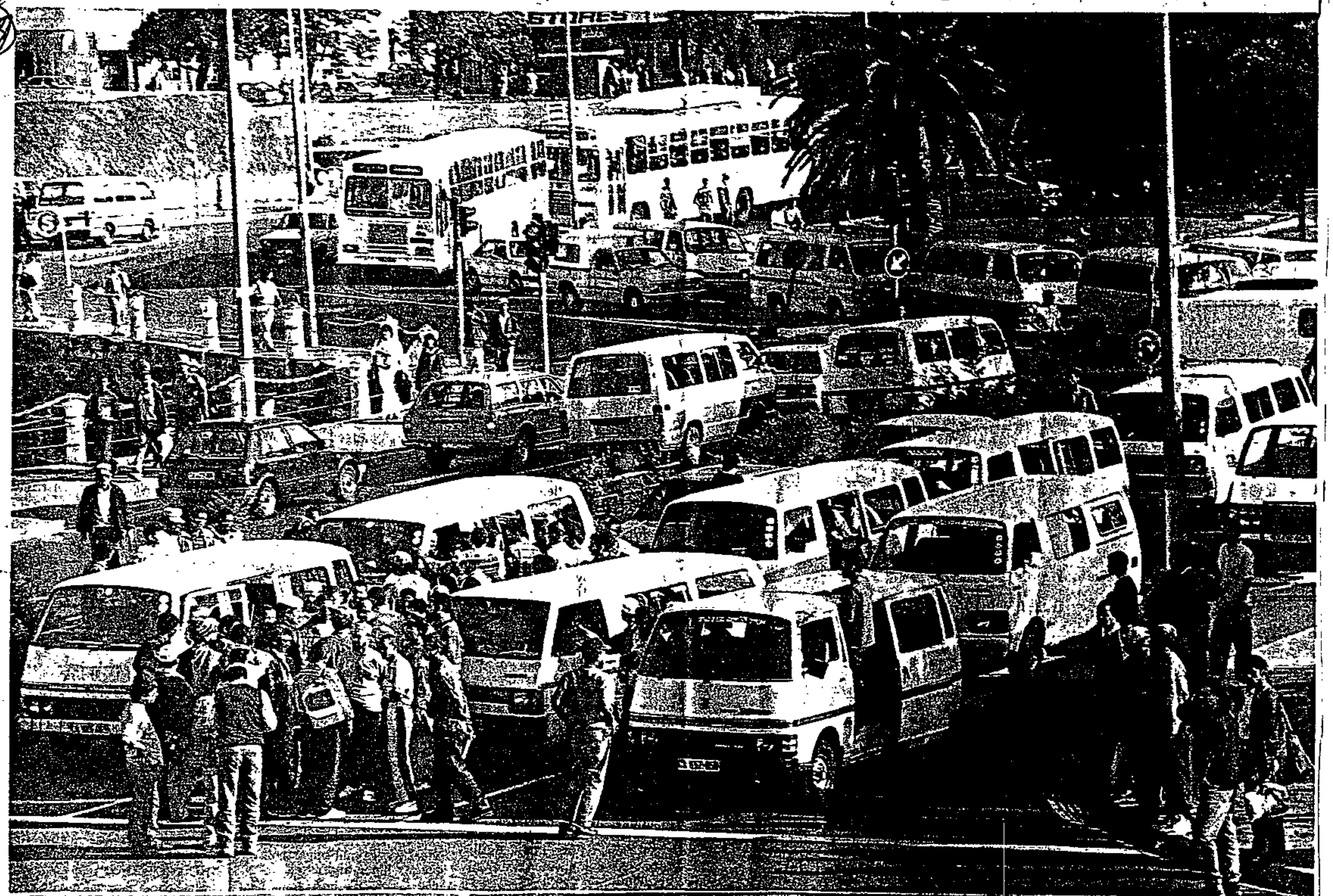
As the crisis deepened, President De Klerk last night expressed regret that the issue had become politicised. This was because of next year's election.

Mr Bartlett insisted in his meeting with the National Economic Forum (NEF) in Johannesburg and with the Cape Town taxi drivers that the decision to increase the petrol price was based purely on economics.

He undertook to convey taxi drivers' concerns to the president, but ministry spokesman Carel du Toit said there would be no "giving in to pressure".

"There is no question that the new prices will be reduced or scrapped," he said.

The task force being set up by the NEF after discussions wit' Mr Ba lett a d Minister



Picture: WILLIE de KLERK, Weekend Argus

☐ **ANXIOUS WAIT:** Taxi drivers gather at the parade to hear what Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs George Bartlett tells representatives at a meeting held at the airport.

Picture: LEON MÜLLER, Weekend Argus

☐ **HIGH AND DRY:** Shoppers laden with groceries wait in queues for buses near

taxi-drivers a[illegible] that their lives were in danger.

As the crisis deepened, President De Klerk last night expressed regret that the issue had become politicised. This was because of next year's election.

Mr Bartlett insisted in his meeting with the National Economic Forum (NEF) in Johannesburg and with the Cape Town taxi drivers that the decision to increase the petrol price was based purely on economics.

He undertook to convey taxi drivers' concerns to the president, but ministry spokesman Carel du Toit said there would be no "giving in to pressure".

"There is no question that the new prices will be reduced or scrapped," he said.

The task force being set up by the NEF after discussions with Mr Barlett and Minister of Finance Derek Keys in Johannesburg earlier yesterday has the job of drawing up proposals on the fuel industry and submitting them to a summit on October 4.

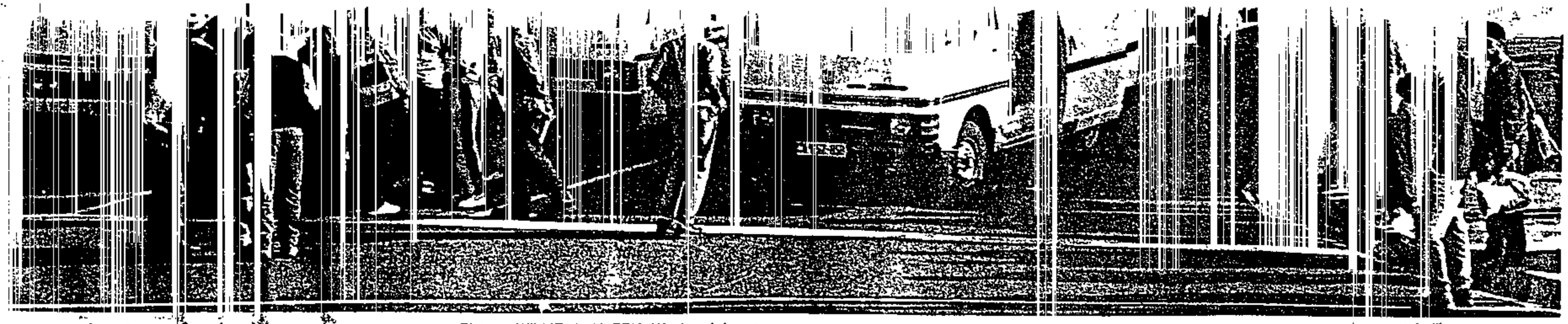
Trevor Kempshall of the Western Cape Transport Forum and Mr Soeker pleaded with Mr Bartlett during their meeting at the airport yesterday to suspend the seven cent increase to avert violence in the country.

Mr Bartlett responded: "The fuel industry contributes R23 000 million to the economy and hundreds of thousands of people are working in refineries and gas stations. Before I tamper with the system, I need to know from all the role players."

Mr Kempshall said the Department of Mineral and Energy Affairs had a "non-negotiable attitude" towards the price increase and this had angered consumers.

Mr Bartlett said his "door has always been open" and that three months ago, when he mentioned the fuel price was under-recovering and that the Equalisation Fund was running out of money, he had invited groups to make representation.

He had sent invitations to over 70 organisations to discuss the fuel industry and only about 20 had responded. They included the Small Business Development Corporation, Caltex, the AA and some major labour unions.



Picture: WILLIE de KLERK, Weekend Argus

☐ **ANXIOUS WAIT:** Taxi drivers gather at the parade to hear what Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs George Bartlett tells representatives at a meeting held at the airport.

Picture: LEON MULLER, Weekend Argus

☐ **HIGH AND DRY:** Shoppers laden with groceries wait in queues for buses near empty taxi ranks.

Picture: LEON MULLER, Weekend Argus

☐ **MOBILE PLACARDS:** Taxi drivers show their displeasure at the recent petrol price hikes during a blockade of city streets.

Airline menus ruffle feathers

Staff Reporter (332)

THE airways row soared to new heights yesterday with price-cutter Comair claiming its food was superior to Flitestar's. CT 18/9/93

Comair ruffled feathers in the airline industry recently by launching a Johannesburg-Durban flight that shaved 30% off the economy fares of both Flitestar and SAA.

Since April Comair's economy flight on the Johannesburg-Cape Town route has also been 30% cheaper than competitors.

Comair spokesman Mr Bert van der Linden claimed yesterday that while Comair offered smaller portions of food, "in terms of quality we are superior".

Instead of offering biscuits, peanuts or crisps as snacks, Comair served biltong, macadamia nuts and open sandwiches with Canadian salmon, he said.

Flitestar spokesman Mr Alan Fabig roared with indignation at this.

"All you've got to do is taste the food. It's like night and day, like black and white," he said.

Mr Van der Linden said Comair could offer cheaper flights by "cutting out the expensive frills of other airlines, such as free drinks.

"The customer would rather pay for his drink than have a fixed amount built into the ticket fare," he said.

Your lives in danger if the taximen attack, Golden Arrow bus drivers warned

'Standstill' threat by cabb

ARG 18/9/93 (332)

DALE KNEEN,
EDWARD MOLOINYANE
and MICHAEL MORRIS
Weekend Argus Reporters

TAXI organisations have been asked to join a government, business and union task force to investigate the fuel industry in the face of the growing petrol-price crisis.

But the taxi strike is expected to continue.

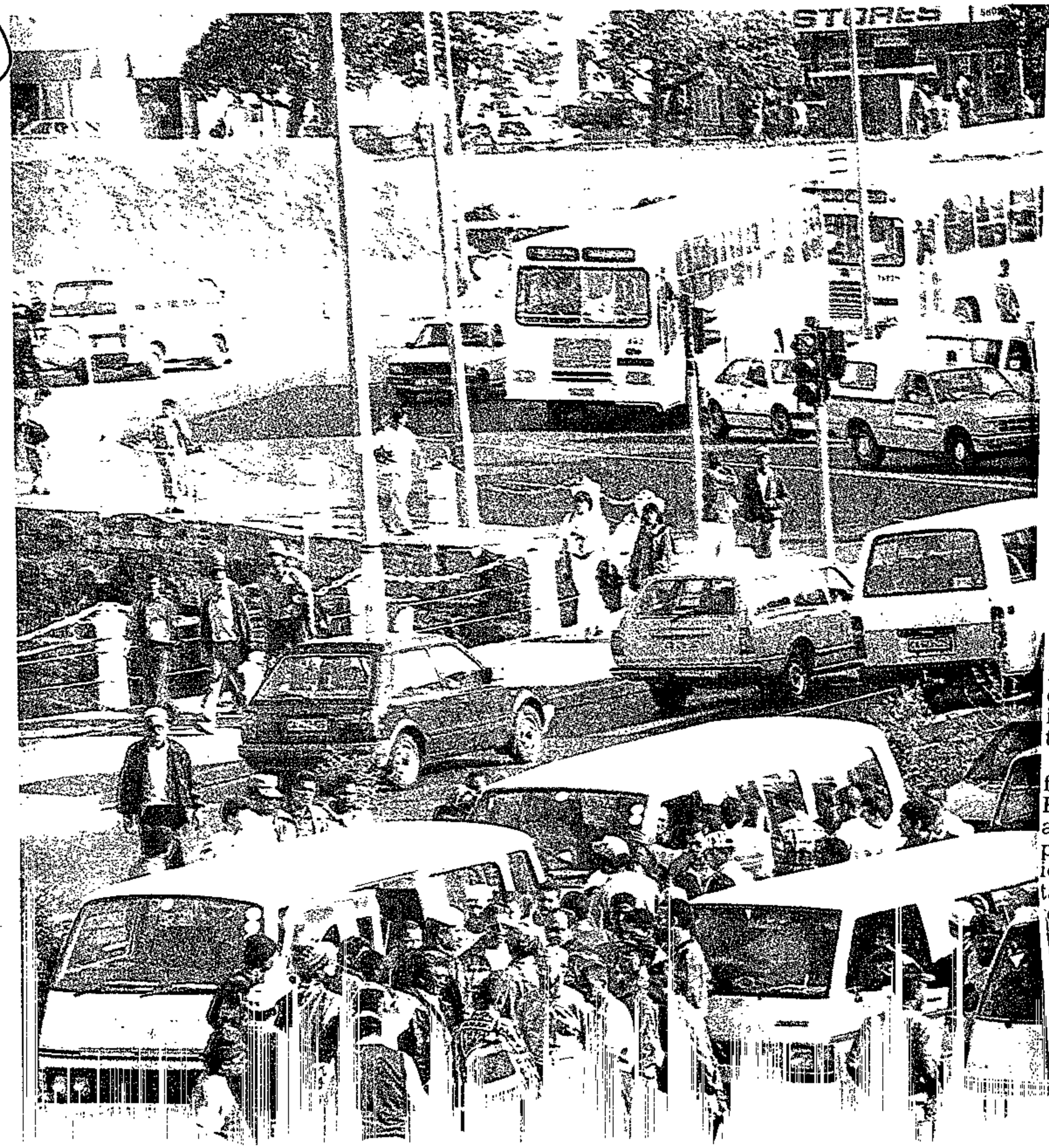
Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs George Bartlett met a small group of taxi leaders at D F Malan airport yesterday, but scores of others claimed they could not find the venue at the airport and returned to the city and organised "moving blockades" on various roads in the city and southern suburbs.

At meetings at the Civic Centre, Hartleyvale soccer stadium and Guguletu community hall, taxi operators from Elsies River, Bellville, Mitchell's Plain and other areas resolved to continue the strike.

Chairman of the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) Kidwell Magwayi warned at the Guguletu meeting that the taxi industry could bring South Africa "to a standstill" if they remained united. The taximen slammed Golden Arrow bus service for running during the strike.

Transport and Bus Workers' Union spokesman Mogamat Soeker expressed fear that bus drivers could be targeted by taxi-drivers and that their lives were in danger.

As the crisis deepened, President De Klerk last night expressed regret that the issue had become politicised. This was because of next year's election



Mr Bartlett insisted in his meeting with the National Economic Forum (NEF) in Johannesburg and with the Cape Town taxi drivers that the decision to increase the petrol price was based purely on economics.

He undertook to convey taxi drivers' concerns to the president, but ministry spokesman Carel du Toit said there would be no "giving in to pressure".

"There is no question that the new prices will be reduced or scrapped," he said.

The task force being set up by the NEF after discussions with Mr Barlett and Minister of Finance Derek Keys in Johannesburg earlier yesterday has the job of drawing up proposals on the fuel industry and submitting them to a summit on October 4.

Trevor Kempshall of the Western Cape Transport Forum and Mr Soeker pleaded with Mr Bartlett during their meeting at the airport yesterday to suspend the seven cent increase to avert violence in the country.

Mr Bartlett responded: "The fuel industry contributes R23 000 million to the economy and hundreds of thousands of people are working in refineries and gas stations. Before I tamper with the system, I need to know from all the role players."

Mr Kempshall said the Department of Mineral and Energy Affairs had a "non-negotiable attitude" towards the price increase and this had angered consumers.

Mr Bartlett said his "door has always been open" and that three months ago, when he mentioned the fuel price was under-recovering and that the Equalisation Fund was running out of money, he had invited groups to make representation.

He had sent invitations to over 70 organisations to discuss the fuel industry and only about 20 had responded. They included the Small Business Development Corporation, Caltex, the AA and some major labour unions.

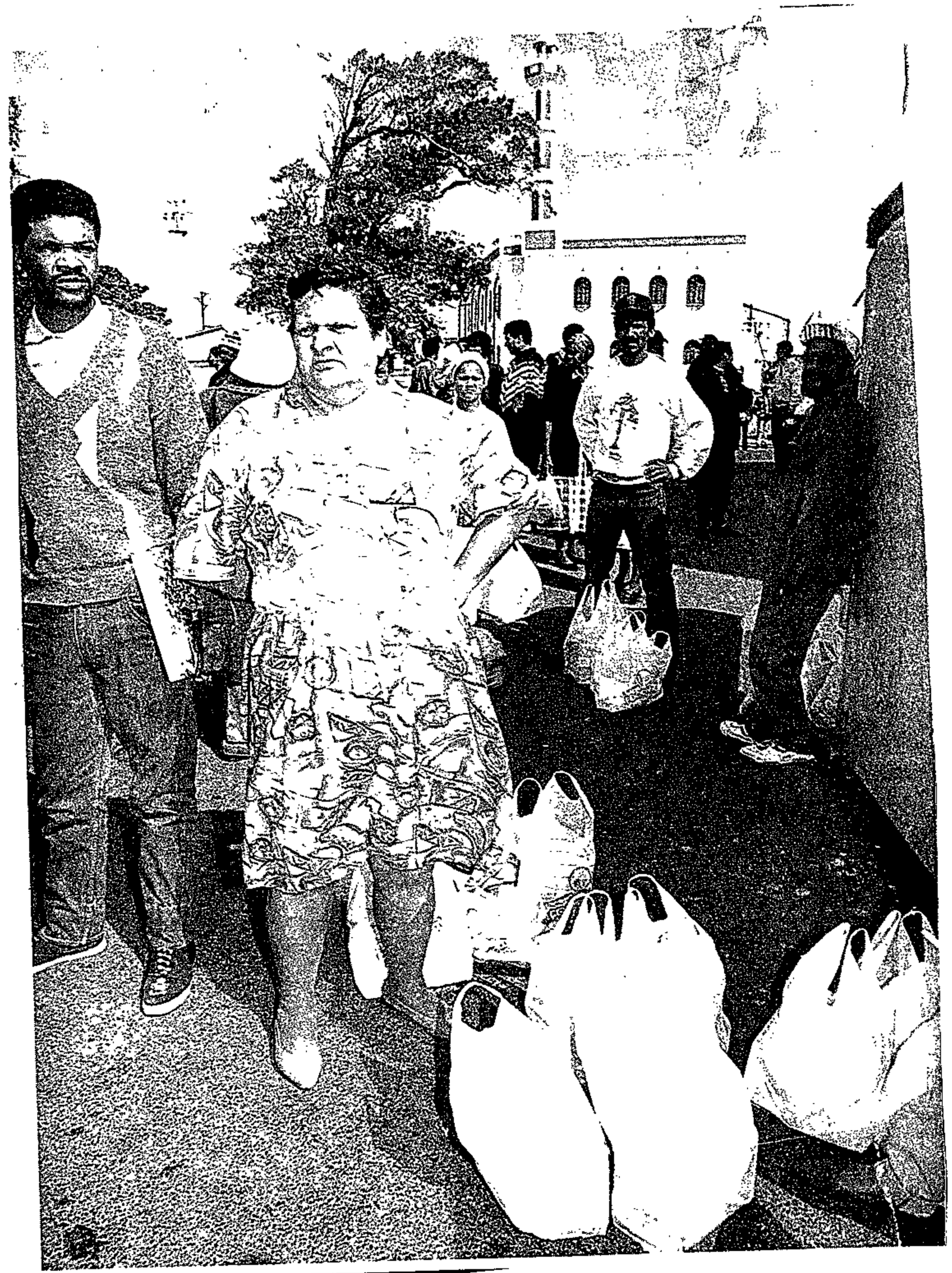
Picture: WILLIE de KLERK, Weekend Argus

□ **ANXIOUS WAIT:** Taxi drivers gather at the parade to hear what Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs George Bartlett tells representatives at a meeting held at the airport.

Picture: LEON MÜLLER, Weekend Argus

□ **HIGH AND DRY:** Shoppers laden with groceries wait in queues for buses near empty taxi ranks.

ARG 18/9/93



Picture: LEON MULLER, Weekend Argus

□ **MOBILE PLACARDS:** Taxi drivers show their displeasure at the recent petrol price hikes during a blockade of city streets.

Taximen hand thugs to cops

C/Press 19/9/93

By MOSES MAMAILA

DOZENS of Rose Taxi drivers last night apprehended two white "racists", who had assaulted a taxi driver and a passerby, and handed them over to Jeppe police.

The drivers, who called City Press, said they called the media to prevent police from releasing the suspects. They alleged that in the past police showed little interest in dealing with white attackers.

Recounting the unprovoked attack by the two whites, taxi driver Themba Ngubane, 32, said he was stopped by his attackers in Doornfontein.

"Before I could even ask what was going on, they were all over me, hitting me with fists. They pulled me out of the car and I think they would have killed me had it not been for a passerby who came to my rescue," said Ngubane.

(332)

Although the passerby, Edward Marumo, 25, was also assaulted, the brutes fled in a truck when they realised more people were coming to the scene.

Ngubane, who followed his attackers in his vehicle, said he used his radio to call other taxi drivers. After a while, the taxi drivers caught up with the truck and barricaded the street. The two attackers were then apprehended and handed to the police.

Explaining why the drivers left their job and followed the attackers, Johannes Mgidi, 32, said the white racists were giving Rose taxi drivers a hard time and police were doing nothing about it.

"Each time we report cases of assaults, police only take statements. That is why we wanted to hand over the terrorists to the police so that they (police) should not have an excuse," said Mgidi.

Standby police spokesman Maj Eugene Opperman could not be reached at the time of going to press.

Pretoria taxi drivers halt action

C/Press 19/9/93

CONFRONTATION was averted in Pretoria on Thursday when the South African Taxi Drivers' Union suspended a blockade of the town. (332)

A heated meeting held at the Bloed street taxi rank finally resolved to end the blockade, pending the outcome of a meeting with the Pretoria United Taxi Association. (~~278~~)

Natal taxis in fuel demos

Star 30/9/83

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — Large convoys of minibus drivers drove through here and five other Natal towns yesterday, honking their hooters and flashing headlights in protest against the petrol price increase.

The drivers claimed passengers were refusing to pay increased taxi fares.

Police said demonstrations here and in Newcastle and Ladysmith went off smoothly. No incidents were reported during similar protests in Vryheid, Dundee and Greytown.

Safair, Simera to start joint firm

Own Correspondent (332)

JOHANNESBURG. — Safair and Simera, the commercial aviation arm of Denel, plan to start an aircraft maintenance company by January to target the Middle East and Africa. CT 20/9/93

Simera said it would not compete directly with SAA. However, industry sources said the move was expected to make inroads into SAA's dominance of the aircraft maintenance market.

Addressing an Air Finance for Africa conference in Gaborone, Botswana, last week, Simera executive Bob Watson said his company recently concluded a memorandum of understanding with Safair's engineering and maintenance division to create the new entity labelled Samco (SA Aircraft Maintenance Company).

"Should we be successful in concluding a binding agreement we are targeting a contract by November 30 with a formal start up of January 1," Watson said.

Watson said it did not intend directly to compete with SAA's formidable maintenance capabilities, but would instead continue with an existing relationship to do work for it in the more exotic metallurgical process area which was currently being sent overseas.

Industry sources said Simera's proven high technological expertise could be a factor in drawing business away from SAA. In addition, SAA's technical assets were prioritised towards supporting its own operational requirements, they said.

Taxi strike in city suspended

CT 20/9/93 (332)

Two-week halt — but peaceful protest goes on

By PETER DENNEHY

THE taxi strike which has severely disrupted the city has been suspended for two weeks and several taxi associations have apologised for abuses during the strike, which included violence against bus commuters.

Commuters were attacked and beaten, petrol stations damaged and major routes in the city jammed in violent protests which started on Wednesday after the 7c/l petrol price hike.

Strike violence declined yesterday, said Mr Frans Mavoss General

Mr Faiek Ariefdien, a spokesman for the Hanover Park Taxi Alliance, said taxi drivers had realised they were "harming the very people in whose interests we were protesting".

At another meeting at Community House yesterday, Mr Isgak Kamaar of the Hanover Park ANC said:

"This meeting is about isolating those causing the violence.

● Pick 'n Pay vows to find a way — Page 3

CT 20/9/93 (332)

Two-week halt — but peaceful protest goes on

By PETER DENNEHY

THE taxi strike which has severely disrupted the city has been suspended for two weeks and several taxi associations have apologised for abuses during the strike, which included violence against bus commuters.

Commuters were attacked and beaten, petrol stations damaged and major routes in the city jammed in violent protests which started on Wednesday after the 7c/l petrol price hike.

Strike violence declined yesterday, said Mr Frans Mayoss, general manager of Golden Arrow bus company, whose buses were among the taxi drivers' primary targets.

He said, however, that one of his company's senior inspectors had been "cold-bloodedly shot in the neck" in Mitchells Plain on Saturday. He is in a stable condition in Groote Schuur Hospital.

Mr Mayoss said bus passengers were intimidated and harassed. Some were forced off buses and drivers and passengers were robbed.

Intimidated

The police placed men on some buses to "ride shotgun".

Several taxi associations apologised yesterday for the abuses.

At a meeting of about 700 people convened by the ANC and others at Community House on Saturday, and at subsequent meetings, taxi associations decided the strike should end today. However, some will go ahead with "peaceful protest action".

Drivers from the Lotus River taxi association intend to park in District Six from about 10am today and then to march on Parliament, and some Mitchells Plain drivers may protest outside the Caltex refinery in Milnerton "all week".

Mr Don Lawrence of the Mitchells Plain Taxi Association said members were standing by to see what happened at Wednesday's cabinet meeting, where the protest will be discussed.

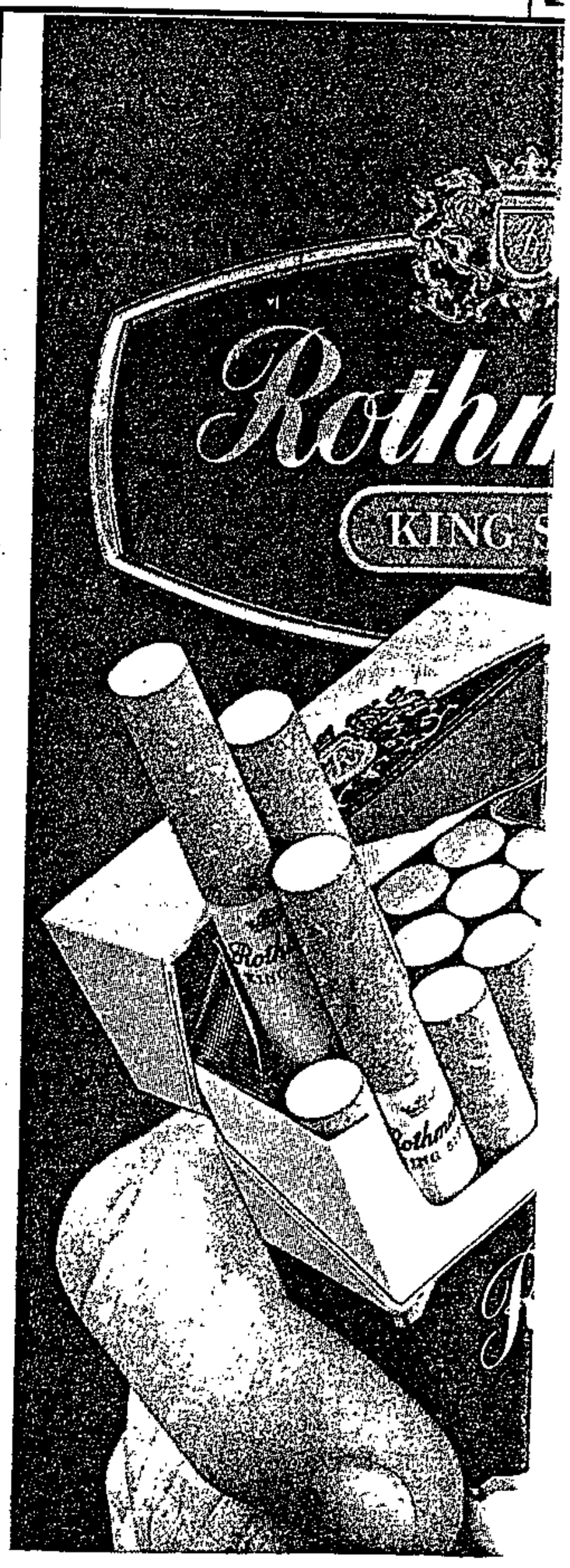
About 30 drivers representing Manenberg, Kensington, Heideveld, Bonteheuwel, Bridgetown, Claremont, Wynberg, Grassy Park and part of Mitchells Plain met in the Hanover Park town centre yesterday.

Mr Faiek Ariefdien, a spokesman for the Hanover Park Taxi Alliance, said taxi drivers had realised they were "harming the very people in whose interests we were protesting".

At another meeting at Community House yesterday, Mr Isgak Kamaar of the Hanover Park ANC said:

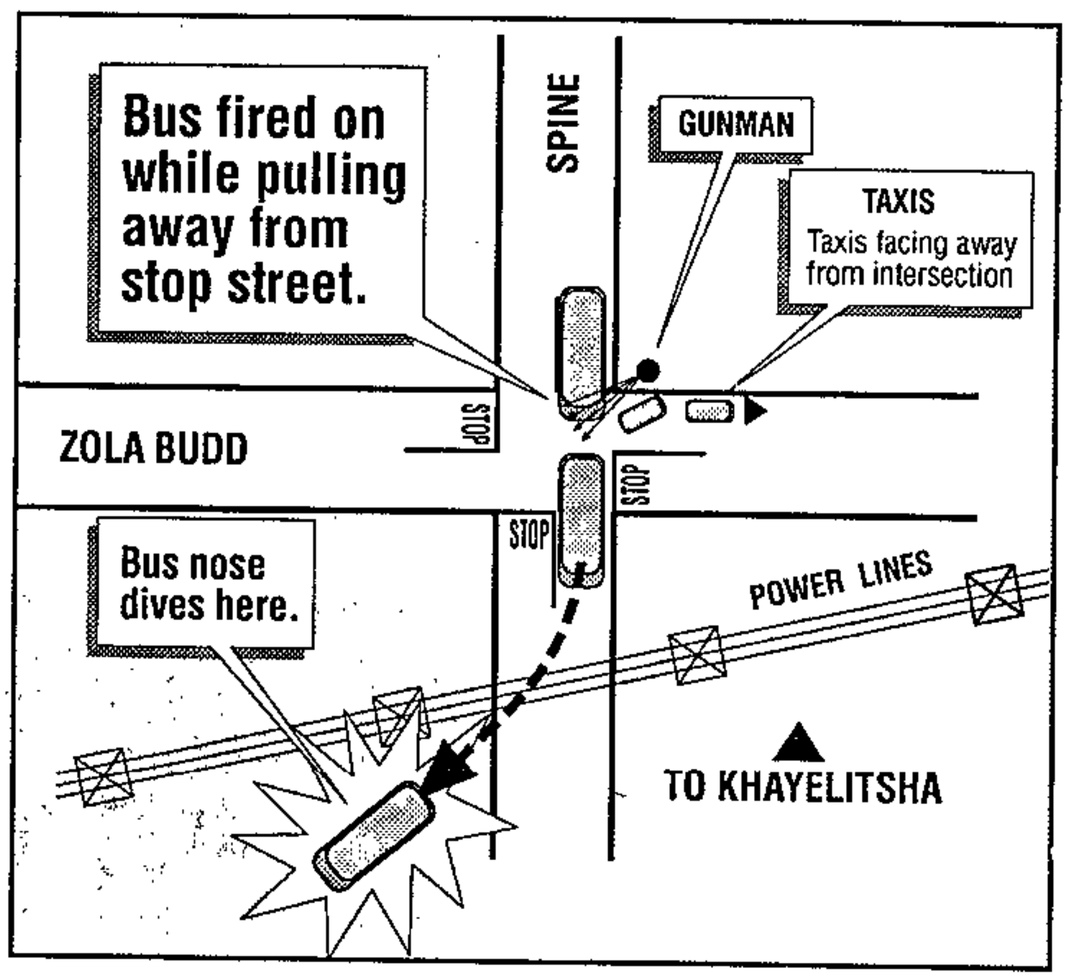
"This meeting is about isolating those causing the violence.

● Pick 'n Pay vows to find a way — Page 3



Picture: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus.

BUS KILLING: Police and bystanders look at the bus which nosedived into a marshy vlei after a gunman opened fire on it in Khayelitsha today, killing the driver, Ganief Karriem, and injuring nine passengers.



Bus driver shot dead

332 249

(From Page 1) ARG 20/9/93

not stop I had to dive for cover myself.

"I thought it was my last moment. I was running out of breath very quickly and blood was everywhere. The windows shattered around me and glass splinters blinded me," said Mr Gray.

A hospital spokesman said doctors would probably operate on Mr Gray today to remove the bullet.

Mr Karriem's body was found slumped behind the steering wheel.

He leaves his wife Radia and two daughters Rashida, 15, and Anita, 13.

Mrs Karriem said today her husband had worked for the bus company for about five years. He had been worried about the violence and had a premonition about an incident.

"But we didn't expect this," she said.

Mr Karriem will be buried today in keeping with Muslim tradition.

The police spokesman said police were shocked at the escalation of violence, which was they believed was connected to the taxi protest over the petrol price increase.

Meanwhile Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett was to meet a delegation of taxi operators at parliament today.

Killing may stop buses

CT 21/4/93 (332)

By DAN SIMON

DOZENS of Golden Arrow bus drivers are reluctant to service Peninsula townships today after a fellow bus driver was shot dead in Khayelitsha early yesterday.

Bus services into the townships were disrupted for most of yesterday when drivers, who normally return to Golden Arrow's Philippi depot after the peak morning shift, left for home on hearing of the death of their colleague Mr Ganief Karriem.

Police said Mr Karriem, 37, of Strat Caldecott Close in New Woodlands, Mitchells Plain, was taking 11 passengers, including six schoolchildren, from Blue Downs to Mitchells Plain about 7.35am when a lone gunman raked his bus.

Mr Karriem was hit in the left side and died instantly. The out-of-control bus then ploughed down an embankment before coming to rest in a vlei.

Five people were injured, but none of the six schoolchildren was hit. The injured, two men and three women, were admitted to Groote Schuur Hospital.

One, Ms Sanya Lee, was shot in the face and will have to undergo reconstruction surgery.

Plight will be put to cabinet tomorrow, W Cape leaders are promised

ARG 21/9/93

Bartlett may drop fuel price for taxis

(332)

BACKGROUND TO THE NEWS

ROGER FRIEDMAN, Staff Reporter

THE cabinet will discuss the fuel price and possible relief for the taxi industry tomorrow, Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett promised a delegation of Western Cape taxi association leaders.

Mr Bartlett met representatives of Codeta and the Mitchell's Plain, Uitsig and Belhar-/Delft Taxi Associations yesterday.

Initially given 24 hours to drop the fuel price or face increased action, Mr Bartlett brokered an additional 24 hours to allow him to raise the matter with the cabinet.

Codeta general-secretary Michael Kupiso said after the 90-minute meeting: "Mr Bartlett is the first minister who has been prepared to meet us and address the root cause of problems within the taxi industry. It gives us hope."

Mr Bartlett said: "Maybe there can be some form of subsidy for the taxi industry. You cannot ask us to to drop the price for all — but for the taxi industry, maybe."

He called on the taxi industry nationwide to prepare a memorandum and submit it to the National Economic Forum.

He said: "Perhaps it can be made a requirement that every registered taxi carry some form of identification sticker and every driver some form of identification. When he fills up with petrol the attendant signs a form and once a week he can be reimbursed.

"But as the Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs I believe the increase was absolutely essential because it is market-related.

"If relief is to be granted it will have to be found elsewhere. The petrol price cannot be reduced.

"I can assure you I will work with you. I will speak to my colleague the Minister of Transport. He pays subsidies to bus companies. If there are subsidies available, maybe there's something for the taxi industry.

"To say the price must come down with the market going up makes no sense. You are asking for the impossible. If you want assistance it must be clearly structured and in terms of the service you provide to the public.

"If the Rand continues to devalue, the petrol price will go up again."

Mr Bartlett said the 7c a litre increase translated into R93 million a month in extra revenue for the government.

The National Economic Forum had been charged with investigating ways and means of lowering the fuel price and would report back in two weeks.

Asked whether the increase could not be held over until after the elections, Mr Bartlett said the loss of R93 million a month for eight months would "close down our refineries".

Meanwhile he appealed to the taxi leaders for discipline.

He said the country was seeking international investment to generate wealth.

"To hold a gun to the government's head, threatening to tear the country apart, will frighten investors away."

Mr Bartlett said he could not reduce the price of petrol or implement subsidies alone. He would have to discuss the issue with the cabinet and the ministers of Transport and of Finance.

Earlier he defended government's stance against deregulating the fuel industry and accused the supermarkets of "loss-leading" fuel, but making up their losses on the sales of food and other commodities.

He showed the delegates a graph depicting fuel prices in 13 European countries, three of which had reduced prices.

"In Britain the price of petrol was reduced and two British refineries had to close."

Federated National Transport Organisation consultant Jan Prinsloo asked whether the government was prepared to tolerate further loss of lives.

"Are lives worth less than R93 million a month?" he asked.

Mr Prinsloo, who is in regular contact with the 1 700 taxi associations countrywide, told Mr Bartlett the industry would discuss structuring a proposal around subsidies.

"We are leaving this prickly pear in your lap and it might hurt you," he told the minister.

Codeta general-secretary Mr Kupiso said taxi operators wished to set up a broad forum to resolve the matter of the fuel price and other problems within the industry.

"We don't want to hear of the ANC or Cosatu, and we don't want to talk with (PAC president Clarence) Makwetu or (ANC president Nelson) Mandela.

"We are not politicians but business people and we don't want to involve ourselves in politics.

"At this stage all we are appealing for is for you to listen to the people who work with the taxis every day. You are trying to nurse the BPs and the Caltexes.

"Financial institutions are ripping us off and political organisations don't want to touch us at all because we have been marginalised by the government."

Mr Kupiso said Codeta drivers had nothing to do with attacks on Golden Arrow buses.

He appealed for Golden Arrow to discuss these issues with Codeta.

Mr Bartlett said general problems within the industry did not fall under his jurisdiction, but he undertook to work with the minister of transport and the state president to address them.

● Mr Bartlett will report back to the delegation tomorrow afternoon after the cabinet meeting.

The taxi leaders refused to speculate on their action should their demands not be

Picture: WILLIE DE KLERK, The Argus.

PETROL TALKS: Embattled Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett met a delegation from the taxi industry in his offices at Parliament yesterday.

Petrol protest backla

Centre city traffic brought to a star bus drivers hit back at assault and

Staff Reporters

LUNCHTIME traffic came to a standstill in the centre of Cape Town as bus drivers hit back at the assault and murder of their colleagues and blockaded main routes into town.

Scores of single and double-decker buses blocked Strand, Darling and Plein Streets shortly around noon today as drivers parked their vehicles and walked off.

The protest comes in the wake of the killing of Golden Arrow driver Mr Ganief Karriem in Khayelitsha yesterday.

Bemused bystanders stared in amazement at the chaotic scene which echoes the petrol protest blockades mounted by taxi drivers over the past week.

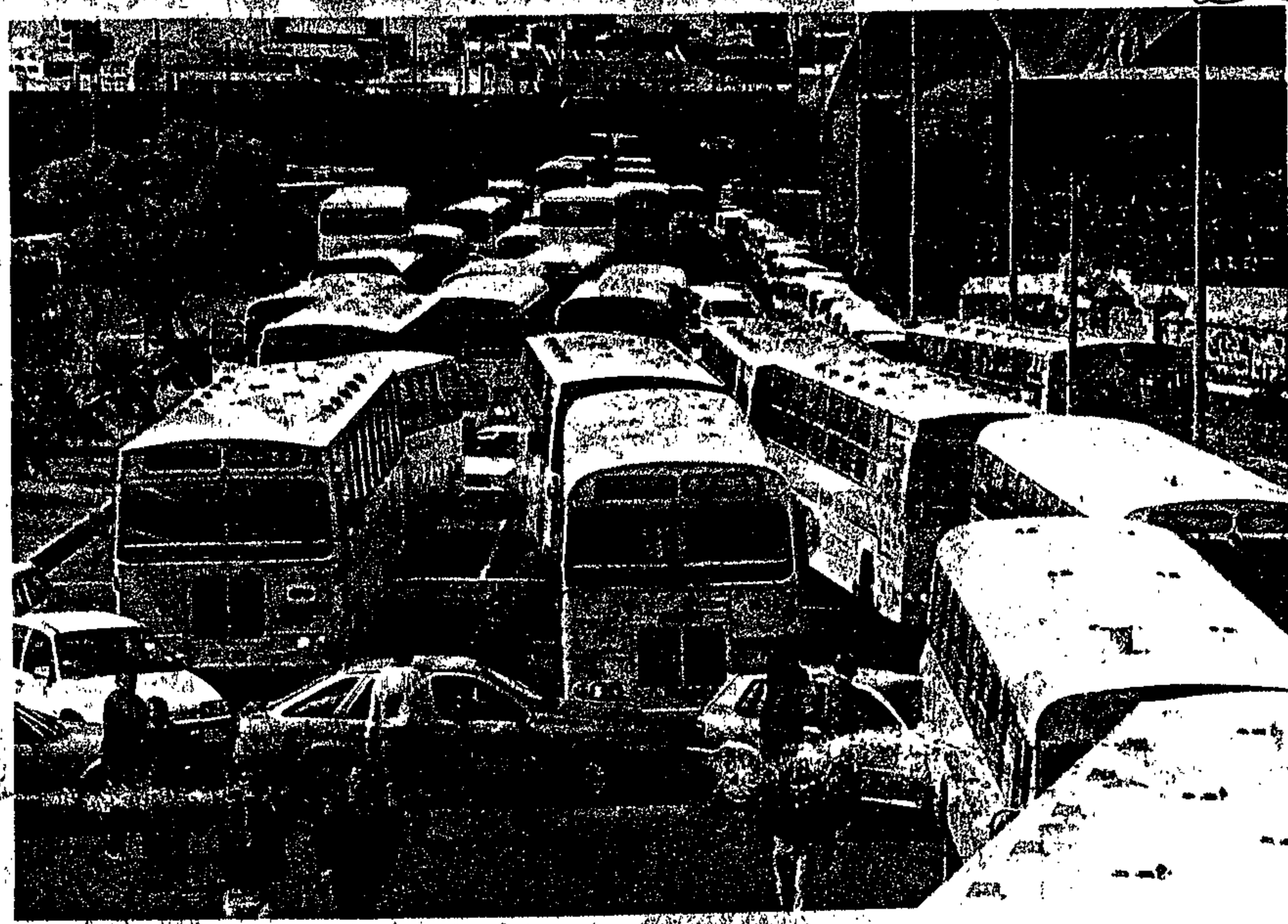
The traffic department was hard pressed to clear the roads as traffic officers took over the driver seats of the abandoned buses and started moving them away.

One bystander expressed strong support for surprise action saying: "the taxi drivers are killing them, what else are they supposed to do?"

Police stood by helplessly.

Drivers insisted on speaking to top management of Golden Arrow Bus Services. "The safety of drivers is at issue here," said spokesman James Roubain. "Over the years nothing has been done to look after the drivers. The taxi people fight with us even though we have no fight with them."

Leaving their buses where they were, drivers walked to the Good Hope Centre for a meeting with Golden Arrow representatives.



Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

BUS BLOCKADE: Rush hour traffic comes to a standstill as Golden Arrow bus drivers abandon their vehicles in Strand Street today.

Earlier a move to bring peace to Cape Town's troubled public transport system ended in disarray when taxi leaders squabbled and walked out of a meeting called by the Peace Committee at the Good Hope Centre today.

This follows days of disruption on Peninsula roads after a 7c a litre petrol price rise last week.

Bus services were badly disrupted yesterday and today and drivers were threatening a stayaway unless their safety could be guaranteed. Thousands of commuters were late for work.

And Caltex has stopped deliveries to Mitchell's Plain service stations over fears for its drivers and tankers.

Today's meeting between taxi organisations and representatives of bus company staff arranged by the regional peace committee broke up in confusion after power squabbles between rival taxi groups.

Two taxi groups walked out of the meeting because they claimed there was no agenda, but Peace Committee representative Susan Collin, who chaired the meeting, said there was no agenda because it had to be determined by those present.

Members of the Mitchell's Plain Taxi Association, who claimed to be affiliated to the Federation of National Transport Organisations (Fento), walked out of the meeting after complaining about the lack of an agenda and claiming that another taxi organisation had tried to speak on their behalf without a mandate.

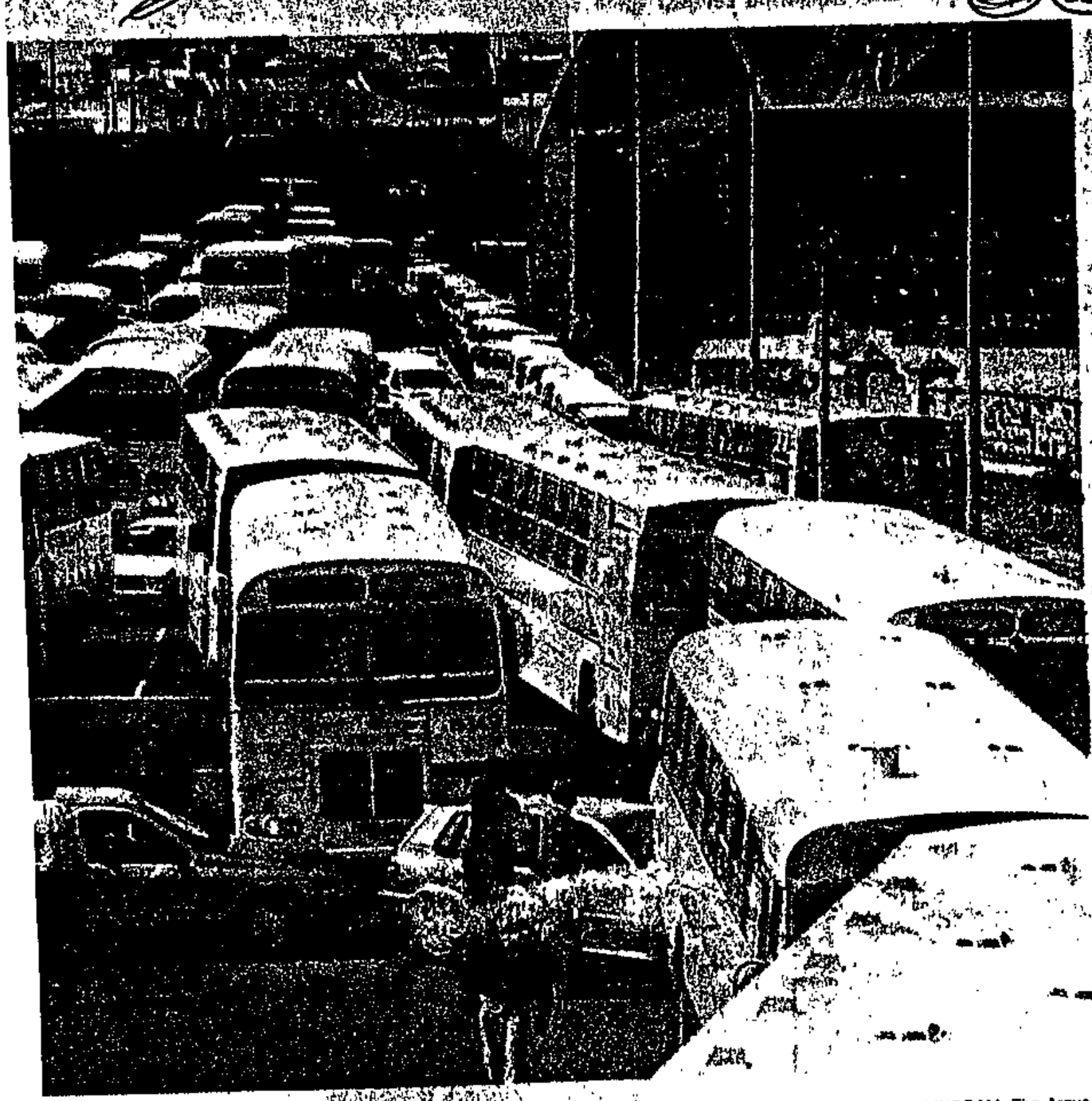
Representatives of Codeta also left on the issue of the agenda and because of the

(Continued on page 4, col 5)

Centre city traffic brought to a standstill as bus drivers hit back at assault and murder

st backlash

332 ARG 21/9/93



lic comes to a standstill as Golden Arrow bus drivers abandon their vehicles in Strand Street today.

Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

Ackerman vows to go ahead with fuel cuts

The Argus Correspondent

PRETORIA. — Pick 'n Pay chief Raymond Ackerman has vowed to go ahead with his countrywide petrol discount plan from Thursday.

Mr Ackerman said this in a telephone interview after a top-level meeting of the chain store's directors today.

He said that company lawyers had advised them there was no way Energy and Mineral Affairs Minister George Bartlett could stop Pick 'n Pay's 7c a litre discount petrol scheme.

"We are definitely going ahead with our plans with discount petrol at our outlets throughout the country on Thursday," he declared.

Mr Ackerman said Mr Bartlett could not — either through the Petroleum Act or acting on his ministerial powers — stop the chain store from selling discounted petrol.

He said Pick 'n Pay directors had information that Mr Bartlett was geared to offer the taxi industry a coupon discount petrol scheme, a concession Mr Ackerman said was similar to the one offered by his company.

● Sapa reports that Mr Bartlett is waiting for a legal opinion on Pick 'n Pay's scheme.

Traffic in city brought to standstill

332 ARG 21/9/93

(Continued from page 1)

walkout of the Mitchell's Plain group.

Mitchell's Plain drivers and owners were visibly angered when Ms Collin said the meeting was being held at the request of taxi drivers and the bus company employees.

When told the Peace Committee had been asked to arrange the meeting by National Transport Forum member Trevor Kempshall who claimed to speak on behalf of taxi associations, they rejected Mr Kempshall's mandate, saying he did not speak on their behalf.

They also rejected the mandate of another organisation, the Cape Province Public Transport Association (Captra), who initially claimed to speak on their behalf.

But Captra secretary general Dawood Adams criticised Fento as a group of self-made leaders without support.

"Fento has a problem with itself. We have had enough of self-made, self-styled leaders in this industry who have no support and will not let the process be held to ransom.

"We are involved in a process to save lives and stop violence. We are willing to talk to anybody who has proof of support. This is why we have a good relationship with Codeta."

Ms Collin and assistant Chris Spies decided to adjourn the meeting after Codeta left.

Bus chief attacks 'lawless' taxi drivers

(332)

ARGUS 21/9/93

ANDREA WEISS
Staff Reporter

FAILURE to prosecute taxi drivers had created a "breed of person who believes he is actually above the law", the chairman of Golden Arrow Bus Services has said in a strong appeal for a more co-ordinated public transport system.

Chairman N S Cronje was reacting in a letter to the death of Golden Arrow bus driver Ganief Karriem who was shot aboard his loaded bus in Khayelitsha yesterday.

Mr Cronje urged authorities to restore order to a situation "that has the potential to destroy the fragile economy of our region".

"The extreme brand of protest which has come to characterise the taxi industry in the Western Cape is an alarming example of what happens when those who break the law are allowed to escape from justice."

He said it was common cause that the authorities had dealt leniently with taxi drivers in the past.

Taxis also flagrantly flouted the laws and rules of the road and had been allowed to disregard municipal bylaws which regulated public transport.

Reacting, Codeta chairman Gidwell Magwayi angrily called on Golden Arrow to produce evidence that yesterday's attackers on a bus driver were Codeta members.

"If they are so sure who did this why are they not laying charges with the police. They are pledging substantial rewards for the arrest of the culprits," Mr Magwayi said.

He said accusations and counter-claims would not bring solutions.

"We have been challenging them (Golden Arrow) since last year to stop making generalised accusations against our organisation as it tarnished our image. They after all receive millions in government subsidies while the taxi industry has to struggle," he said.

Sowetan 21/9/93

Minibus protest at Union Buildings

Sowetan Correspondent and Sapa

PETROL PRICE Sixteen taxi drivers hand list of demands to government representative:

332

SIXTEEN taxi drivers drove their minibuses to the Union Buildings in Pretoria yesterday to hand a list of demands to a Government representative.

The representative undertook to refer the matter to the relevant authorities.

The demands are that the petrol price increase be rescinded, that VAT on taxi vehicles be scrapped, that the Goldstone Commission's recommendations on the taxi industry be implemented and that taxis receive subsidies similar to the bus industry.

In another development, Pick 'n Pay boss Mr Raymond Ackerman vowed to carry on selling petrol at discounted rates — and to extend this service to 16 other outlets in the country. Initially, this service was only available in Natal.

Earlier yesterday, Pretoria security forces were deployed around the city in anticipation of taxi protests following a meeting yesterday between taxi drivers and the South African Police.

At the meeting, taxi drivers apparently vowed to forge ahead with plans to blockade city streets this week.

In Cape Town the strike, which severely disrupted the city and environs, has been suspended for two weeks and several taxi associations have apologised for abuses during the strike which included violence against commuters.

At a meeting of about 700 people called by the African National Congress and others at Community House in Cape Town at the weekend, and at subsequent meetings, taxi associations decided the strike should end yesterday.

Pick 'n Pay vowed to go ahead with its discount petrol scheme and threatened to challenge energy Minister Mr George Bartlett in court if he tried to prevent this.

Ackerman's defiant stand came as Bartlett sat in Cape Town to consider a submission from Pick 'n Pay lawyers on the chain store's discount petrol offer following last week's rise of 7c a litre.

Ackerman's son, Pick 'n Pay joint managing director Gareth Ackerman, said from Durban on Monday afternoon: "We are going ahead with the programme because we believe it's totally legal."

Under the discount scheme supermarket customers buying goods for more than R10 get a coupon allowing them 7c a litre off as much petrol as they want.

6 die in taxi attack

The Argus Correspondent (332)

JOHANNESBURG. — Six people were killed and nine wounded today when men armed with AK-47s fired on a minibus taxi near Phola Park squatter camp in Alberton.

A witness said the men continued to fire at the passengers trapped inside, according to police. ARG 21/9/93

Hundreds of angry residents from the area converged on the scene and began chanting and shouting at police. They claimed that the Internal Stability Unit was the cause of their problems.

● Police said they were expecting to make arrests soon after an attack by AK-47 gunmen on two members of the East Rand police dog unit in Vosloorus in which a constable died and a sergeant was critically wounded.

the minister. selling price of petrol cussed in appropriate tions in Cape Town and a further 12 nationwide.

70 bus drivers face fines

(332)

Staff Reporter

ABOUT 70 bus drivers who severely disrupted traffic in the city yesterday will be heavily fined, said Cape Town traffic chief Mr Wouter Smit yesterday as bus drivers threatened a stayaway unless their safety is guaranteed. CT 22/9/93

The protest comes in the wake of the killing of Golden Arrow driver Mr Ganief Karriem in Khayelitsha on Monday.

Traffic officers moved abandoned buses which blocked Strand, Darling and Plein streets and Sir Lowry Road in Woodstock.

At a meeting at the Good Hope Centre yesterday drivers told Golden Arrow management that the company had done nothing to prevent attacks on drivers in the townships and wanted to know why their vehicles were not armour-plated.

Golden Arrow chief executive Mr Barry Gie said the company was very concerned about township violence.

● Codeta president Mr Kidwell Magawayi strongly condemned the killing of Mr Karriem — "an innocent man" — and any other attacks on buses, which he blamed on unemployed gangster youths.

7.29

per kg

Don't pay more. Come get m

W. CAPE ONLY (EXCEPT GEORGE, KNYSNA & MOSSEL BAY) Y&R HB C

70 bus drive

(332)

Staff Reporter

ABOUT 70 bus drivers who severely disrupted traffic in the city yesterday will be heavily fined, said Cape Town traffic chief Mr Wouter Smit yesterday as bus drivers threatened a stayaway unless their safety is guaranteed. CT 22/9/93

The protest comes in the wake of the killing of Golden Arrow driver Mr Ganief Karriem in Khayelitsha on Monday.

Traffic officers moved abandoned buses which blocked Strand, Darling and Plein streets and Sir Lowry Road in Woodstock.

300 taxis blockade Welkom

CT 23/9/93 (332)

WELKOM. — About 300 taxi drivers laid siege to this northern Free State city yesterday to protest against the 7c/litre petrol price increase.

The drivers parked their vehicles in the city centre and locked them, effectively blockading the city.

A Free State police spokesman confirmed the blockade, which began at 9am. He said most drivers had begun a peaceful exodus, and those taxis still blocking traffic were being impounded.

A driver was arrested for obstructing police.

Sporadic fighting had broken out between drivers, but had been quelled. Police used stun grenades to disperse the crowd, the spokesman said, adding that 345 policemen had been deployed.

The drivers had drawn up a list of demands to present to the Welkom police, Mr Fezile Dabi, legal department head of the ANC's northern Free State region, said. — Sapa

Bartlett sticks to petrol price

CT 23/9/93

By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

THE cabinet had decided the increased petrol price would remain in force, the Minister of Energy Affairs, Mr George Bartlett, told Cape Town taxi drivers yesterday.

The cabinet had decided that in view of the investigation by the special task force, established by the National Economic Forum, there would be no change.

The task force had to report by October 4, and the cabinet decided it would wait until it had received the inquiry's recommendations before taking any decisions about the price of petrol, Mr Bartlett said.

A spokesman for his office, Mr Carl du Toit, said Mr Bartlett had reported back to the taxi driver representatives for 15 minutes after the cabinet meeting.

The cabinet had decided that a

Govt to establish taxi forum

national taxi forum should be established as soon as possible to look at the whole industry.

This forum would be established under the Minister of Transport, Dr Piet Welgemoed, who had been instructed to get the forum going.

Cape Town's traffic chief Mr Wouter Smit said yesterday both bus and taxi drivers who had disrupted traffic would be heavily fined.

The penalty for disrupting traffic was a R1 000 fine.

A second Golden Arrow worker has died as a result of the violence sparked by the petrol protests. The bus company has offered a reward of R50 000 for information leading to the arrest of the killers of senior inspector Mr Pelele Mgudhlwa, 55, who died in the Groote Schuur Hospital on Tuesday night.

He is survived by a wife and five children.

On Monday a driver was shot dead in Khayelitsha.

In another incident yesterday a bus on the outskirts of Nyanga was fired on.

There were no passengers on the bus and the driver escaped serious injury when bullets shattered the windscreen.

A Golden Arrow spokesman said yesterday buses were only going to the outskirts of the townships.

● City's traffic chief under fire — Page 7

Taxi body delivers Oct 4 ultimatum on fuel price rise

ROGER FRIEDMAN, Staff Reporter

TAXI associations countrywide have threatened unprecedented mass action if the petrol price increase is not scrapped or the industry subsidised by October 4.

This follows the cabinet's decision yesterday not to pre-empt proposals of the special task group established by the National Economic Forum to look into the petrol price increase and the entire price structure.

President of the Federated National Transport Organisation (Fento) Lennox Magwaza said the groundwork was being laid "for stronger but disciplined" national protest from October 4, the date the NEF task force is due to table its report.

"We are not fighting with civilians, but with the government of the day," Mr Magwaza said.

"Taxis carry 55 percent of passengers nationally on a daily basis and there is therefore a lot we could do in order to bring down the economy of the country.

"We don't want to harm the economy — we want to build it, but if the government snubs us we'll snub them back."

Fento is an emerging giant in the transport industry, representing 225 taxi associations, and with interests in trucking, shipping, aviation and tourism.

Active in the Transvaal, Free State, Natal, Lesotho and Swaziland, Fento is now making inroads in the Western Cape. ARG 23/9/93

The Mitchell's Plain Taxi Association has already affiliated, while discussions with Codeta are in progress. (332)

Mr Magwaza is due to meet Energy Minister George Bartlett in Pretoria today to set out the taxi industry's demands.

300 taxis blockade Welkom

CT 23/9/93

(332)

WELKOM. — About 300 taxi drivers laid siege to this northern Free State city yesterday to protest against the 7c/litre petrol price increase.

The drivers parked their vehicles in the city centre and locked them, effectively blockading the city.

A Free State police spokesman confirmed the blockade, which began at 9am. He said most drivers had begun a peaceful exodus, and those taxis still blocking traffic were being impounded.

A driver was arrested for obstructing police.

Sporadic fighting had broken out between drivers, but had been quelled. Police used stun grenades to disperse the crowd, the spokesman said, adding that 345 policemen had been deployed.

The drivers had drawn up a list of demands to present to the Welkom police, Mr Fezile Dabi, legal department head of the ANC's northern Free State region, said. — Sapa

NEWS Drivers protest against petrol increase ● Un

Sowetan 23/9/93

Taxis blockade Welkom

ABOUT 300 taxi drivers laid siege to the northern Orange Free State town of Welkom yesterday, to protest against the 7c a litre petrol hike.

The drivers parked their vehicles in the city centre and locked them, effectively blockading the city.

A Free State police spokesman confirmed the blockade which began at 9am. He said most drivers had begun a peaceful exodus, and those taxis still blocking traffic were being impounded.

A driver was arrested for obstructing police. (332)

Sporadic fighting broke out between drivers, but was quelled. Police used stun grenades to disperse the crowd, the spokesman said, adding that 345 policemen had been deployed in the city.

The petrol price increase, the brainchild of Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Mr George Bartlett, has been given a resounding thumbs-down by most parts of the business and labour community this week.

Mr Fezile Dabi, legal department head of the African National Congress' northern Free State region, said taxis had begun grouping in Thabong township, 2km from Welkom.

Police had earlier cordoned off the area, Dabi said, warning that trouble could flare.

"We think there might be trouble, but we have written to the police, asking them to act with restraint and tolerance." — *Sapa.*

Unitrans looks forward to sustained real growth

B/Day 23/9/93

EDWARD WEST

ROAD transport group Unitrans was confident of significant real growth this year and beyond, chairman Andre van der Colff said in the 1993 annual report.

The group had invested heavily in replacement truck tractors and trailers to benefit from the change in regulations governing heavy vehicle transport in SA. These investments had improved fleet productivity. Further fleet upgrading and early replacement would continue.

Three major contracts had been obtained towards the end of the year which had not made a contribution to profit in financial 1993, but would do so this year.

Operations to transport cement to the Katse Dam, part of the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme, had started on a limited scale, and would increase to a satisfactory level in the 1994 financial year. (332)

Cross-border operations continued to be plagued by irregular traffic, foreign currency shortages, drought, and operating constraints along the Mozambican corridor and elsewhere. Nevertheless, cross-border operations had made satisfactory profit over the past year, Van der Colff said.

The group had suffered two main setbacks during the year. Drought had affected sugarcane operations in Natal. Because the drought was not yet over, it would be some time before these operations returned to normal profitability. The other setback was the loss of some timber contracts to Spoornet.

Enraged taxi drivers slate Bartlett

South 24/9 - 28/9/93

By Barbara-Ann Boswell

TAXI services are nearly back to normal after mass action by drivers almost paralysed the city. But taxi drivers are far from satisfied with the results of their meeting with Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs Mr George Bartlett . Their message is clear: Bartlett must go.

"He should resign," said disgruntled taxi driver Mr Clyde Fernandez. "His treatment of us over the past few days shows he is not competent to handle the situation."

Mr Ismail Abrahams felt a bit stronger on the issue: "He shouldn't resign, he should be dismissed! When the fuel goes up everything else goes up, except our wages."

Others thought Bartlett was not representative of the community.

"We are not satisfied with his decision. He must resign — he doesn't think for the community. People are already suffering and we don't want to increase the fares," said Mr Mzonke Xhanti.

Mr Desmond Louw agreed: "He just does what he wants to without consulting us. He doesn't even want to meet us so that we can talk about it. He must go."

Another taxi driver, Mr Godfrey Thuysma, thought that Bartlett's decision went further than just being wrong. (332)

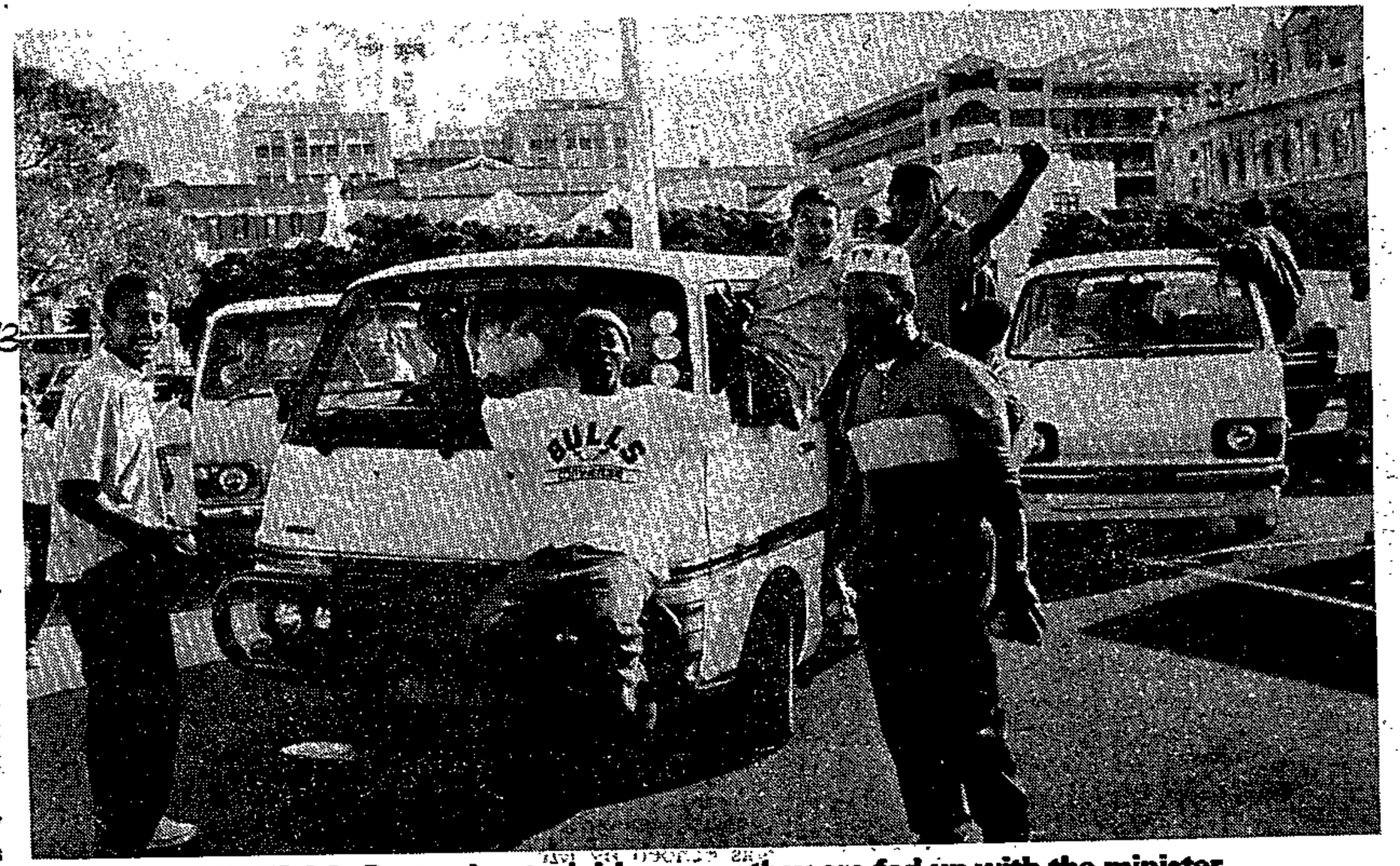
"Bartlett just made a decision which was non-negotiable. It is wrong, unfair and immoral," he said.

Mr Steve Sivada believed there was more to the petrol increase than met the eye.

"Bartlett should resign, it's obvious that he is covering up something sinister which is beginning to surface now. He is putting up the price to subsidise something bigger; I wish he'd just be honest about it," Sivada said.

"Mossgas and Sasol should also be closed down. You can't just create employment for employment's sake."

Another driver, Mr Xompi Dornart was less eloquent, but equally enraged: "Af met petrol and Bartlett moet weg!"



BARTLETT MUST GO: Protesting taxi drivers say they are fed up with the minister

Taxis: Plan for new fuel protests

332

CT 24/9/93

Staff Reporter

FURTHER protest action against the recent petrol price increase is being discussed by several taxi associations and a group of trade unions.

A meeting of the Western Cape Fuel Crisis Forum was convened by the Nactu and Cosatu trade union federations on Wednesday and yesterday morning in the Sactwu Hall of Industria House in Salt River.

Participants included representatives of the Codeta township taxis, Mitchells Plain taxis, Bellville taxis, and those based at the Wynberg interchange.

Representatives were also present from the bus drivers' union (Tramway and Omnibus Workers' Union), from the Transport and General Workers' Union, and from the ANC, PAC and SACP.

At the meeting, a resolution was adopted rejecting Minister of Energy Affairs Mr George Bartlett's "intransigence" in refusing to suspend the fuel price increase.

Mr Joe Sineke of Nactu and Mr Xolile Nxu of Cosatu said the various organisations were discussing, with their constituencies, what further action should be taken.

This will be finalised this coming Monday at 10am at Industria House.

"The forum calls on all commuters and the community at large to express their views through their communities, political parties, trade unions, civics and churches," the two men said in a press release.

Earlier this week, taxi drivers said that many commuters had complained about lack of consultation with their organisations before taxis embarked on a strike, supposedly "on their behalf".

Both bus drivers and taxi drivers who got fines during the course of their protests have yet to work out how they are going to deal with these.

Task group on minibuses

PRETORIA. — A task group would be appointed to investigate the grievances and problems in the minibus taxi industry, the Minister of Transport, Dr Piet Welgemoed, announced yesterday.

The department's director general, Dr C F Scheepers, welcomed the decision and said such an independent task group would co-ordinate the findings of different inquiries into the industry.

The Department of Transport had been in the process of studying the issue of a new, more appropriate Public Passenger Transport Policy, which includes the subsidising of commuters using minibus taxis.

Views would be forwarded to the task group whose address is: The Chairman, Taxi Task Group, Department of Transport, Private Bag X193, Pretoria, 0001, Fax Number: (012) 326-4791. — Sapa

Union, taxi groups want 10c fuel drop

(332)

CT 24/9/93

JOHANNESBURG. — The Congress of South African Trade Unions and a labour and taxi delegation are demanding not only the scrapping of the seven cent a litre petrol price increase, but a further reduction of three cents a litre in the price of petrol and diesel fuel.

The demand was formulated by Cosatu, the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services, the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry and representatives of several taxi organisations.

The organisations are also demanding a review of all subsidies, protection and profit margins which make up the petrol and diesel price.

Speaking at a news conference in Johannesburg yesterday, Cosatu vice-president Mr Chris Dlamini said the organisations condemned Wednesday's cabinet decision not to review the petrol price increase "especially in the light of the fact that government has agreed to be part of the National Economic Forum task group on this issue".

Mr Dlamini said a labour and taxi delegation would attend the NEF's first task group meeting today to begin negotiations on the structure of the petrol price.

●In Kroonstad, taxi drivers blockaded two streets in the central business district of this northern Free State town yesterday afternoon.

News in brief

20 taxis blockade CBD

POLICE and traffic authorities removed more than 20 taxis which were blockading the central business district in the northern Orange Free State town of Kroonstad yesterday afternoon. Sowetan

SAP spokesman Colonel Andre van Deventer said no violence had been reported and negotiations were still taking place between police and the black taxi drivers, who were apparently protesting against the petrol price increase. 24/9/93

Local African National Congress chairman Dennis Bloem said about 60 drivers had been arrested and the atmosphere was tense. (332)

But Van Deventer said nobody had been arrested.

CP MPs stage walkout

THE Conservative Party walked out of Parliament immediately after the 211-36 vote in favour of the Transitional Executive Council Bill yesterday afternoon. Sowetan 24/9/93

Just after the Speaker, Mr Eli Louw, had announced the result, CP leader Dr Ferdi Hartzenberg stood up to address him.

He said that with the acceptance of the Bill, the Government had finally put its foot on the path of abdication.

He requested that the CP be excused from the rest of the session's proceedings.

The Speaker said such action was entirely in Dr Hartzenberg's hands. CP MPs then walked out.

Busdrivers protest lack of safety

PROTECT US: Bus drivers blocked all major entrances to the city Photo: Yunus Mohamed

South 24/9 – 28/9/93

By Barbara-Ann Boswell

HUNDREDS of angry bus drivers gathered on Tuesday in front of the Good Hope Centre to voice their dissatisfaction with Golden Arrow's safety policy.

Buses blocked major Cape Town streets while the drivers aired their grievences to Mr Barrry Gee, director of Golden Arrow.

Drivers complained nothing was being done to ensure their safety in townships. (332)

"Golden Arrow advertised that they are not going to increase bus fares because of the petrol increase, and this is causing division among taxi drivers and bus drivers," said an angry bus driver.

"Mitchells Plain, Hanover Park, Bellville, Elsies River and Khayelitsha are off-limits to bus drivers."

Gee said the drivers should not expect Golden Arrow to guarantee their safety, as that was the duty of the police. He repeatedly blamed taxi drivers for "waging war" against the bus drivers.

"We had meetings with the police, the Regional Services Council and taxi associations to find answers to our problems," said Gee.

"All we can say is you cannot look towards the company to solve the township violence."

Drivers asked Gee why letters about safety, sent to management last year, had gone unanswered.

His response was he could not negotiate safety with the workers, only with police.

Drivers were not convinced that the police could help. One told how he had gone to Khayelitsha at night, and when he asked police for assistance they told him he was looking for his death, and that they could not escort him out.

When drivers asked Gee if they would be paid for taking the day off to attend the funeral of bus driver Mr Ganief Karriem yesterday, he said that the company policy of "no work, no pay" still applied.

Golden Arrow armoured buses?

ARG 25/9/93 (232)

■ After the fatal shooting of two Golden Arrow employees the safety of the bus-drivers — or lack of it — is once again under the spotlight.

VUYO BAVUMA, Weekend Argus Reporter

EMBATTLED Golden Arrow bus-drivers who have become almost sitting targets for the townships' faceless gunmen are, once again, clashing with their employers over the issue of safety.

As was the case last year, the workers are accusing the company of leaving them in the lurch by not taking adequate steps to ensure their safety while they operate in the violence-ravaged areas.

To back up their demands, the members of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Transport Omnibus Workers' Union, are now refusing to "walk into lions' dens" by driving the buses into the danger zones until the company takes effective steps to provide security.

In a bid to defuse the situation the company has agreed to set up a committee that will include union representatives to investigate the feasiblity of bullet-proof cabs.

But workers claim a similar investigation was carried out last year and the company refused to install them because they were too expensive.

However, the company denied this.

The security issue, which was at the centre of last year's five-week strike, was again tragically highlighted this week when two Golden Arrow employees were shot and killed after the outbreak of petrol increase protests.

Ganief Karriem, a father of two, was shot and killed while driving a bus with passengers near the corner of Zola Budd and Spine roads in Khayelitsha. And security guard Franklin Gray was seriously injured after being hit by bullets in the chest and back. Five other passengers were also injured.

Another Golden Arrow employee, senior inspector Pelele Mgudlwa, a Khayelitsha father of five, died in hospital three days after being shot in the neck in Mitchell's Plain.

The wave of violence against the buses continued as 23 buses were stoned and 92 windows smashed and passengers pulled from their seats.

In defiance, angry bus-drivers blockaded the streets of central Cape Town by parking their buses and walking off to a meeting in the Good Hope Centre.

The killings of Mr Karriem and Mr Mgudlwa were widely condemned in various quarters, including Golden Arrow which offered R50 000 for the arrest and conviction of the killers.

In a strongly worded letter, Golden Arrow chairman Mr N S Cronje blamed the taxi industry for the killings, saying failure to prosecute taxis had created a breed of a person who believed that "he is above the law".

But the taxi leadership vehemently denied they were involved in the killings and said accusations and counter-claims would not solve problems.

Bus attacks include:

■ In August last year several buses were stoned in six separate incidents and a bus-driver was fatally injured after being stoned. Two weeks earlier, nine busmen were kidnapped and locked up in a dark shack by taxi representatives in Khayelitsha.

■ In September six drivers were shot and wounded in separate incidents. During the same month, two drivers, Mr O B Kerchoff and Mr J G Roskruge, were shot dead in ambushes, bringing the number of Golden Arrow employees killed while on duty in the townships to three.

■ In January this year a bus driver was shot in the stomach in Guguletu.

The killings of Mr Kerchoff and Mr Roskruge caused the workers to demand adequate security. Some went to a Paarden Eiland firm to test the bullet-proof cabs.

Taximen call for another blockade

Staff Reporter

CAPE TOWN could be facing another traffic blockade after Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett's petrol price summit next week.

About 100 delegates from taxi associations, trade unions and other transport-related organisations met yesterday to discuss the petrol price.

Co-chairmen Mr Xolile Nxu of Cosatu and Mr Joe Sineke of Nactu said the feeling was that there should be mass action, "but we will wait until October 4". However, the meeting as a whole resolved that decisions on what form mass action should take should wait until after October 4, the date of Mr Bartlett's price summit in Johannesburg.

The meeting also again rejected the fuel price increase, re-affirmed its commitment to non-violence, and said that it wanted representation on the National Energy Forum.

The blockade suggestion was made by the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, with the PAC proposing a public transport stay-away on October 4. Nactu suggested a "disciplined and dignified stayaway provided that the community gives its support".

The township taxi association, Codeta, said that whatever action was decided on should depend on the outcome of the summit meeting.

A meeting is to be arranged with Cape Town traffic chief Mr Wouter Smit to discuss fines imposed on bus and taxi drivers during protests.

• Pick 'n Pay announced yesterday that the Cape Town Supreme Court will hear the petrol coupon scheme case on October 29.

332

CT 28/9/93

THE WEEKLY MAIL & GUARDIAN
September 24 to 30 1993

Battle for bus routes

WM 24-30/9/93 (332)

Behind the Cape Town protests over the petrol price rise is an ugly fight — taxi and bus industries vying for commuters, reports **Gaye Davis**

CAPE Town's bus and taxi employers were using drivers as foot-soldiers in a battle for market share, the Transport and General Workers' Union charged this week.

TGWU organiser Nick Henwood made the allegation after Golden Arrow Bus Services' driver Ganief Karriem (38) was killed and five of his passengers wounded when gunmen attacked his bus in Khayelitsha early on Monday — soon after taxi associations pledged to suspend violent protest action.

Karriem was the latest casualty in a conflict which has seen taxi drivers targeting buses, drivers and their passengers — and bus drivers declaring their intention to fight back.

Earlier this week bus drivers staged their own city-centre blockade to back their demands for the bus company to provide them with greater protection.

Golden Arrow accused taxi interests of using the fuel price rise as a smoke screen in a bid to seize control of public transport in the Western Cape.

There have been scores of attacks on bus drivers over the past two years, including the abduction of drivers, stonings and petrol bombings, attacks by gunmen — sometimes fatal — as well as threats, assaults and minibus blockades.

"Taxi drivers are bearing the brunt of the fuel price increase," said Henwood. "They have to bring in a set amount of money for the taxi owner each day but have to pay their own fuel costs, rank fees and fines. Anything left over is theirs.

"They can't boost their fares because they'll lose customers to the buses. They're fighting the fuel price hike but end up fighting those who're taking their business."

But while the issue was the fuel price rise, the main problem was the lack of any policy governing the industry.

"We're saying that the government, first by unilaterally deregulating the industry and then by unilaterally raising the fuel price, is plunging the passenger transport industry deeper into crisis," Henwood said.

"There has to be a place for taxis and buses and they must be part of a regulated industry — but this mustn't happen at the expense of commuters."

At a crisis meeting this week, taxi associations and the bus company agreed that neither would use drivers as soldiers or targets in a commercial battle.

Overseas air fare hike coming

(332) CT 28/9/93

JOHANNESBURG. — All international passenger air fares from South Africa will increase by about five percent from Friday. This follows an agreement between most carriers serving the country.

While some observers said the move reeked of price fixing, SAA yesterday ascribed the hike to the continued weak performance of the rand.

A KLM Royal Dutch Airlines spokesman said a first-class fare from Johannesburg to Europe would cost about R12 600 if booked in rands, but about R18 000 if booked from a European destination.

Sources said some smaller carriers, which constantly undercut larger airlines' fares, were forced to agree to the hike.

Meanwhile, SAA public relations officer Mr Leon Els said yesterday the SAA is following an affirmative action policy like other companies in Transnet. However, standards would not be allowed to drop, he said.

"We are a First World airline and we will maintain First World standards."

Although all SAA pilots employed are white, the airline is advertising for 25 more, who Els said could be of any race "as long as they have the experience and reach the standard we require". — Own Correspondent, Staff Reporter

Yearly vehicle test: Taxi industry upset

Staff Reporter and Sapa (332)

THE taxi industry has greeted the announcement of a new annual roadworthy test today with a warning that it could lead to more violence.

The Department of Transport said today that buses, minibuses and large goods vehicles would be required to have an annual roadworthy test from November 1. ARG 30/9/93

Vehicles which will have to be tested each year are goods vehicles with a gross mass of more than 3500kg, buses and minibuses with at least 12 seats or a gross vehicle mass of more than 3500kg, breakdown vehicles and any vehicles conveying passengers for reward.

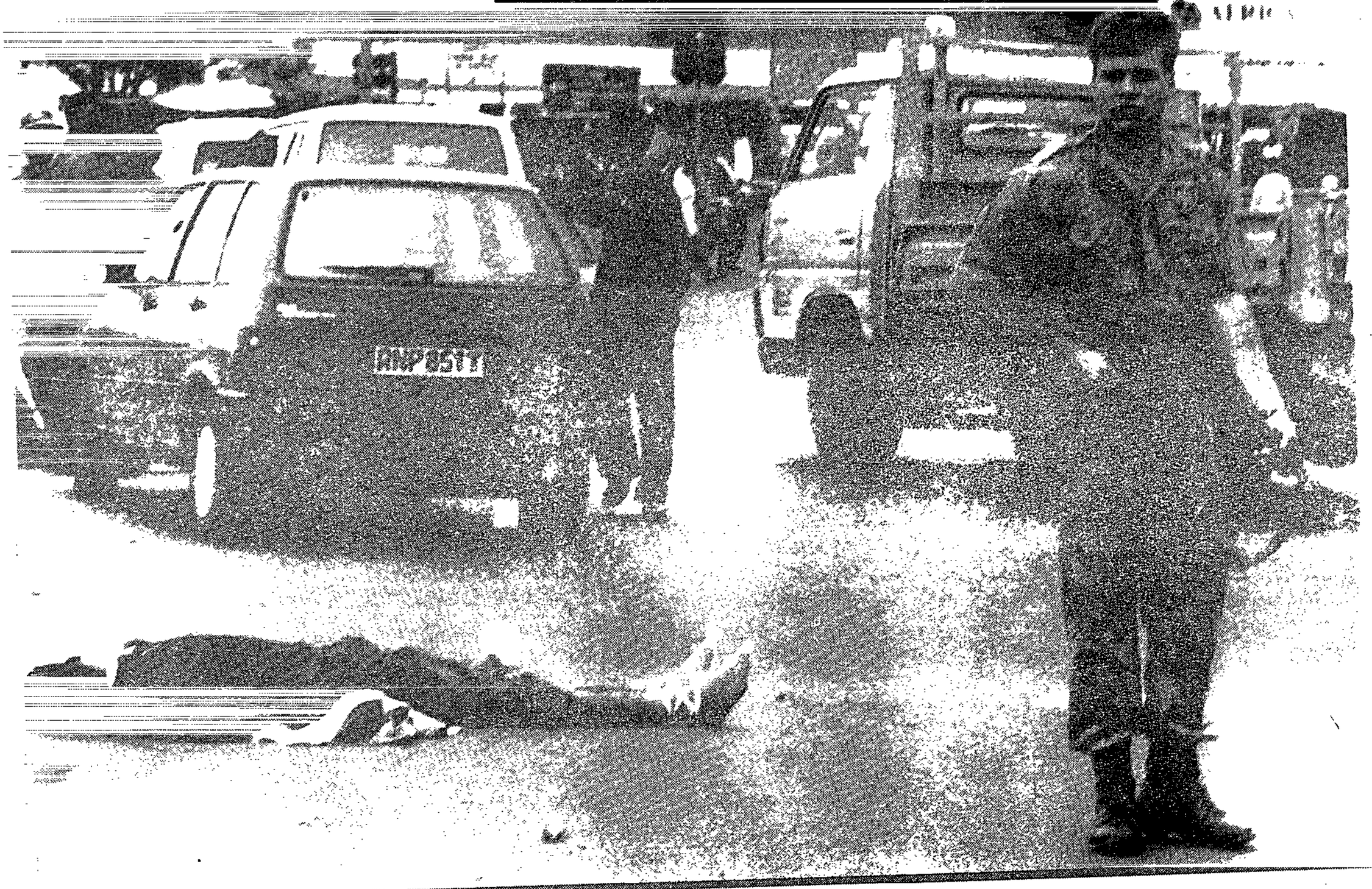
Only certificates issued after November 1 would be valid for 12 months, and vehicles with existing certificates would be retested when these expired.

Minibuses with at least 12 seats, including the driver's, would have to be roadworthied annually even if not used to transport passengers for gain.

Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association chairman Kidwell Magwayi said the new test would affect the industry "very badly".

He agreed that minibus taxis had to be safe "because we are transporting human beings", and said there were efforts to improve standards.

But annual tests could be costly as taxis were not given a state subsidy.



Police and paramedics attend to the injured after Saturday morning's shootings at Denneboom taxi rank.

Gunmen wreak havoc at Mamelodi taxi rank

Sowetan 4/10/93

■ HELTER SKELTER Pandemonium ensues as commuters dash for cover:

By Pat Seboko
Sowetan Photographer

AN East Rand-style taxi shooting took place at the Pretoria township of Mamelodi on Saturday morning.
Three people were killed and at least 15 were wounded.

I was at the scene seconds after eight gunmen opened fire with AK-47s on commuters at Denneboom Station in Mamelodi West.

I was returning from a funeral in Mamelodi when I heard shots and saw people running towards my car.

I grabbed my camera and went towards the station where I heard gunfire. People were running and falling down out of fear. They were all pointing towards the station and screaming: "They are shooting there!"

I saw a man who was trying to drive away from the gunfire slump forward on the steering-wheel. After the car stopped, I rushed over and could see that the poor driver was dead. There was a bullet wound in his forehead and in his thigh.

Pat Seboko

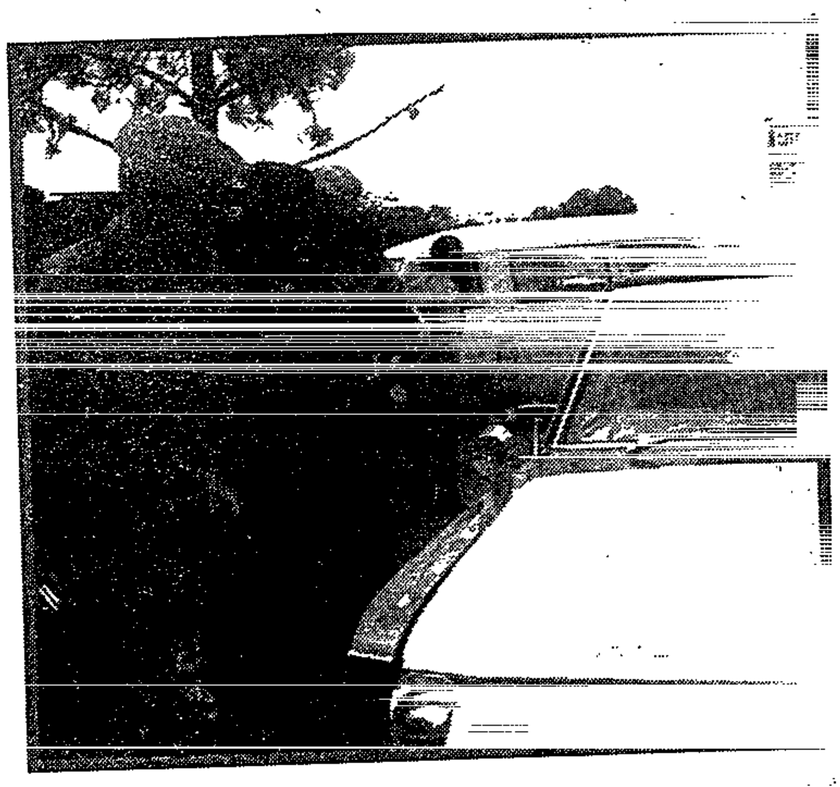
The man has been identified as 56-year old Mr Simon Naphane of C3 Mamelodi. (332)

After running to the taxi rank, I saw scores of bodies lying on the ground. The killers had left the scene.

A bystander told me that some of the killers drove away in a green Mazda 626. *Sowetan* is in possession of the registration number.

An unarmed man is being credited with the capture of two of the gunmen. Solly Setlau (45) said he pounced on one of the gunmen and disarmed him. When he pointed the gun at another gunman, the suspect dropped his firearm.

The two men are in police custody. Six other gunmen are being sought by police.



Separate taxi services 'heighten tensions'

WILSON ZWANE

SEPARATE transport arrangements for hostel residents and local communities in Thokoza and Katlehong on the East Rand were heightening tensions, Transvaal Hostel Residents Association chairman Joseph Kubheka said.

It is understood residents of the two townships and local hostel inmates began using separate minibus taxis shortly after the violence erupted in July.

"I see no reason why they should use separate taxis. This should be stopped because it serves only to heighten tensions in the townships," Kubheka said.

SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) southern Transvaal general secretary Dan Mofokeng disagreed with Kubheka, saying the use of separate taxis by hostel inmates and township residents was not fuelling tensions.

Mofokeng said the separate transport arrangements were agreed upon by residents after it had become clear that taxi operators living in hostels were colluding with "warlords". B/Day

He claimed these taxi drivers had driven scores of township residents into the hostels where they were either harassed or killed. 6/10/93

"This necessitated separate transport facilities for the residents," he said.

He said until Kubheka and his organisation could ensure the safety of the passengers and township taxi drivers, the separate transport arrangements would remain in place.

Attempts to get Kubheka to comment on Mofokeng's allegations proved fruitless yesterday. (332)

Sapa reports East Rand police reported the discovery of two dead men in Thokoza yesterday, and another man was shot dead in an attack on pedestrians in KwaThema.

This brings to 34 the number of people slain on the East Rand since Friday.

Meanwhile, more than 1 000 residents of the East Rand township of Katlehong have vacated their homes as a result of unrest and violence.

Katlehong town clerk Fanie Mar said it was regrettable affected homeowners did not respond to the council's call to come forward and provide details of their property and personal information.

The council had asked residents to provide addresses of vacated homes, present addresses and telephone numbers, names of financial institutions and an account number where a bond, if any, was registered.

Mar appealed to residents to give the information so the council could negotiate with financial institutions not to repossess affected houses.

UNITRANS Fm 8/10/93

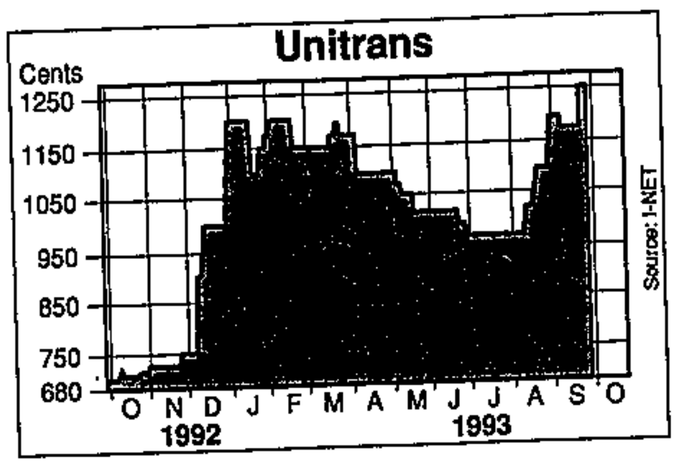
Gathering speed

Activities: *Road freight transport.* (332)
Control: *M&R 77,5%.*
Chairman: *A M van der Colff; CEO: E Gutierrez-Garcia.*
Capital structure: *37,6m ords. Market capitalisation: R470m.*
Share market: *Price: 1 250c. Yields: 2,4% on dividend; 8,0% on earnings; p:e ratio, 12,6; cover, 3,3. 12-month high, 1 250c; low, 700c. Trading volume last quarter, 102 000 shares.*

Year to June 30	*'90	*'91	†'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	4,5	12,8	7,8	18,3
LT debt (Rm)	11,3	16,1	16,9	38,9
Debt:equity ratio	—	0,04	(0,14)	0,19
Shareholders' interest	0,74	0,65	0,68	0,65
Int & leasing cover	5,4	3,2	7,2	5,0
Return on cap (%)	19,7	16,4	15,7	14,1
Turnover (Rm)	216,2	257,1	327,3	357,2
Pre-int profit (Rm)	42,8	41,8	53,0	55,8
Pre-int margin (%)	19,6	16,3	16,2	15,5
Earnings (c)	78,0	72,5	88,9	99,5
Dividends (c)	19,5	23,5	27	30
Tangible NAV (c)	436	311	436	507

* Year to March 31. † 15 months annualised.

At a time when management jargon is dominated by survival concepts such as downsizing (or the more euphemistic "right-sizing"), consolidation and rationalisation, it's



Fm 8/10/93

Gutierrez-Garcia ... *hitting new highs*

actually quite novel to come across a company not only still expanding but doing so at an accelerating rate. (332)

This phenomenon at Unitrans is no more clearly evident than in the group's capex statistics: from a base of R64,3m for the 15 months to June, 1992, capital expenditure virtually doubled to R120,4 for 1993 and is set to double again in 1994 as a result of an order — believed to be worth more than R200m — recently placed with Mercedes-Benz for 400 new truck tractors.

To put this in perspective, the R200m order is roughly equal to the depreciated value of the group's 2 500 vehicle fleet and represents about half total assets presently employed. An equally important aspect is the timing of the order. Like most of the rest of the economy, the transport industry is a mess, plagued by over-capacity and depressed demand. So, a fleet upgrade programme of these proportions can only be justified if the group has the utmost confidence, first, in itself and, second, in the quality and cost-effectiveness of the service provided to customers.

Chairman Andre van der Colff and CEO Eduardo Gutierrez-Garcia say the objective of the fleet upgrade is to improve the productivity of the fleet, thereby enhancing the group's ability to offer cost-effective solutions to customers' transport needs. The importance of this is that Unitrans' growth, past and future, comes mainly from taking over the transport divisions of its customers who, instead of running their own operations, are provided with a dedicated freight service.

To keep the ball rolling, customers need to be convinced the arrangement is the cheapest; conversely, Unitrans has to satisfy not only the customer but also must provide an acceptable profit to itself. This target is difficult to achieve in a competitive industry, a fact underscored by the loss of some timber transport contracts last year to Spoornet. But it's equally true Unitrans's failures are

Fm 8/10/93

substantially outweighed by its successes.

Partly because of the financial implications of the current capex programme, the forecast that Unitrans should be able to continue to show real earnings growth may also prove demanding, particularly as profits will not benefit to the same extent as in 1993 from lower tax — the main source of last year's 12% EPS improvement. Furthermore, the full impact of 1993's increase in borrowings has not yet been felt in the income statement and, on top of this, the financing of this year's capex programme also needs to be borne in mind. (332)

Obviously, operating profit must grow faster than last year's 5% improvement but there are a number of factors suggesting that this can be achieved: in particular, the group should benefit from three major contracts signed towards the end of the 1993 financial year and there will also be a full year's contribution from Greyhound Coach Lines, acquired in February from Tollgate — Unitrans' first venture into the passenger transport market.

Certainly, JSE investors seem to have little doubt that growth will be achieved. The share continues regularly to hit new highs and, at 1 250c, has appreciated 77% since the *FM* reviewed the 1992 annual report. It was noted at the time that a rerating was overdue, which clearly has now taken place, but the 2,4% historic dividend yield and 12,6% PE indicate that Unitrans still offers fair value.

Brian Thompson

Flitestar appeals to Board over SAA

CT 15/10/93 (332)

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

FLITESTAR has, for the second time, asked the Competition Board to investigate alleged restrictive practices by SA Airways (SAA).

Announcing this yesterday the Board said its task was "to monitor the process of reduction of capacity by SAA and its adherence to commercially viable yields per seat ratios".

Issues to be examined by the Board were SAA's frequent flyer programme, allegations of improper use of its computer reservations system, exclusive corporate discount arrangements and overriding commission to agents.

Flitestar MD Jan Blake said the use of such incentive schemes was not necessarily anti-competitive, but the manner in which they were implemented could be.

Flitestar, in which Safren has a stake, entered the domestic market in 1991 but suffered substantial losses in its first year. Blake complained that SAA, had not reduced capacity in line with a lower market share.

The Board recommended that SAA cut its capacity on domestic flights by 30% and increase the price to its level in January 1991 in real terms, after inflation.

In August this year SAA reported a profit of R77m on its domestic services. But this was wiped out by a loss of R155m on international routes.

Yesterday SAA said it would make a submission within 30 days.

Transport groups join forces

MARC HASENFUSS
Business Staff

(332)

ARG 9/10/93

TRENCOR Transport, a subsidiary of the blue chip transport listing Trencor, has acquired Independent Wholesale Deliveries — trading as Independent Express — for an undisclosed amount.

Independent Express, which will form part of Trencor's transport division, provides an express document and parcel delivery service door-to-door home and abroad from branches countrywide.

In addition, as the South African agent of the Skynet Worldwide Courier Network, Independent Express has access to Skynet branch offices in 92 countries.

Trencor Transport chief executive Deon Blignaut said yesterday that Independent Express would enhance the already extensive service network provided by Jowells Transport, Stuarts Transport and particularly Cross-Cape Express by strengthening air courier services and providing an important international link.

The current management of Independent Express would be retained. The group was founded 1989 and has current annual sales of around R25 million.

■ This week Trencor Transport also secured a lucrative contract for the transport of mineral products from Namakwa Sands — the R1 billion Anglo American development project on the West Coast.

A Trencor spokesman said it was impossible to estimate the value of the contract at this stage.

The contract will see Trencor transport ore from the mining area at Brand-se-Baai to the mineral separation plant located near Koekenkamp.

Bus firm rejects claim

CT 16/10/93

Staff Reporter (332)

THE Golden Arrow bus service dismissed claims yesterday that they had an agreement with the PAC to supply free buses which transported 800 pupils to a Pan-African Student Organisation (Paso) meeting at UCT last month as "nonsense".

The claim was made by PAC regional secretary Mr Bathembu Lugulwana on Thursday at a meeting with students whose property was damaged by the pupils and are claiming R30 800 in compensation from the PAC.

Asked who footed the bill for the ten buses which transported the pupils, Mr Lugulwana said the PAC had an agreement with Golden Arrow who supplied the transport free of charge.

But Golden Arrow spokesman Mr Bob Krause dismissed the claim as "nonsense" and said the PAC had hired two buses. The other eight were hijacked by the pupils who forced the drivers to first drive to Cape Town where a PAC meeting was cancelled and then to UCT.

After the pupils alighted, the hijacked buses left and the hired buses remained, he said.

Fuel price protesters get organised

B/Day 18/10/93

JOHANNES NGCOBO

TALKS aiming at co-ordinating mass protest action against the recent petrol hike will be held at the National Federation of Taxi Organisations' Johannesburg office this week.

The Liquid and Fuel Crisis Committee, black business and consumer, labour, political, church, civic and taxi organisations, will debate and adopt a programme of action. (332)

Top of the agenda will be what labour and the taxi industry can bring to the campaign to force government to rethink its position on the recent 7c/l petrol price hike.

Business Times reported yesterday that Finance Minister Derek Keys has initiated attempts to defuse the crisis through investigations into the possibility of a taxi industry subsidy.

Taxi drivers boycott threatened blockade

(332) (183) (484)

ARGUS 18/10/93

Staff Reporters

THE major blockade of Cape Town threatened by irate minibus taxi drivers did not materialise today.

It appeared only some taxi drivers were taking part in the action announced at a rally at Athlone Stadium yesterday, and the Strand Street taxi rank appeared to be as busy as normal.

Members of the largely black Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), who did not attend yesterday's meeting, were also plying their trade.

By 10 am, when taxi drivers were supposed to have met in Wetton Road, they were still operating in Mitchell's Plain.

At 10.15 some drivers in the area met to form a convoy and drove to Wetton Road where they were due to link up with colleagues from other townships.

Members of the Internal Stability Unit (ISU) put up a roadblock in Wetton Road near Kenilworth.

Fifteen vehicles from the Hanover Park-based Park City Taxi Association were parked nearby and drivers said they were waiting for colleagues to join them.

But at 11.15 the convoy returned to Hanover Park after negotiations with ISU officer Colonel Nel, who said: "They have given us an undertaking that they are returning to work."

Former mayor Frank van der Velde, chairman of the city council's taxi liaison committee, confirmed that a meeting had been held with taxi organisations today.

But their agenda had been routine and today's protest had not been discussed, he said.

The taxi drivers' action was part of a planned three-day protest from today, which included threats to blockade D F Malan Airport, Table Bay docks and oil industry installations.

● See page 6

Airports firm aims to ground losses

B/Day 18/10/93

STEPHANE BOTHMA

THE newly formed Airports Company would turn SA's nine state airports — currently losing R60m a year — into a self-supporting industry within the next financial year, MD Braam Loots said at the weekend.

At a media briefing on the objectives of the management team which took over the running of state airports in August, Loots said an airport was potentially a lucrative business.

His company had been tasked with managing the country's airports on a bona fide commercial basis, although the state remained the only shareholder. Profitability could be achieved through better management and extending commercial activities, such as retail outlets.

The airports would be run on three basic principles — to develop a safe and secure environment for customers (airlines and passengers); to create a user-friendly environment; and to give customers value for money.

Airports Company chairman Jan van den Berg said it had taken experts "a while" to establish that SA's state airports had been running at "quite a considerable loss" — about R60m per year". (332)

He said one of the world's most profitable airports, London's Heathrow, derived more than half its income from non-aviation activities. Non-aviation activities at Jan Smuts airport made up only about 20% of its income — a situation that would be changed in the near future.

Taxi massacre: Two in court

PRETORIA — Two people appeared in the Pretoria North Magistrate's Court yesterday in connection with the Mamelodi taxi rank shooting in which five people were killed and 15 were injured.

Mr Sela Hlela and Mr Peter Ngomane were not asked to plead and their case was postponed to November 2.

They face five charges of murder, several of attempted murder and one of illegal possession of an AK-47 rifle. — Sapa

20/10/88

Govt offers to cut price by 2c, but mass action to go ahead

Taximen plan petrol blockades

Star 22/10/93

(332)

BY PAUL BELL
LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

A PROGRAMME of countrywide protests is planned to force the general restructuring of the petrol price

Despite a Government offer of a 2c/litre cut in the price of petrol, the taxi industry has decided to resume mass action next week in an attempt to force a reversal of last month's 7c/litre increase.

This includes the disruption of fuel supplies by blockading petrol dumps.

At the same time, the taxi industry, pleading that it has been severely hit by the 7c price rise, says it will be forced to raise fares but has undertaken to consult community organisations, including the South African National Civic Organisation, on an attempt to ensure that whatever political credit is to be gained from a drop in the petrol price does not merely accrue to the Government, the LFCC has warned De Klerk to refrain from a "unilateral" announcement of its offer, saying any statement should come from the NEF's task force.

These decisions were taken at the LFCC summit, which

In a statement last night, Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett said a Government investigation into the structuring of the fuel price had found it "possible to propose a modest price reduction with almost immediate effect".

The results of the investigation had been passed on to the National Energy Forum (NEF). "The parties will meet as soon as possible to discuss this matter further. An announcement on a possible decrease in the fuel price will be made only after further consultations," he said.

The Liquid Fuel Crisis Committee (LFCC), which convened a summit in Johannesburg yesterday, will write to President de Klerk today saying it accepts the offer of the 2c price reduction made on Wednesday at a meeting of the NEF's process committee.

But the LFCC will tell De Klerk it regards the Government offer simply as an opening bid in what must be renewed negotiations on the restructuring of the fuel price.

The LFCC wants the 2c/litre price cut no later than October 31, and it is demanding that the Government return to the NEF Liquid Fuel Task Force on Monday.

In what is clearly an at-

included leaders from the taxi industry and the broad trade union movement, as well as representatives of a range of consumer and transport organisations and black petrol retailers. The summit was chaired by Dr Bernie Fanaroff who called on the business sector to reduce its prices in line with the 2c price cut.

The summit also accepted a programme of mass action to ensure a roll-back of the entire 7c increase and the general restructuring of the petrol price. Proposed action includes the picketing of oil company and Government offices; blockades of petrol dumps and streets; and the organising of marches, petitions and stayaways.

The programme is expected to spread through the four provinces week by week, beginning in the Cape on Sundayand move to the Free State on November 1, to the Transvaal on November 8 and to Natal on November 15.

In a burst of enthusiasm, taxi spokesman Boetie Letsoela warned delegates: "If we have to take 3 million taxis and blockade Jan Smuts Airport, we will do it."

Black petrol retailers endorsed the action but expressed fears that a blockade could lead to a serious disruption of their supplies.

PUTCO FM 22/10/1993 01.

In a better position

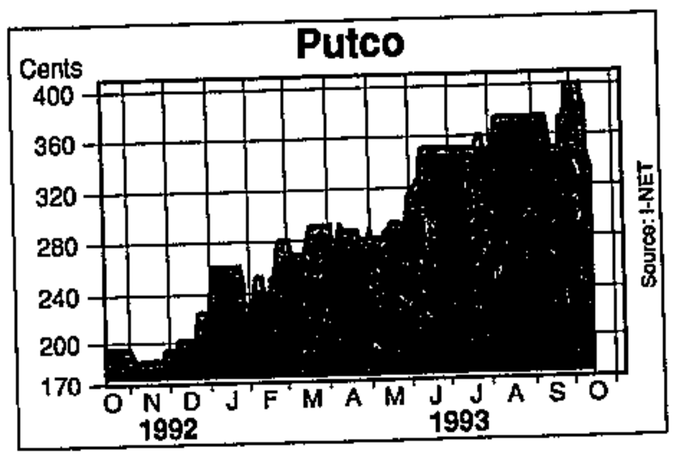
Activities: *Operates mass transport services.*
Control: *Carleo family 52,5%.*
Chairman: *A Carleo; MD: E M R L Oldham.*
Capital structure: *26,4m ords. Market capitalisation: R81,8m.*
Share market: *Price: 310c. Yields: 11,3% on dividend; 24,9% on earnings; p:e ratio, 4,0; cover, 2,2. 12-month high, 400c; low, 185c. Trading volume last quarter, 243 340 shares.*

Year to June 30	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	5,5	4,6	—	—
Shareholders' interest	0,62	0,58	0,56	0,61
Return on cap (%)	(4,0)	(3,8)	10,3	8,3
Turnover (Rm)	365	360	398	421
Pre-int profit (Rm)	(8,5)	(7,4)	23,3	19,0
Pre-int margin (%)	(2,3)	(2,1)	5,8	4,5
Earnings (c)	18,1	(13,7)	53,2	77,2
Dividends (c)	320*	30*	30	40
Tangible NAV (c)	498	431	476	527

* Special dividend

(332)

Change is not always for the best but for Putco, a provider of mass passenger transport, it certainly seems to have been. Having conceded defeat in its uneven battle with the minibuses for control of short-haul commuter routes, Putco has repositioned itself in the longer-distance market where the minibus finds it difficult to compete in economies of scale.



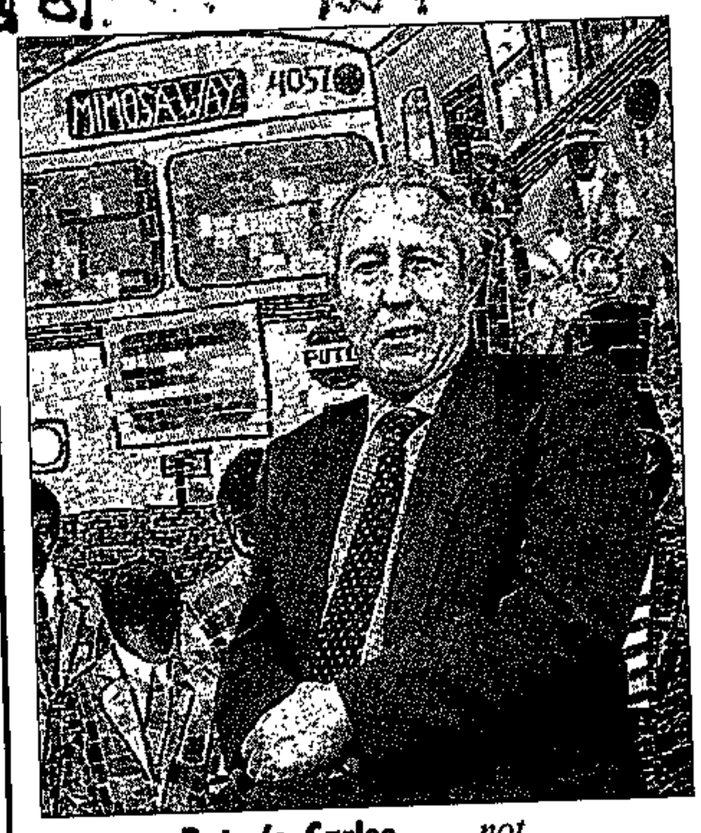
The effect on the bottom line has been dramatic. From a R13,6m loss in the first half of its 1991 financial year (which prompted the group to announce its intention of withdrawing from the transport industry), Putco has since shown a significant turnaround in profit.

Earnings for the year to end-June were up 45% at R20,4m, against 1992's R14,1m. It's notable, though, that the turnaround was achieved despite an 18% decline in operating profit (a 27% gain in the six months to December) and rise of only 7% in turnover.

The bottom line was helped by a 55% jump in interest received (R8,9m) and a lower effective tax rate of 27% (1992: 51%).

Management denies that profitability is due to increased subsidies and tenders awarded by government. Rather, it contends that profitability has been brought about by the restructuring of overheads and a consolidation of activities. However, continued deterioration in almost every ratio measuring asset usage suggests Putco is not yet out of the woods.

Passenger support continues to decline,



Putco's Carleo ... *not a stable environment*

(332)

though at a slower pace; the number carried was down 6% in 1993 to 81m. Just five years ago this figure was 181m. The fleet size has shrunk accordingly, from 2 758 buses in 1989 to 2 358 at year-end. Before giving Putco a clean bill of health, one would at least want to see signs of returning stability after a decade of deterioration.

But to be fair, the operating environment has been anything but stable. Chairman Albino Carleo says the stayaway of August 1992 brought all Putco services to a halt, as did the murder of Chris Hani. Escalating damages to the fleet, because of theft, robberies and hijackings also disrupted services. The volatile environment makes forecasts impossible.

The share, at 310c, though off its annual high of 400c, has been favourably rerated by the market — but it continues to trade at a discount to NAV. Putco seems to have survived the crisis confronting the mass transport industry and has again proved to be a strong cash generator thanks to a restructuring of its operations. Though political events next year may again make things difficult for the group, this counter is worth considering.

Marylou Greig

Star 25/10/93

Petrol price protests set to begin

BY HELEN GRANGE

Mass action by the taxi industry protesting against the recent petrol price rise looks set to begin in Cape Town today, despite the Government's decision to drop the fuel price by 2c/litre from October 30.

Although the protest mood has been softened in the industry, plans to stage taxi blockades and marches in major centres countrywide, hitting the Transvaal on November 8, have not been scrapped.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions, while welcoming the reduction, has remained committed to the mass action agreed to at the liquid fuel crisis summit last week.

The National Council of Trade Unions has said it rejects the 2c/litre price reduction as inadequate, and warned businesses they would be targeted for protest action if they did not "reduce their prices accordingly".

(332)

Cosatu, taxi industry discuss protest plans

(332)

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — Cosatu is meeting the taxi industry today to discuss action to press the government to withdraw the remainder of the 7c/litre petrol price rise. ARG 26/10/93

The government's decision last week to reduce the increase by 2c/litre comes into effect at midnight on Saturday, but it has failed to silence the taxi industry and Cosatu affiliates.

Cape Town taxi organisations did not implement planned blockades of petrol stations yesterday.

Cosatu assistant general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi said the federation would accept no less than the withdrawal of the whole 7c/litre increase, and would continue preparing for protests until the government acceded to this demand.

Plans included taxi blockades, pickets, sit-ins and the occupation of government buildings.

Cosatu is also organising protests from Thursday as a build-up to the November 15 strike to demand the withdrawal of the clause in the draft Bill of Rights which entitles employers to lock out striking workers.

Flitestar call on SAA year reports

27/10/93

(332)

JOHANNESBURG. — Flitestar yesterday called for SAA to separate from Transnet and to publish its own audited annual reports.

Flitestar MD Jan Blake told the Afikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) junior congress in Bloemfontein his company had suffered "a worrying blow as a result of the non-implementation of the domestic air transport policy and certain actions of SAA, as found by the Competition Board."

Blake said despite these problems, Flitestar's performance in the market was highly satisfactory.

"We question SAA's recent revelations of profitability and are of the opinion that the success of deregulation in SA cannot be ensured unless the policy on domestic air transport is throroughly applied," Blake said.

Among the steps needed were SAA's separation "as a legal (entity) independent of Transnet with its own audited annual report" and the withdrawal of all state guarantees to SAA.

Blake said the addendum to the domestic air transport policy demanded that SAA be run as "an ordinary commercial business" reaching profitability.

"That can in our opinion be done by reducing seat capacity or increasing tariffs or both."

He said Flitestar had serious misgivings about recent suggestions that SAA had reached profitability on its internal routes.

Funicular railway for Cape Point

(332) ARG 28/10/93

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

CONCOR has got conditional approval from the Western Cape Regional Services Council to build a restaurant and funicular railway at Cape Point, beating a rival syndicate of three businessmen who bid for the job.

Approval is subject to "mutually satisfactory" talks between the RSC and the company about the second phase of the proposal call process.

The RSC adopted a report by its works, amenities and services committee which said Concor should get the job because it had a proven record and readily available resources.

The ability of the three businessmen to work as a cohesive unit was untested.

Concor's proposal includes a 200-seat restaurant, a curio shop, a takeaway shop and information kiosk, and a funicular railway system with its lower station next to the curio shop.

The RSC will be asked to help raise finance for the project by standing surety.

Two lease agreements proposed would yield R10 million for the nature reserve in the first 15 years, Concor said.

FEDERATED NATIONAL TRANSPORT ORGANISATION

FENTO

A Star, Argus, Daily News, Pretoria News and Sowetan advertising feature

A new transport organisation has seen the light of day. Its president welcomes competition but warns against the destructive forms.

Reports: ANNA COX.
Advertising: NIKI HART

Shell SA looks forward to working with new organisation

'Big buddy' keeps up good work

Shell South Africa's red and yellow emblem is a familiar partner to many of South Africa's "new wave" of taxi and transport entrepreneurs. The company is involved in a wide range of joint business ventures, peace campaigns and safety promotions.

Shell was one of the first companies to recognise in the 1980s how minibus taxi operators and the informal road transport industry would change the face of road use in South Africa. The company has, since the mid-'80s, forged strong links with a wide range of representative organisations.

Companies are sometimes criticised for doing no more than handing out cash; a form of support that is relatively easy and popular, but does little to actively promote the grassroots process of economic empowerment and skills development.

SUPPORT for empowerment is about more than just handing out cash

To support the empowerment process more constructively, Shell has supported taxi organisations in a number of ways.

Experienced Shell staff has been seconded to organisations for long-term service, to assist them with management and business skills, joint business ventures have been set up to give transport entrepreneurs direct involvement and equity in fuel retailing; and joint road safety promotions have helped reduce accident rates.

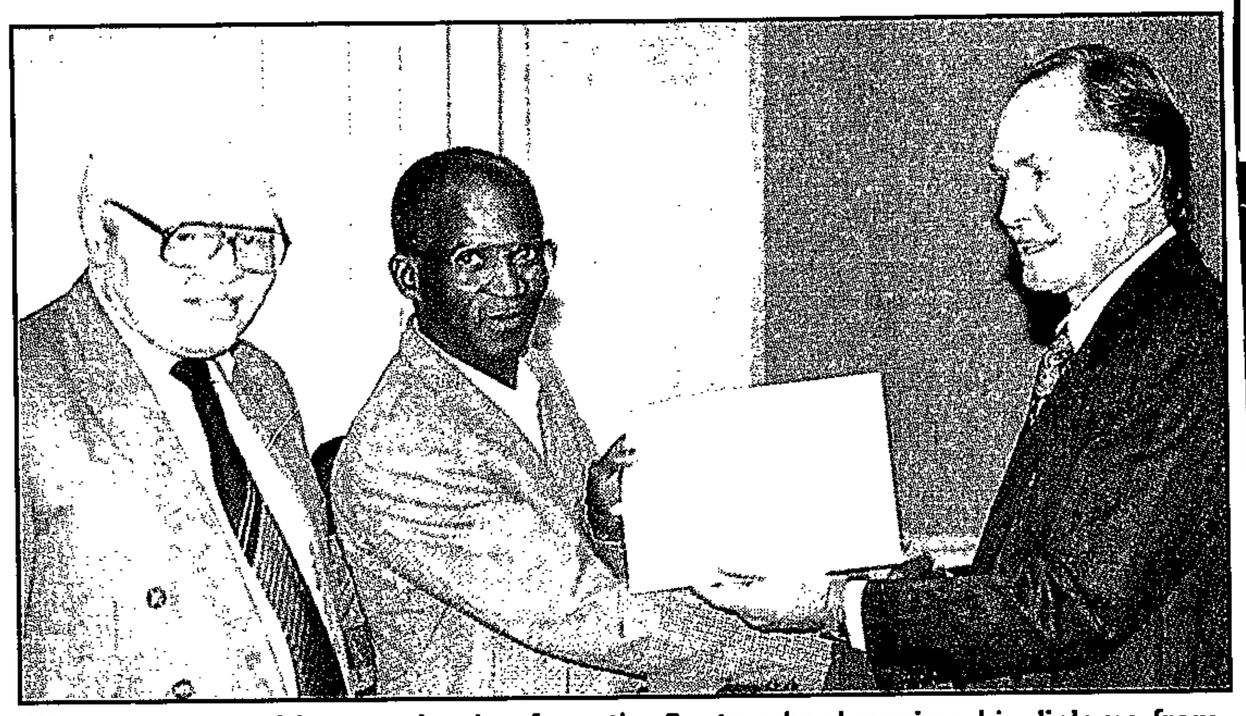
Shell assisted Fento with its launch at the University of the North earlier this year and Shell is committed to working with Fento in future to further the broad goals of black economic empowerment.

Welcomed

Says a company spokesman: "We welcome the formation of Fento and look forward to working with its representatives to promote entrepreneurial skills."

On a broader front, Shell is one of the partners in the "Taxis for Peace" project, along with Star Taxi Music. This concept emerged from the National Transport Policy Forum.

The company also works closely with the Directorate of Traffic Safety, which sets up special information and communication centres at Shell Ultra Cities on the main holiday routes in December and at Easter.



Well done . . . a driver graduating from the Fento school receives his diploma from Automobile Association MD Peter Elliot. Fento national president Lennox Magwaza is on the left.

On the road to success

(332) ARG 28/10/93

The fragmentation in the taxi industry has caused chaos. It is now a matter of dog eats dog, and there are no clear and structured guidelines by which to address the problems, said Fento national president Lennox Magwaza at the organisation's national annual convention last week.

Fento stands for Federated National Transport Organisation. Being an apolitical organisation, it is ideally positioned to accommodate owners and drivers on its new journey to success, he said.

Approach

"We can give a home to all discontented members of other associations where there are no positive benefits forthcoming."

In general, the taxi industry has an immature approach to competition, said Magwaza.

"We welcome healthy competition because it is an important mechanism whereby operations are forced to be effective and costs kept as low as possible. In such a case, both the industry and the commuters benefit.

"But there is also destructive competition: internal fights, accidents because of overloading and speeding and overtrading of routes. The negative forms of competition will affect the viability of our industry if we are not willing or able to co-ordinate and consolidate to make routes viable."

Fento has taken a resolution to be pro-active in this matter. The most recent strategic plan will offer its members a benefit package that will reduce their running costs by as much as 20 percent.

Magwaza invited all associations to co-operate with one another to benefit all.

"The industry should have a battle plan against ever-rising costs, high accident rates and its poor image. Only when associations unite and agree on a common code of conduct will this industry be able to change direction. For this to happen, a proper industry structure is necessary."

He said the industry was in disarray at present and as yet there was no mechanism for ensuring that the different voices which made up the industry were heard by the decision-makers.

"It is a shame that one of the largest industries in the country has such a battle to be heard by the authorities. Many industries in these bad times are being kept viable by our industry and just think of the job opportunities being created in the glass, tyre, spares and petroleum industries by our buying power.

"We are wielding tremendous power but we shoot ourselves in the foot because of disorganisation, power struggles, lack of management experience and training," said Magwaza.

The most valuable form of assistance is that which empowers. He said the industry needed to take advantage of the opportunities which existed to empower itself and to take responsibility for its own destiny.

Fento has resolved to distance itself from begging for hand-outs and so-called sponsorships.

These practices, said Magwaza, had weakened and spoilt the industry to the point where the focus was no longer on profitability.

Fento, he said, would structure itself to be self-supporting through its members and would employ astute business principles.

"Instead of us remaining the disadvantaged victim of the apartheid South Africa, this philosophy will make Fento a dynamic power in the new South Africa.

"The time has come for this industry to stand up, unite, and use its influence and buying power to rejuvenate itself and become the giant it deserves to be. Let us refuse to play into the hands of the people who take advantage of our disarray to milk the taxi industry with their high prices.

Money

"It is no longer a struggle for survival — it is now a matter of growth and profitability through professionalism."

Magwaza said the Fento culture was built on professionalism and large sums of money would be spent on training, upliftment of its image and management development.

Strong policy is Fento's aim

The Federated National Transport Organisation (Fento) is one of the largest taxi associations in the country.

Fento was formed in June 1992 and has gone from strength to strength. Today it boasts a membership of over 32 000, including 225 taxi associations, five truckers' associations, three bus companies, one tourism company and one associate aviation company.

It was founded by national president Lennox Magwaza.

Fento is a federation of associations of various transport mode operators throughout southern Africa. It was formed with the aim of developing a strong transport policy for the country and to empower small transport entrepreneurs.

Fento is a non-profit-making body. Its affiliates are transport operators. There are seven provinces and 18 regions nationally.

It is an autonomous body run by its members.

The organisation, according to Magwaza, was established to curb the unnecessary cut-throat competition between numerous transport associations.

"With Fento we hope to overcome the points of unhealthy competition and harmful opposition by supplying the long-awaited, expected best service to transport members countrywide and in the neighbouring states," said Magwaza.

Fento caters for the following transport modes: minibus taxi, metered taxi, haulage and trucking, busing, travel agencies and tourism, aviation and shipping.

One of the primary objectives is to establish a sound financial base for members.

The basic plan is as follows: to reach a break-even point within six months of the strategic plan being implemented; to establish a collateral or a "bank comfort" within three years with Fento Foundation Fund (Fento envisages enabling its members to purchase vehicles with relative ease); to improve all transport divisions by attending conscientiously to the common demands of members.

Alarm (and good news) over tyres

ARG 28/10/93

A national survey at the end of 1992 revealed that 56 percent of 14-to-18-seater minibus taxis had incorrect tyre fitment.

This was an alarmingly high percentage considering the danger, says Roger Tait, marketing director of Centyre, manufacturers of Continental Tyres in South Africa, which commissioned the annual survey.

"On the other hand it is encouraging to see that almost 100 percent of 9-to-12-seater minibus taxis — 11 percent of all minibus taxis — had correct tyre fitment. This is a significant improvement over the previous year, when the national minibus taxi tyre survey showed 93 percent of all taxis had incorrect tyres fitted."

He attributed this improvement to the combined effort of the national taxi associations, road safety organisations, tyre and motor vehicle manufacturers and the media.

Overall, tyres were found to be in good condition, with only six percent being below one millimetre remaining tread-depth and therefore illegal. There remains a high degree of dangerous mixing of various tyre constructions and sizes.

Preferred

Centyre warns that as a rule, passenger tyres are not suitable for use on a minibus taxi. Commercial tyres, which are identified by a "C" in the size marking on the sidewall, are the type that must be used on minibuses.

Part of the problem still appears to be the preferred use of imported sidewall passenger tyres, particularly in the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area. The Centyre survey reveals that over 21 percent of taxis are fitted with white sidewall passenger tyres which cannot carry the loads transported by minibus taxis.

Tait stresses that there are suitable locally designed and produced commercial tyres with white sidewalls available for use by minibus taxis.

Overloading causes the tyre to overheat, resulting in premature tyre failure.

To assist with correct tyre fitment and tyre pressures, Centyre has produced a guide for minibus taxi owners and operators.

These, together with a "splash" decal giving the recommended pressures for the popular makes of tyres suitable for use on minibus taxis, are available from Centyre branches or selected dealers throughout the country.

Two buses attacked as no-go zone deal with taxis collapses

332

ARG 28/10/93

STEFAANS BRÜMMER
Staff Reporter

TWO buses were attacked in Khayelitsha and a passenger was wounded just an hour after a meeting — called to announce that Peninsula townships would cease to be no-go areas for buses — was abandoned.

Efforts to stop the war on buses were dealt a severe blow when the taxi body, Codeta, scuppered the peace announcement by failing to attend the meeting yesterday. Then came the attack.

The Golden Arrow buses were sprayed with bullets shortly before noon in Khayelitsha's Site C. Passenger Nomaliso Xowa was wounded in the right arm.

Golden Arrow spokeswoman Jeanne Welsh said three men with pistols fired six bullets at the first bus, carrying two passengers, and two at the second, which was empty.

Police spokesman Wicus Holzhausen said his information was that there was only one gunman. Both buses were damaged.

Khayelitsha, Guguletu, Crossroads, Langa and Nyanga have been bus no-go areas since the outbreak of taxi disturbances after the petrol price rise. Bus services all but stopped in the townships after a gunman opened fire on a bus in Khayelitsha on September 17, killing driver Ganief Karriem.

A Transport and General Workers Union statement yesterday, warning of the "imminent collapse of bus passenger services in the Western Cape", said Golden Arrow drivers reported facing "daily threats and harassment from taxi drivers associated with Codeta".

Keeping buses out of townships "is leading to the retrenchment of Golden Arrow workers and could lead to the closure of Golden Arrow", the statement said.

Efforts to solve the impasse culminated in a meeting on Tuesday chaired by the Western Cape Peace Committee.

It was resolved that buses would return to the townships today. The decision was to have been made public yesterday at a follow-up meeting in Bellville.

Codeta failed to arrive at the scheduled time of 11am. The meeting went ahead at 3pm, by which time the other taxi bodies had also withdrawn.

The remaining bodies resolved that "due to the failure of the taxi associations to attend ... the decision to resume bus services be suspended until this matter can be further discussed".

A Codeta spokesman said allegations that Codeta drivers were involved in intimidation or attacks on buses were "wild accusations".

He said as far as Codeta was concerned, buses could return to the townships.

The spokesman said it was not Codeta's decision that buses be pulled out of the townships, so he could see no reason why Codeta should be involved in efforts to bring them back.

Alitalia postpones expansion plans in SA

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

THE present state of the international airline market has caused Alitalia to postpone plans to increase its service to this country, its marketing manager in SA, Demetrio Cassa, said yesterday.

Although it has landing rights in Cape Town it will not come here for at least a year.

But, Cassa said: "Cape Town is always in our plans although we don't think this is the right time to extend our service there. Head office is currently thinking about introducing a flight to Cape Town in 1994."

Alitalia, like other international airlines, is suffering from competitive pressure which has pushed rates down to unprofitable levels.

Although sales revenue rose by 7,3% in the six months to June to R5 820m, and the number of passengers rose by 2,9%, rising costs and falling margins increased the Italian national carrier's losses to R455m compared with R83m in the first half of 1992.

The directors say labour costs rose by 8%. And the growth in sales revenue correlated with a growth of 15% in the airline's consumption of goods and services.

They say Alitalia — which has cut staff by 4,5%, or 881 people — is rationalising capacity to meet demand, particularly on domestic flights.

But, Cassa said, Alitalia's three weekly flights between Johannesburg and Rome would not be affected.

The directors report that load factors during the six months were 62,3% for passenger traffic and 67,6% for cargo.

"Freight carried increased by 8,6%, thanks to a notable increase in Italian exports."

They point out that "investments continued to the tune of R1 155m". Of this, R934m was spend on expanding the fleet and R221m on the acquisition of a 30% stake in Hungarian airline Malev.

Call for safety for bus drivers

Staff Reporter (232)

THE Transport and General Workers' Union has called for attacks on bus drivers to stop and claims the crisis which has prevented buses from operating in townships since mid-September may cause the collapse of bus services in the Western Cape.

This comes after attacks in Khayelitsha on Wednesday where buses were sprayed with bullets and a passenger was wounded. CT 29/10/93

The crisis could close the bus service and mean loss of jobs, said the union.

Demos: SAP to impound taxis

CT 30/10/93

Staff Reporter

POLICE will in future tow away all vehicles blocking public roads following taxi protest blockades countrywide.

The police vowed to impound vehicles in such protests and warned that the drivers would be prosecuted and liable for a fine of up to R20 000.

Vehicles would be removed by tow truck. Should this be impossible, "the vehicle will be forced open and any mechanism that prevents the removal of the vehicle will be broken," the SAP said.

Prison warders 'start violence'

30/10/93

JOHANNESBURG. — Prisoner representatives accused the warders yesterday of fomenting the violence in jails which has claimed three lives this week.

The South African Organisation for Human Rights warned violence in jails would "explode soon" if ill-treatment was not checked.

A Correctional Services spokesman rejected the allegations.

Correctional Services Minister Mr Adriaan Vlok said yesterday by the end of August, there were 113 973 people in jail. The department can only accommodate 87 706. — Sapa

Third Israeli

'Bus boycotts started by taxi operators'

(332)

CT 2/11/93

Staff Reporter

AN enforced boycott of Golden Arrow Bus Services in the city's townships was being masterminded by taxi operators, the company claimed yesterday in a letter to the council.

Golden Arrow said normal services in Khayelitsha, Crossroads, Nyanga and Guguletu had been disrupted since the murder of two staff members.

"Understandably, many of our drivers have been unwilling to enter the townships, those that have ventured in have continued to be harassed or threatened," general manager Mr F E Mayoss said in the letter.

In jobs, this has meant 47 contract drivers have had their contracts cancelled and 40 cleaners jobs were on the line.

Mr Mayoss spoke at a meeting last week to address "the specific problem of being denied free entry into the townships". Company representatives had been told by community organisations they "had been told by Codeta that taxi operators are not prepared to support the return of buses".

The community organisations were not named and Codeta representatives could not be contacted.

The 21-year-old free Adventure Bus and Adventures In Learning programmes which were used by 40 000 school children a year has been suspended.

R10 000 rent for taxi rank on station deck rejected

(332)

ARG 2/11/93

☐ Continuing chaos in Strand Street over Christmas feared

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

A ROW is looming about a proposal by Intersite, the property arm of Transnet, to charge the city council R10 000 a month to use the station deck as a minibus taxi rank.

And the rank will not be ready before next winter, risking chaos in Strand Street over Christmas.

Council negotiators have counter-offered with R5 000, but utilities and works committee member Frank van der Velde said the council's highest offer should be R2.

He said the station and its parking deck had been built with taxpayers' and ratepayers' money.

"The station was paid for by the people of Cape Town.

"If we wanted to use the deck for income-generating activities, I would have understood. But we want it for a public transport interchange.

"If we have agreed to pay R10 000 a month, we have been taken for suckers."

Deputy city administrator Alan Dolby said the council had not accepted Intersite's proposed rent.

Kenny Penkin asked why the station deck minibus rank was taking so long to complete.

"The council agreed to go ahead at the end of July.

"It has taken more than three months for anything to be done."

Gordon Oliver asked officials to finalise the matter urgently.

"We are coming to the height of the tourist season and the city will still be in a shambles."

City planner Neville Riley said he was optimistic the minibus taxi terminus would be ready by winter.

The deadline for tenders will be December 15.

A working group of minibus taxi operators, informal traders, town planning and traffic officials, and the metropolitan transport planning branch has been set up to consider proposals for managing the rank.

Mr Riley said minibus taxi associations from Athlone, Heideveld, Grassy Park and Wynberg wanted new rights to ranks in the central business district. Associations of operators with existing rights opposed this.

Another problem was that minibus taxi operators had not been persuaded the council was capable of stopping illegal operators using the Grand Parade.

Anger at rental demand for deck

(332) CT 2/11/93

THE demand for R10 000 a month in rent for the Cape Town Station deck was slammed as "totally unacceptable", by councillor Mr Frank van der Velde yesterday.

This was the sum quoted to the City Council by Intersite, the property arm of the railways.

Mr Van der Velde was participating in the debate on the provision of minibus-facilities on the station deck instead of in Strand Street — a matter that has dragged on for four years.

The deck had been paid for by the railways "which belongs to the people", he said. He could understand the railways charging a high rental if the council wanted to use the deck for something that generated income, "but this is a transport interchange. That is what the land was for".

He suggested they offer R2 for the lease.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said the council had a lifetime right to parking on the station deck, not a right to operate a minibus terminus.

According to a report before the committee yesterday, advertisements inviting tenders to design and construct minibus-taxi facilities should appear in the press early this month. The deadline will be the start of the builders' holiday in mid-December.

The tender should be awarded by the end of January, and work should take about four months.

• Representatives of the minibus taxi industry are reported to be sceptical about the council's ability to prevent illegal operators from running taxis from Strand Street and the Parade after everyone else moves to the station deck.

"Council does not appear able to do this now", they argue, "so they will not be able to do it once the Station deck terminus is open".

Township communities hit by disruption to bus services

Municipal Reporter

BUS drivers are losing their jobs and township communities are hard hit by the disruption of Golden Arrow services to Khayelitsha, Crossroads, Nyanga and Guguletu.

Golden Arrow general manager Frans Mayoss said consequences of the bus boycott included:

- Cancellation of scheduled trips meant there was too little work for drivers and 47 contract drivers, not on the permanent staff, had been laid off.
- The company was considering retrenching 40 bus cleaners.
- Free buses to take people to pension payment points had not run since mid-September.
- The "adventure bus" programme, which had run for 21 years, had been suspended. Normally, 15 000 pre-primary children benefited from this service.
- The "adventure in learning" programme had been suspended. This programme involved free trips to cultural and educational venues for 25 000 primary school pupils a year.
- Disruption of community outreach programmes of the Nico Malan and others, in terms of which buses were provided for patrons at nominal rates.

Mr Mayoss said community organisations had told Golden Arrow they would not support the return of the buses to the townships.

Community leaders said they would be in danger if they supported buses because "they had been told by Codeta that taxi operators were not prepared to give up territory they had won".

The chairman of the taxi liaison committee, Frank van der Velde, said he would raise the matter at the committee's next meeting.

ARG 2/11/93 (332)

Employers urged to change views

B/Day 3/11/93

ERICA JANKOWITZ

COSATU affiliates would be more likely to opt for union independence in a post-election SA if employers showed a willingness to adopt a co-determinate workplace philosphy, Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) general secretary John Copelyn said yesterday.

Speaking at an Innes Labour Brief seminar, Copely said Sactwu had called for a split in the ANC/SACP/Cosatu alliance directly after the election.

This was mirrored by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), but for different reasons. He said Numsa's position was adopted as a result of its perception that the ANC was not socialist enough in its approach to reconstruction and redistribution.

Copelyn said Numsa was therefore looking to establish a "conference of the left" co-sponsored by the SACP and incorporating all like-minded leftist organisations.

He described calls for nationalisation without compensation as "bankrupt" and not viable and suggested all affiliates would change their thinking soon away from a strongly socialist line.

Bartlett suggests petrol plan for taxi groupings

CAPE TOWN — Taxi groups could be encouraged to take over existing service stations in order to provide cheap fuel to their members, Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett suggested yesterday. B/Day

Speaking at the Motor Industries Federation annual conference in Cape Town, he said he had resisted pressures to allow minibus taxi owners to operate consumer installations — outlets owned by consumers — and had imposed a moratorium on all consumer installations until the situation had been fully assessed. 3/11/93

These installations could have repercusssions for the retail margins of existing petrol sellers, negative implications for the petrol price and lead to the closure of many service stations. (332)

One solution might be for taxi groups to take over existing service stations and operate them with shareholders sharing the profits.

Provision would have to be made for all oil industry marketing companies to become involved in such a scheme.

The argument against this proposal was that it had been tried in the past with limited success.

"Much experience has been gained and this option should again be productively explored."

Bartlett said he had been told the retail margin on petrol was under pressure from rising costs.

This issue could not be assessed in isolation, but would be addressed urgently as part of the current evaluation of the fuel price structure.

Bartlett said a factor the government had taken into account in retaining a higher fuel price was that the impact of the increase had already "worked its way through to the economy".

"It would have been very difficult to reverse these impacts and in the end the consumer would be placed in jeopardy should the price have to be raised again in December."

He was convinced that the decision not to accept the original proposal of the National Economic Forum — that the increase be held over to December — was the appropriate course of action.

Motor Industries Federation president Errol Richardson told the conference black petrol station owners would suffer the most if the fuel industry was deregulated.

He said a structured industry was in the interests of the consumer. — Sapa.

Taxis 'should supply petrol'

TAXI groups should be encouraged to take over existing service stations to provide low-cost fuel to their members, Energy Affairs Minister Mr George Bartlett suggested yesterday.

Speaking at the Motor Industries Federation annual conference in Cape Town, he said he had resisted pressures to allow minibus taxi owners to operate petrol outlets and had, in fact, imposed a moratorium on all privately-owned installations until the situation was fully assessed.

These installations could have a negative effect on existing petrol outlets and lead to the closure of many service stations, he said. 332

One solution might be for taxi groups to take over existing service stations.

Mr Bartlett said a factor the government had taken into account in retaining a higher fuel price was that the increase had already worked its way through the economy and affected the price of goods.

CT 3/11/93

"It would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to reverse these impacts and in the end the consumer would be placed in double jeopardy should the price have to be raised again in December."

He said he was convinced that the decision not to accept the original proposal of the National Economic Forum — that the increase be held over to December — was the appropriate action and would be in the best long-term interests of the economy.

ANC meeting on buses, taxis

Staff Reporter

THE ANC yesterday announced that it would convene an urgent public meeting in an attempt to solve the township minibus taxi and bus dispute which has led to Golden Arrow buses being withdrawn from certain townships.

Alleged intimidation of bus drivers by Congress for a Democratic Taxi Association drivers and township taxi operators has resulted in nearly 50 Golden Arrow drivers being laid off and fears that a further 40 cleaning staff may lose their jobs.

An ANC spokesman said yesterday that Codeta and community-based organisations in Khayelitsha and Nyanga would be invited to a meeting early next week.

Codeta executive member Mr Johnson Martinis yesterday denied that Codeta was trying to take over township bus routes. CT 3/11/93

Lufthansa in Safair deal

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

LUFTHANSA has joined Safair in a new ground handling company which will provide services at Cape Town, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban airports from next month.

(332) CT 3/11/93

Until now Safair's ground handling operation, which started this year, provided the only competition for SA Airways (SAA).

The new company, Swift Handling Services, is 74% owned by Safair. Lags, a 100% owned subsidiary of Lufthansa, has taken a 26% stake.

This is Lags' 17th joint venture of this type, worldwide.

Safair MD Piet van Aswegen said yesterday: "This is a significant development for Safair. It is in line with our strategy to form joint ventures that benefit both parties.

"In this case Safair will gain the advantage of international technology, training and expertise in the ground handling field.

"Swift has the full support of our holding company, Safmarine."

'Solution' for Taxi groups

Sowetan 3.11.93

TAXI groups could be encouraged to take over existing service stations in order to provide low-cost fuel to their members, Energy Affairs Minister George Bartlett suggested yesterday. (332)

Speaking at the Motor Industries Federation annual conference in Cape Town, he said he had resisted pressure to allow minibus taxi owners to operate consumer installations and had imposed a moratorium until the situation was fully assessed.

These installations could have repercussions for the retail margins of petrol sellers, negative implications for the petrol price and lead to the closure of many service stations. One solution might be for taxi groups to take over existing service stations and operate them with shareholders sharing the profits. — *Sapa.*

Rival taxi factions in accord

Star 4/11/93

Rival factions in a taxi association in Tokoza agreed to bury the hatchet yesterday after a two-month dispute which is believed to have claimed scores of lives.

At a meeting at the Alberton Town Hall, two factions of the Tokoza Amalgamated Taxi Association said their different political stands were central to the conflict.

"We must decide if we want to be businessmen or politicians," one taxi owner said.

The taxi owners have been drawn into the conflict between IFP and ANC supporters in the volatile township. This led to a split in the taxi association. (332)

Yesterday's meeting was held under the auspices of the Independent Mediation Services in South Africa.

The association's executive committee was given a mandate to continue until the conflict is brought under control.

The committee's term of office was due to have expired a month ago but it has been struggling to carry out its duties because of the hostilities.

"We are relieved that members have resolved their differences," said chairman of the association, John Motloung.

Both sides have agreed to go back to their communities and inform them of the decision to end the fighting. A report back meeting will be held next Tuesday. — Own Correspondent.

za make peace ● Councils' irregularities probed

Taximen in Tokoza end their war

Sowetan 4/11/93

By Ruth Bhengu

■ POLITICAL DIVISION Business more important than ideologies:

332

RESIDENTS OF TOKOZA ON the East Rand were relieved yesterday when taxi owners decided to bury the hatchet after faction fighting which claimed 30 lives in two months.

At a meeting in the Alberton Town Hall, two factions belonging to the Tokoza Amalgamated Taxi Association took a stand against being divided by political ideologies.

"We have to decide whether we want to be businessmen or politicians," one taxi owner said.

"If a taxi owner also wants to be a politician then he or she must employ a manager to take care of the business."

The taxi owners are part of a community that has been split down the middle with Inkatha Freedom Party supporters living in one part of the township and supporters of the African National Congress dominating the other.

The division spilled over to the taxi association a few months ago. Clashes between the two factions affected commuters who had to walk long distances to avoid certain taxis and were often caught in the crossfire.

The meeting, co-ordinated by Independent Mediation Services in South Africa, also made a commitment to stay under one body.

A mandate was given to the current executive committee, whose term of office expired a month ago, to continue until the situation was under control.

Since June, the committee could not function properly because it was viewed with suspicion by both factions.

"We are relieved that members have resolved their differences," said chairman of the association Mr John Motloung.

"It was very difficult for the executive committee to operate under the circumstances. The fact that we live on the side of the township which is known as an ANC area made things even more difficult.

"Now that the membership wants us to continue it will be easier to do our job and also to solve some of the problems we still have," said Motloung.

Both sides resolved to go back to their communities and inform them of the decision to end the fighting. A report-back meeting will be held next Tuesday.

NEWS Taxi war flares on E Rand ● Save Promat C

Drivers dispute routes

Sowetan 5/11/93

By Mzwandile Jacks and Sowetan Correspondents

A MAN was seriously injured when violence erupted on the East Rand yesterday in clashes between African National Congress and Inkatha Freedom Party-aligned taxi drivers.

The unidentified man had to be airlifted to Natalspruit Hospital after he was attacked with pangas at the Germiston rank at about 10am.

The man was attacked by a group of drivers who fired shots at him, stabbed him and set his car alight on the corner of Black Reef and Dekema roads. Another car was later set alight, police said.

Witnesses said the injured man escaped the flames.

Police said three men were arrested for being in possession of two AK-47 rifles, two AK-47 magazines and cartridges at the rank.

Earlier, IFP-aligned drivers blocked the Katlehong-Germiston road to prevent "township" taxi drivers, aligned to the ANC, from ferrying residents out of the township. They set up a similar blockade on Wednesday.

The IFP-aligned drivers wanted their ANC counterparts to drop passengers off midway and allow other drivers to ferry the passengers into Germiston.

Stranded commuters

Hundreds of commuters were stranded and had to walk several kilometres into Germiston yesterday morning.

In Wadeville, drivers overturned two cars and set them alight, police said.

Mr Michael Ngidi, chairman of the Germiston and Katlehong local peace committee, said the conflict was between members of the Katlehong Peoples Taxi Association (Kapta).

"The association has members who stay in the hostel and those who stay in the townships. The fighting is over routes," Ngidi said.

Kapta's executive committee resigned three months ago amid death threats and the interim committee took over the running of the association.

One driver, who refused to be named, said residents were afraid to use the IFP taxis because these drivers were "strangers".

Hostel dweller drivers had thus been driven out of Katlehong and had sought refuge in Germiston, said the taxi owner.

Several township taxi drivers claimed that their colleagues had been shot and stabbed yesterday.

Police later cleared the roadblock but the situation remained tense.

WOW-WOW-WOW... MAN CROESUS

Bartlett bans taxis' cheaper petrol

S/Times 7/11/93

By KEVIN DAVIE

ENERGY Minister George Bartlett has outlawed a scheme which enables embattled minibus taxis to save 15,6c a litre on petrol.

Mr Bartlett's intervention followed lobbying from the oil companies and service stations which supply petrol valued at R1,7-billion annually to minibus operators.

The ruling has caused outrage because it denies benefits to minibus taxis which are available at about 2 000 approved installations operated by farmers, companies, bus operators and conventional taxis.

The scheme establishes consumer installations owned and run by taxi associations. They buy and sell fuel at wholesale prices, a 15,6c/l saving.

Sources suggest that further "kickbacks" of a few cents a litre depending on volumes sold.

Sasol currently supplies 12 outlets used by taxi organisations. The cheaper fuel led to a flood of applications to the Department of Mineral and Energy Affairs for more outlets, leading Mr Bartlett to impose a moratorium from August 1.

An industry source says Sasol, limited to 8% of the retail market in terms of the blue pump agreement with the oil majors, is keen to develop the sites and so increase its market share.

The cost of an outlet is said to be moderate. (332)

The SA Black Taxi Association's Mike Ntlatleng says the taxi business is the largest user of fuel after the Government. It thus makes sense that it be allowed to run its own installations.

Mr Ntlatleng says Mr Bartlett claimed that unscrupulous people tried to take advantage of the savings available.

Mr Bartlett says it is estimated that at least 500 service stations are more than 50% reliant on taxi business.

"A proliferation of these installations would seriously impact on the existing retail outlet network and particularly the black service station operator."

He says there are about 1 000 black-operated service stations (roughly 20% of the network).

Industry sources say the taxi operators are faced with increasing fuel and other operating costs, but are unable to pass them on to consumers.

Mr Bartlett has said he is sympathetic to the plight of taxi operators.

The Government is reportedly investigating the provision of subsidies for taxis.

Pretoria attorney Adolf Luderitz, who represents 17 taxi associations, has filed eight applications since November last year for taxi associations to set up their own fuel depots.

None has been granted or rejected.

Mr Luderitz has tried unsuccessfully to meet Mr Bartlett to discuss the issue.

Mr Luderitz says most applications were independent of support from the oil companies. Fuel operators would negotitate with these companies to see which could supply at favourable prices.

One scheme on hold is a major taxi rank in Kimberley which has support from the city council, private developers and the regional services council. They have put property and money into the scheme.

Mr Bartlett says increased numbers of fuel sellers will promote conflict between taxis and black business interests.

"Loss of fuel sales may render operations unviable and closure will lead to the loss of enterprises and jobs — not just forecourt attendants.

"In addition, replacement of equivalent volumes would result in duplication of dispensing equipment and existing investment would be underutilised."

Mr Bartlett told the Motor Industries Federation annual conference this week that taxi groups could be encouraged to take over existing service stations to provide low-cost fuel to their members.

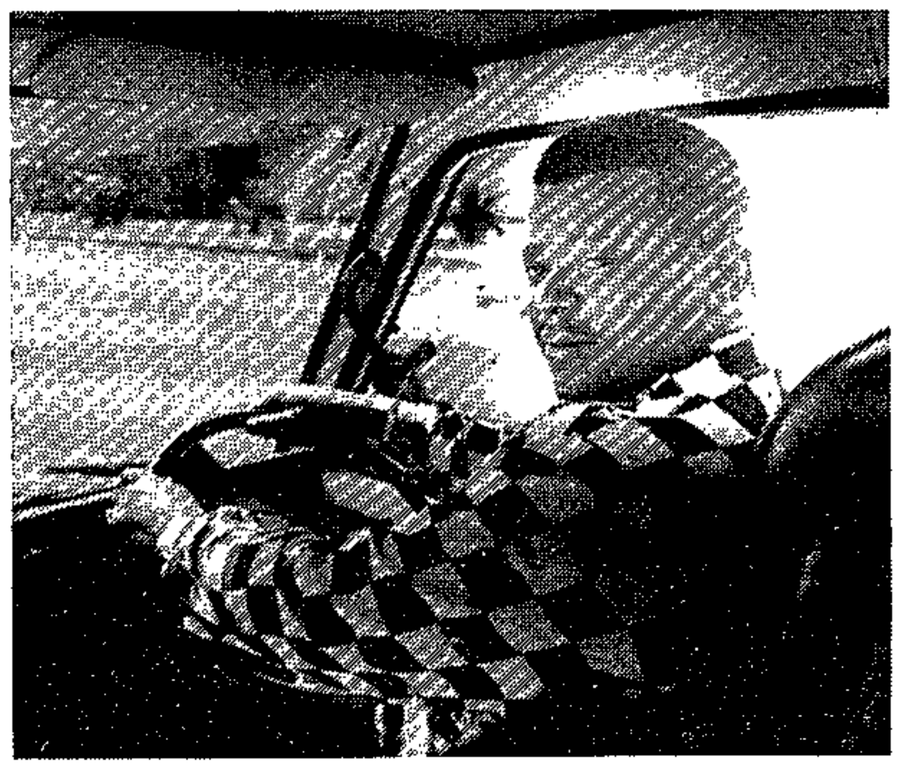
"To allow for an assessment of all implications of minibus taxi installations and of possible alternatives a moratorium has been placed on the erection of new consumer installations," said Mr Bartlett.

Mr Ntlatleng says the sales points should be seen in the context of the wider deregulation debate, including the need for greater disclosure of information about fuel issues.

Further discussions in the National Economic Forum and with Mr Bartlett are planned.

A taximan tells his story

How are taxi-drivers coping with the latest fuel increase? **QUENTIN WILSON** spent some time with Mkhabela Mdlankomo, who shuttles commuters between Guguletu, Cape Town and Khayelitsha in his combi:



MKHABELA MDLANKOMO

MR MKHABELA Mdlankomo starts his working day at 3.45am by driving his combi to Eyona taxi rank in Guguletu. Careful not to wake his wife and two kids of six and 10, Mdlankomo leaves his home in NY1 to be one of the earliest on the rank, so as to ferry the first batch of early workers to town. South 5/11 – 9/11/93

For the next 15 hours, Mdlankomo is on the road.

Only after 7pm, when his last combi load is despatched at Kuwait taxi-rank, Site C, Khayelitsha, can he think about spending some time with his family.

"I can't complain," says the 32-year-old. "It brings in money and that is what is important for me and my family."

Mdlankomo has been driving passengers around Cape Town since 1985.

Despite his relief at being able to put food on his family's table, Mdlankomo says the taxi-industry has been beset with difficulties.

He has worked through the "cruelty", as he calls it, of the traffic department which "did everything it could to stop us from being on the roads", especially in the eighties when authorities were anxious to protect state-owned train and bus companies.

Then there was the taxi-war, spanning through 1991 and 1992.

"God, that was terrible. It was impossible to work because people were too busy fighting. Eventually I went to work with my grandparents in Ciskei until the fighting was over. I only returned at the beginning of this year," Mdlankomo said.

Now he, and the thousands of taxi-drivers like him, face the latest crisis to rock the transport industry — the fuel price increase.

"Believe me, this increase is killing us," says Mdlankomo. "We can't charge our passengers more because a lot of them earn low wages or are unemployed. We the ones who are made to suffer."

Before the price increase, Mdlankomo says, half a tank of petrol cost R50. Now he has to spend R75. (332)

While Mdlankomo says he brings home about R100 each day, he is one of the more fortunate because he owns his own combi.

Most drivers in his association, the Congress of Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), don't own the combis they drive.

Instead of the R100 Mdlankomo brings home, they would be left with R25. The other 75 percent of the takings going into the owner's pockets.

Even though the owners fork out on car repairs, the drivers pay for the petrol they use — making them the vulnerable ones when the petrol price is upped.

Even before the latest increase of 7c a litre, the meagre wages of taxi operators have led to fierce and often violent competition between taxi-drivers over routes.

IF there are too many taxis working one route, fare-paying passengers are thinly spread, often causing fierce scrambles for passengers. This was one of the reasons that unleashed the taxi war between the old Lagunya and Webta taxi associations.

"I can't see this petrol price increase starting another war," says Mdlankomo. "People are sick and tired of fighting. But it certainly could raise tensions."

Mdlankomo pointed to a new fleet of about 50 taxis which have set up shop next to Mdlankomo's rank in Cape Town. They also lift commuters from town to Guguletu, robbing Mdlankomo of former passengers.

"This is the reason why I am earning peanuts at the moment. Since they started about a month ago, I have had very little work. While we mustn't fight about it, something must be done," Mdlankomo said.

As far as Mdlankomo is concerned, the government must "open their eyes" and back down completely on any petrol price increase.

But, he believes, protests should not take the form of street blockades "and such like action" because this would inconvenience people who want to commute.

"Instead," says Mdlankomo, "people must protest outside parliament with petitions. It is them that did this to us, so we must target them in our actions and not the public."

NOT only should the government sort out the petrol fiasco, says Mdlankomo, they should also act on promises made to the taxi industry.

"About two years ago, they promised to make space for us near the train station and to build shelters for waiting passengers who have to stand in the rain in winter. We are still waiting," Mdlankomo said.

But, he says, the attitude of the traffic department towards taxi operators has changed over the years.

"They are not as cruel as they used to be," Mdlankomo says, "They seem a lot fairer now. I remember once in 1987 I was driving a combi full of passengers into town.

"It was in the morning and they were trying to get to work on time, when I was pulled over by a traffic officer who was determined to get me off the road.

"He looked at everything, all my papers were in order, and he could find nothing wrong with the taxi. But even still, I had to offload my passengers at Mowbray and go immediately to the traffic department in Green Point for a full check-up. I lost a morning's work and they found nothing wrong.

"But it looks as though they have come to accept our presence on the roads now. They know we are here to stay," Mdlankomo said.

Drive to rev up standards of metered taxis

B/Day 9/11/93

THEO NAWANA

THE metered taxi was poised to take its rightful place in the tourism industry now that SA was recognised as an important tourism destination, SA Metered Taxi Association (Samta) chairman Theo Schoenevelt said yesterday.

Samta would upgrade this "uncut diamond" to live up to international standards by training operators to be all that tourists expected of them.

Samta was affiliated to the National Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) and members would be trained at the Nafto Transport College in Braamfontein.

"The metered taximan is the first person a foreign tourist comes into contact with, and first impressions are very important," he said.

The national launch of Samta in Johannesburg in January would streamline and upgrade a component that had "always been seen as the orphan of the transport industry".

Schoenefelt said the Johannesburg City Council would change bylaws controlling the issuing of taxi signs to frustrate pirate operators who now obtained these freely.

Each taxi would display the name and photograph of its operator on its dashboard.

Johannesburg Metropolitan Planning department senior technical officer Greg Meyer said permits would in future be issued only through registered associations. (332)

In line with a study by transport consultants Stamway Edwards Associates, drivers would be trained in all facets of tourist conveyance, from geographical knowledge to courtesy and cleanliness, Schoenefelt said. "The operator is going to be both chaperone and tour guide, ready with the answers when a tourist shoots questions."

Taxi peace pact in Thokoza

S/Times 14/11/93

By SHARON CHETTY

TAXI drivers have forged a pact to protect their passengers in the East Rand township of Thokoza.

This week, 400 drivers called on the warring factions to allow them to continue providing a service to commuters and to join them in their peace initiative.

Over the past year, taxis have become embroiled in the violence simply by taking certain routes in the township.

Those who took the route near the hostel were associated with Inkatha, and the rest were seen as ANC-aligned.

The "branding" of drivers has led to a virtual standstill in their services, while commuters have been left stranded.

Thokoza Amalgamated Taxi Association vice chairman, Mr Elliot Zondo, said his organisation — the only one in the township — was divided because of the violence.

"We taxi owners and drivers have never fought with each other — we are caught in the middle. The people involved in politics have used us as scapegoats," he said.

As violence intensified in the area over the past year, commuters have been targeted, scores have died in "drive-by" shootings, while the drivers were caught in the crossfire.

Many drivers have died, were injured, or lost their vehicles. Others have had to close shop when commuters boycotted them over their perceived alliances.

But since September, the two divisions in the taxi group have hammered out an agreement that dedicates them to providing a service without getting involved in any of the factions in the township.

Routes and a governing body have been agreed upon, and the taxi drivers hope that their bid for peace will encourage the rest of the residents to work together. (332)

A unique aspect of the peace pact is that political groups were not involved in drawing it up, said mediator Mr Thabo Ndabeni.

"Taxi drivers and owners realised they needed to sort out problems among themselves first," he said.

Mr Ndabeni said he hoped the Thokoza deal would spur similar moves in other East Rand townships.

Commuters shot as buses return to Khayelitsha

(332)

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN, Crime Staff ARGUS 16/11/93

A COMMUTER was shot dead and another wounded in Khayelitsha yesterday — the day buses returned to the township after peace committee-brokered meetings between Golden Arrow and residents.

The service was resumed in terms of decisions made and undertakings given at the meetings.

Police spokesman John Sterrenberg said a man died and a woman, Gloria Mqabezulu, 32, was hit in the arm when four buses were attacked at the corner of Lansdowne Road Extension and Zola Budd Drive about 4pm. The man has not yet been identified.

A bus company inspector's bakkie was also attacked. He was not injured.

The service was reduced to a trickle after a spate of attacks which began in August.

Golden Arrow chairman Nic Cronjé said it was unanimously decided that the bus service would operate normally in Khayelitsha from yesterday after protracted meetings under the auspices of the Western Cape Peace Committee.

"Yesterday's attack was a clear violation of that decision and undertaking."

Police are investigating whether the incidents were isolated or related to taxi unrest.

A lorry was badly damaged in NY 110, Gugulethu, yesterday when about 20 youths stoned it and set it alight. The driver was not hurt.

Another lorry was stoned in Lansdowne, Philippi, yesterday by a group of about 16 youths.

A delivery lorry belonging to a large department store was burned when youths attacked the driver in Palma Road, Khayelitsha, last night. Captain Sterrenberg said police saved the driver.

● Picture page 4

Transport sector on the road to strong growth

ALIDE DASNOIS (332) ARG 17/11/93
Business Staff

THE transport sector would be a growth area in the South African economy in the next few years, Nick Barnadt of the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut told a Boland Bank conference in Paarl.

There would be a sharp rise in international transactions — exports, imports, tourism and capital flows.

Other likely high growth sectors included:

- Sales of machinery and business equipment;
- Basic housing, electrification and community facilities;
- Basic household appliances; and
- Security products and services;

He said there would be an "explosion" in the number of children at primary school, with a related increase in educational products.

Long distance education would rise sharply in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

He identified a number of characteristics of the economy in the run-up to the year 2000:

- Greater foreign opportunities;
- Strong internal financial discipline and low inflation;
- An important role for consensus-seeking forums;
- A fall in labour unrest and a shift from capital to labour-intensive production;
- The flattening of inequalities and a greater emphasis on socio-economic development; and
- Slower growth in unemployment — though it would stay high especially among young people.

Boland Bank economist Louis Fourie predicted a 2,5 percent rise in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) next year, fuelled largely by a turnaround in fixed investment and improved foreign demand.

The complete recovery of the primary sector — mining and agriculture — would also give momentum to the upswing.

Golden Arrow running shuttle township service

GOLDEN Arrow buses are operating a shuttle service between the Site C bridge near the N2 and Khayelitsha — in spite of attacks on commuters and bus drivers. ARGT 20/11/93

A passenger was killed and another wounded earlier this week when a bus was attacked in Khayelitsha. (332)

Golden Arrow Bus Services spokesman Jean Welsh said escorts were provided for bus drivers if they asked for them.

A group of angry commuters marched to the Kuwait taxi rank in Khayelitsha on Tuesday in protest against the continued attacks on buses.

Man hurt, vehicles burnt in taxi battle

Star 22/11/93

■ BY ABDUL MILAZI

A man was wounded and six taxis were set alight yesterday in a taxi battle in Pretoria's Bosman Street taxi rank, police said last night.

Pretoria police spokesman Major Andrew Lesch said four men in a cream-coloured minibus stopped at the Bosman Street taxi rank and assaulted the rank manager.

Hospital

The attackers kicked and stabbed the manager before fleeing when a group of bystanders came to his rescue.

One of the attackers fired into the air as the minibus sped off. Shots were returned from the crowd at the rank, but no one was injured.

In their haste, one of the attackers was left behind and was arrested by the police.

During the commotion, another group of people threw a petrol bomb into a stationary minibus taxi, setting alight five other taxis.

Three more people were later arrested.

Police found a number of pistols and spent 9 mm cartridges at the scene. (332)

The injured rank manager was taken to hospital where he was treated for stab wounds and discharged.

This shooting follows a number of gang-style shootings in which three taxi owners have been killed in Pretoria's Mamelodi township in the past two weeks.

However, Lesch said the police could not be sure whether the incidents were connected until they had completed their investigation.

Anyone with information can contact Sergeant Nick Senekal at (012) 323 2918 or phone the toll-free Crime Stop number: 0800 11-12-13.

Bus attacks continue despite peace talks

(382) ARG 27/11/93

■ Attempts are being made to stop people shooting at Golden Arrow buses operating in Khayelitsha, but hopes for a breakthrough are fading.

VUYO BAVUMA
Weekend Argus Reporter

CONCERTED peace efforts are under way to end the "low-key" attacks launched by gunmen on Golden Arrow buses in Khayelitsha, but the chances of a long-lasting solution appear remote.

The campaign, by snipers with automatic guns who prey on defenceless bus employees, has claimed three lives, including two bus drivers. And passengers are under fire.

Last week in Khayelitsha an unidentified man died and a woman was wounded when gunmen fired on four buses — a day after the committee-brokered peace between Golden Arrow and the residents.

Subsequently, a group of angry women, including members of the ANC's Women's League, held a placard demonstration against Khayelitsha taxi-drivers in protest against the killings.

The women were sjambokked by the cabbies.

To some people the drivers' reaction signalled complicity in the shootings, but this was denied by the leadership of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

Since the sporadic killings began in September, bus owners have blamed the Codeta-aligned taxis, but the taxi leadership vehemently reject these claims.

Ironically, the attacks began after Codeta members joined forces with other transport bodies to fight against the increased petrol price.

There were rumours that the taxi drivers resented Golden Arrow, which did not feel the "petrol pinch".

But the rumours were dispelled by the Codeta leadership, saying it did not support moves to drive away Golden Arrow buses from the townships because the market was "big enough for everybody".

The first victim of the wave of attacks on the buses was driver Ganief Karriem of Mitchell's Plain who was shot dead in Khayelitsha in September.

The shooting of defenceless bus employees also triggered a war of words between the workers' union representatives and the bus management over the lack of adequate security.

Many workers refused to work in the dangerous townships unless management installed bullet-proof cabs.

Golden Arrow created a temporary terminus on a bridge over the N2 on the outskirts of Khayelitsha where the passengers boarded the buses.

But now the fate of the workers appears to be in the balance as Golden Arrow is threatening to lay them off because many buses are unable to operate in Khayelitsha.

In spite of the failure to end the killings, the peace committee and several township-based community organisations are still trying meeting to negotiate a solution.

A source, who has attended all the meetings, told Weekend Argus that the progress made during discussions had been undone by the shootings.

"It seemed the attackers were not represented in our meetings — or they just simply wanted to create more chaos in the townships."

But the peace efforts would continue in spite of the difficulties, he said.

Meanwhile, the taxis continue to operate normally in the townships after several people were held in connection with the killings relating to the taxi conflict.

And for the first time, all the taxis are now fully sharing the routes — and the unity, threatened by the killings of several Codeta officials this year, is firm.

Taxi commuters forced to walk

CIPress 28/11/93

By JUSTICE MOHALE

HUNDREDS of residents from Dobsonville, Soweto, could be stranded tomorrow if the feud between two rival taxi organisations operating in the area is not resolved.

Since Friday morning taxis belonging to the Zola Taxi Association (ZTA) have been stopped, allegedly by members of the Dobsonville Taxi Association (DTA), and commuters have been forced to get out and walk.

In one incident, a taxi belonging to the ZTA was smashed up.

Those taxi commuters who managed to go to work in Roodepoort had to queue until late evening yesterday, as taxis were not available to ferry passengers to the township.

(332)

Many tried to hitchhike as they walked home.

According to sources, trouble started when the new Dobsonville Extension 3 area was opened in 1989. The DTA apparently was not keen to ferry commuters from this new area.

The ZTA, seeing a market gap, volunteered to ferry the commuters.

Over the years the ZTA continued to prosper – not realising this was annoying the DTA as they were succeeding on routes which traditionally were supposed to be used by the DTA.

Matters came to a head on Friday when DTA members took the law into their own hands. To the surprise of commuters, taxis belonging to the ZTA were stopped and stoned, allegedly by members of the DTA.

A heavy police presence in the area yesterday prevented what could have been a nasty clash as groups of men brandishing sticks stood in the streets.

Soweto police spokesman Major Joseph Ngobeni said yesterday the situation was tense but added there was a heavy police presence in the area to quell whatever violence might erupt.

Thebe's reaching for the sky

WM 3-9/12/93 (232)

Ferial Haffajee

THE Thebe Investment Corporation is reaching for the skies and taking off ... literally.

This week, the African National Congress-linked investment company announced details of its shareholding in an airline company, South African Express, which will start flying on existing and new national routes in March next year.

The airline is not offering cheaper tickets as its drawcard; it will peg its prices to existing fare structures.

Instead, South African Express, the most ambitious of Thebe's projects yet, is attempting to stake a claim to the already jampacked domestic market by offering regular flights to business hubs including Phalaborwa, Pietersberg, Kimberley, Upington, George and East London from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.

This is a shrewd business move because each of these centres is likely to grow in stature once the new regional dispensation is in place. What also gives the new airline a fighting chance is that it has hammered out a co-operative, not competitive relationship with South African Airways.

The new airline will leave South African Airways' major routes on the "golden triangle" of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban almost untouched. However it will eventually take over SAA's "sub-optimal" routes — or less profitable and under-utilised routes. "We do not seek to compete with SAA," said Thebe's managing director, Vusi Khanyile. SA Express will buy baggage handling, ticketing and other services from SAA and act as a feeder service by bringing travellers from the regions to the hubs.

SA Express comprises two investment companies: Alliance Airline Holdings (a Thebe owned company) and SA Enterprises Limited (owned by a Canadian consortium). Thebe is the sole investor in Alliance Holdings and owns 51 percent of the shares, though Khanyile this week invited investment from black entrepreneurs.

Both parties were a little cagey about the financing details of the new airline: all they revealed was that the company has spent half a billion rand on buying eight Canadian manufactured aircraft which seat 50 passengers each.

SA Enterprises, the Canadian arm of the business, will manage the airline for five years, when they will hand it over to a South African management team. The company will then be floated on the stock exchange and preferential share offers made to the "black community".

Focus and cost-cutting turn Laser around

B/Day 7/12/93

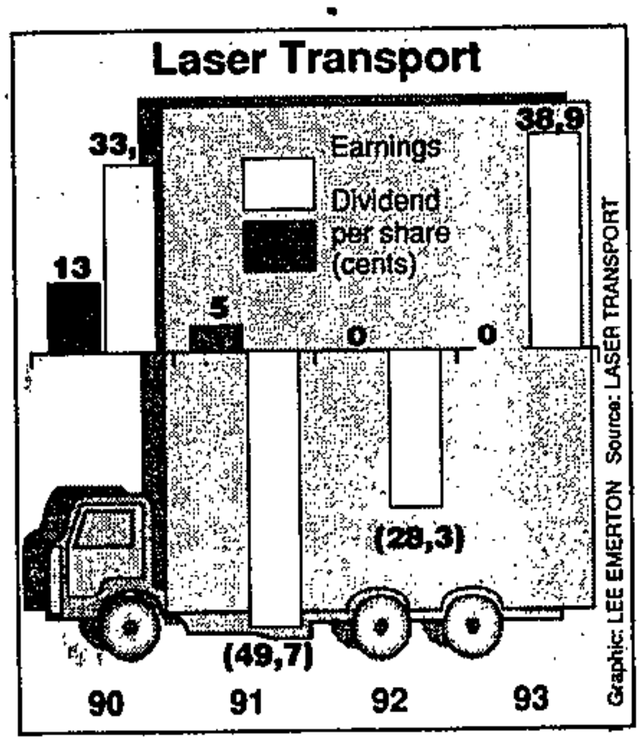
EDWARD WEST

LASER Transport Holdings' operating income increased sharply to R6,75m in the year to September 1993 from R767 000 the previous year as a result of cost reductions, rationalisation and tight management focus on weaker divisions.

The results published today follow the strong recovery in the furniture removal group's share price to 240c yesterday from 80c a year ago. Earnings have surged to 38,9c a share this year from a loss of 28,3c a share last year. (332)

Turnover increased marginally to R119,32m (R116,21m). Interest payments fell to R3,06m (R4,9m) and no rationalisation costs were incurred in the year under review compared with last year, when R3,38m was written off.

The tax bill was also lower at R201 000 (R1,31m) after an overprovision of R1,08m in prior years was taken into account.



Taxed income amounted to R3,89m from a previous loss of R2,83m. The dividend was passed to strengthen the balance sheet, CE Denis Kaye said.

Turnover mix was affected by the return of international corporations and embassies to SA — a trend likely to continue.

Management's priority over the past year was to turn unprofitable divisions around, and the rationalisation of the past 18 months was now starting to bear fruit.

Strong growth had taken place in Lasertrans, a division specialising in logistics and distribution. The divison was expanding fast, Kaye said.

The machine-moving and rigging division was the only one to trade at a loss, but the R5m acquisition of Frasers Machine Moving and Rigging should ensure the division's profitability by the end of the present financial year, he said.

Significant savings would result from its R25m property acquisitions. The group now owned 20 of its 23 operational properties. Property costs were previously one of the groups largest operating expenses, Kaye said.

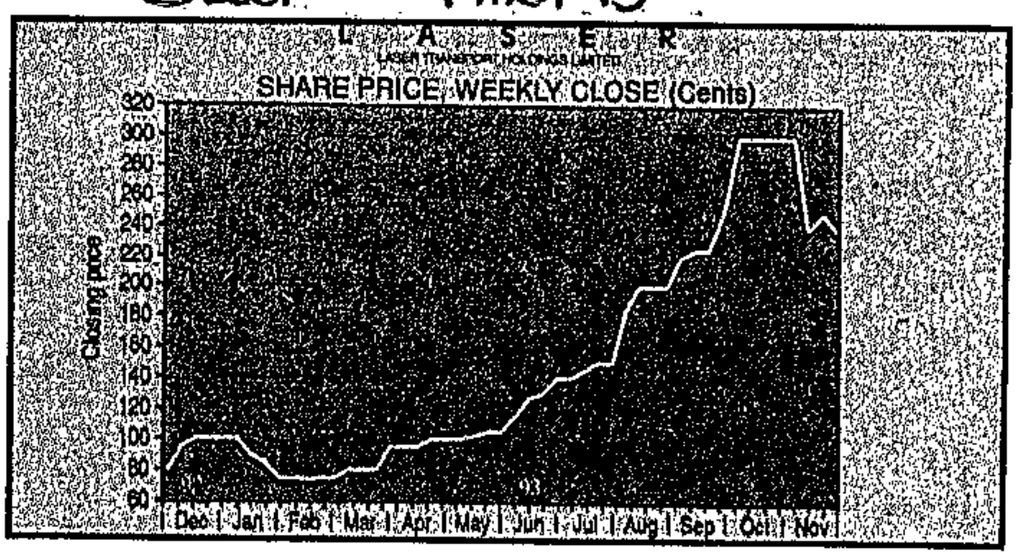
The vehicle fleet would be upgraded to take advantage of the new road ordinance, allowing larger capacity trailers that would improve efficiencies. More than R10m was earmarked for new vehicles and equipment in the new financial year.

Laser had secured a number of contracts, including one from Alusaf to relocate 800 families to Richards Bay.

Laser bounces back to profit

Star 7/12/93

BY STEPHEN CRANSTON



Laser Transport Holdings made a significant turnaround in the year to September.

It improved from a loss of 28,3c a share in the previous year to earnings of 38,9c.

Financial director Eric Puccini attributes this to relentless rationalisation, cost reduction and tight management focus on weaker divisions.

Turnover increased only marginally to R119,3 million, but chief executive Denis Kaye says there was a better mix of high-margin business because of the return of international corporations and embassies.

Operating income rose by more than 60 percent to R6,7 million.

There was no charge for rationalisation costs versus R3,4 million charged to income in the previous year.

Strong growth occurred in Lasertrans, which specialise in logistics and distribution.

Lasertrans manages the supply chain from point of manufacture to point of sales, including invoicing, which, Kaye says, has major growth potential. (332)

The only division to trade at a loss was machine-moving and rigging.

The acquisition of Frasers Machine-Moving & Rigging included capital equipment which should ensure the division is profitable by year-end.

Further savings are expected from the acquisition of R25 million worth of strategic properties because in the past rentals were one of the group's largest operating expenses.

Laser will significantly upgrade its fleet to take advantage of a new road ordinance allowing larger-capacity trailers.

Laser's share price has risen threefold to 240c over the year.

But it might need a recovery in gross domestic fixed investment before it again records a quantum spurt.

Shots at Khayelitsha buses: Two wounded

By JACKIE CAMERON
Crime Reporter

GUNMEN opened fire on three buses in Khayelitsha at the weekend, wounding two passengers.

Golden Arrow Bus Services have stopped their service in Site C following the attacks between 8pm and 9pm on Saturday.

Mr Toy Shovana, 45, of Brown's Farm squatter camp, and Mr Neville Jacobs of Harare squatter camp, were wounded in the legs when gunmen fired on a bus in Site C around 9pm.

CT 13/12/93

In two earlier attacks, gunmen fired at a bus near Nolungile station — shattering a window — and five minutes later fired again at a bus in Site B, a bus company spokesman said.

(332)

No one was injured.

The spokesman said Site C was now a "no-go" area.

Station deck to house taxi rank

(332) CT 15/12/93.

Municipal Reporter

AUTHORITY was granted yesterday for the conclusion of a R5 000-a-month rental agreement between the City Council and the railways for the use of the Cape Town station deck as a minibus taxi terminus.

This was one of the last stumbling blocks holding up the transfer of waiting taxis from Strand Street to the top of the station deck. The council hopes to be able to move all of them onto the deck.

Initially, the railways' property arm, Intersite, had asked for a R10 000-a-month lease. Councillor Mr Frank van der Velde had dug in his heels at this, and called the offer "totally unacceptable".

The deck had been paid for by the railways "which belongs to the people", and now it was to be used for another public purpose, he said last month.

Intersite has offered a five-year lease, in terms of which the council is to pay R5 000 a month "towards the operating cost". The rent will be fixed for the first two years, and thereafter escalate at 10% a year.

After five years, a new amount would have to be negotiated for a further five years.

City taxis extend 'peace campaign'

(332)

MINIBUS taxi drivers and passengers will be called on to pledge themselves to peace after the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) extended its Cape Town — City of Peace campaign yesterday.

Both drivers and passengers will be asked to sign a peace declaration which has already been signed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Cape Town mayor Mrs Patricia Kreiner.

Mr Frank van der Velde, the former mayor who has played a major peacemaking role in the taxi conflict, said it was a sequel to the driving towards peace and safety campaign. CT 23/12/93

The peace campaign was a Codeta initiative and members of the organisation would monitor major routes and caution long-distance drivers against overloading, urge them to sleep and maintain vehicle safety.

Probe into cops, taxis

Sowetan 23/12/93

By Josias Charle

INVESTIGATING TEAM Scores of owners and drivers have fled to refuge elsewhere:

A team of investigators is probing the alleged involvement of senior police officers in the taxi industry in Soshanguve and other Pretoria townships.

Northern Transvaal police liaison officer Captain Evan Johnson said yesterday that a team from the riot and violence investigation unit has been probing the allegations for "some time" and they were looking for more information linking the policemen to the war-ravaged taxi industry.

He said it was illegal in terms of police regulations for a policeman or woman to be involved in any profitable business. (332)

Johnson made these revelations after *Sowetan* had inquired into the escalating levels of taxi linked violence in Soshanguve, Mamelodi and Atteridgeville. The rivalry has forced scores of taxi owners and drivers to flee their homes in Soshaguve to seek refuge elsewhere.

Since the beginning of the year at least 30 people have been gunned down on the notorious but lucrative Pretoria-Pietersburg route in clashes between rival associations of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association and Federated National Transport Organisation.

In the latest clash, members of Saldta allegedly drove off their Fento rivals from the Mabopane Station taxi rank by force last Friday.

Several shots were fired and about 10 minibus taxis were damaged. Police confirmed they were investigating this incident as well. The incident forced at least 50 members of Fento to abandon the rank and flee their homes. Most of them have also stopped operating.

They have accused the police of failing to bring the culprits to book although the taxi rank is less than 500m from the Rietgat police station.

They have also claimed that some policemen involved in the taxi business were watching when the alleged attack took place. The Pretoria Broader Forum, which is trying to bring peace in the taxi industry confirmed that a number of people had left their homes and that reports of "hijacking" of the taxi rank had been filed.

Taximen decide to bury the hatchet

Sowetan 2/12/93

THE Dobsonville Taxi Association and the Witwaterrand Taxi Association yesterday agreed on a temporary solution to their recent clash which began when two DTA members were shot last Monday. (332)

In retaliation the DTA members attacked and wrecked some Wata taxis. At yesterday's meeting both associations agreed to bury the hatchet and work towards reaching a solution.

The meeting, chaired by Dobsonville Station Commander Captain Praduman Haricharan, was almost disrupted when a taxi driver burst in to report that DTA taxis were being stoned at Khwezi Station.

Some members temporrily stormed out but listened to reason and agreed that if a solution was not found, there could be more bloodshed. — *Sowetan Reporter*

ANC plans its own domestic airline

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The African National Congress's Thebe Investment Corporation, in partnership with a Canadian company, is to open its own domestic airline within the next six months, according to industry sources.

The joint venture has been aided by South African Airways.

According to industry sources, the national carrier will allow the new airline to operate on several of its existing routes, but it is not certain whether SAA will relinquish these routes.

The routes include Cape Town-Upington-Kimberley-Johannesburg and back, Johannesburg to Pietersburg and Phalaborwa, Cape Town-George-Port Elizebeth-East London and Durban to Maputo, Cape Town to East London and Durban to Bloemfontein.

ARG 11/2/93

The deal is likely to raise eyebrows in the highly competitive industry because SAA has to date been less than helpful to its smaller rivals, such as Flitestar and Comair, and has been described as "obstructive".

332

Row over 'ANC airline' plans

ARG 18/12/93

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

REGIONAL airlines in South Africa will lodge objections to the planned SA Express Airlines (SAX) formed by the ANC-linked Thebe Investment Corporation and a Canadian consortium headed by airline operator "Bill" Deluce.

Mr Deluce told Weekend Argus 12 aircraft ordered by SAX would be "100-percent financed" by De Havilland (Canada) in a deal involving R500 million.

He expected the airline to be profitable "within two years".

However regional airline directors Neil Robertson of Lionair and Roger Foster of Airlink said they would "definitely" lodge objections to SAX being given a licence.

They claimed that Flitestar and Inter Air would also object, but executives of these airlines could not be reached.

(332)

They said their objections would be based largely on the way in which SAX was to be financed; they claimed that although Thebe was the majority shareholder, the airline would be controlled from outside South Africa.

They objected to "competing with an airline partly owned by a political party which could end up running the country".

They also raised doubts about safety aspects, citing the findings of a 1990 federal inquiry in Canada after an Air Ontario plane crashed in Dryden, Ontario, killing 124 people.

The inquiry found "faulty pilot-training programmes, missing pages in aircraft operating manuals, flight plans that did not meet federal requirements and improper logbooks".

Later, Air Ontario filed an application to block the release of names of people named in the final report on the crash.

Air Ontario was at the time 25-percent owned by Lardel Holdings, headed by Mr Deluce.

As for the ANC connection, Thebe managing director Vusi Khanyile has denied a direct relationship with the ANC.

However, its sole shareholder is a trust whose founders were Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, and other ANC dignitaries are among the trustees.

Mr Khanyile said that before entering into a relationship with the overseas consortium Thebe had thoroughly investigated it.

"We are completely satisfied with its credentials."

A spokesman for the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) said SAX had not yet applied for a licence.

There was "no chance" that airlines and aircraft that did not meet the rigorous standards of the DCA

■ To page 3

'ANC airline' causes a row

(332) ARG 18/12/93

■ From page1

would obtain licences to operate in South Africa.

A "memorandum of understanding", which will have much the same effect as the strategic alliances formed by major American and European carriers with feeder airlines, has recently been signed between South African Airways and SAX.

SAA will provide a wide range of services for it.

However, spokesmen for the the local airline industry say that although they have no objection to competing with a state-owned airline, they have "major problems competing with an airline that is partly owned by the political party which could end up running the country".

"Control of the company cannot truly be said to rest with South African interests, as is required by the Domestic Air Service Act of 1990," said a spokesman.

"In addition, it is difficult to understand why SAA cannot subsidise existing South African carriers, all of whom have existing capabilities.

"By going to an overseas operator with a short-term view of the market (declared at five years), we have a situation where South African interests are likely to be adversely affected."

Mr Deluce, speaking from his home in Ontario, told Weekend Argus Thebe would have 51 percent of the R16 million equity in the holding company, Alliance Holdings, and his group, SA Airline Holdings, would hold 49 percent.

About R500 million was involved in the operation, he said.

The 12 50-seater turboprop Dash aircraft ordered by SAX, and all spares, would be 100-percent financed by the manufacturer, De Havilland (Canada).

De Havilland would also provide pilot training, engineering and technical training for ground staff as well as in-flight training, he said.

Ground-school and simulator training would be done in Canada, but final flight training in South Africa.

SAX planned to begin operations in March with two aircraft, he said.

The remaining 10 would join the fleet within a year.

Fares would be competitive.

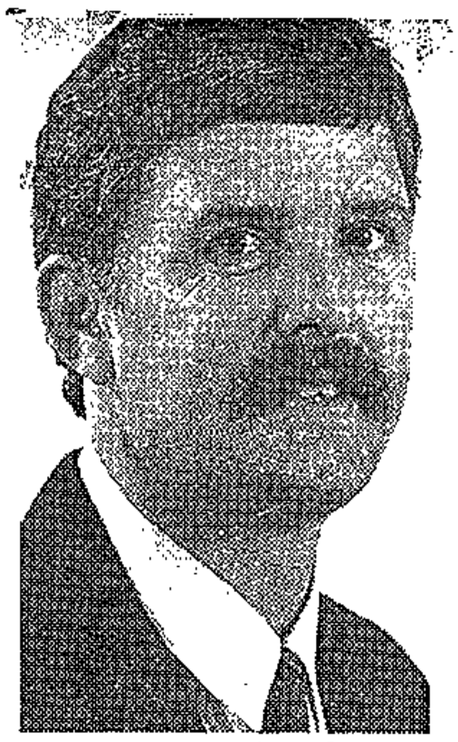
"We plan to focus on regional markets with frequent flights — a lot of 'hub and spoke' activity out of the major centres, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town."

Spokesmen for the local industry said that the airline would need R50 million a year "just to service its debt".

Laser soars back into the black

(332)

CT 7/12/93



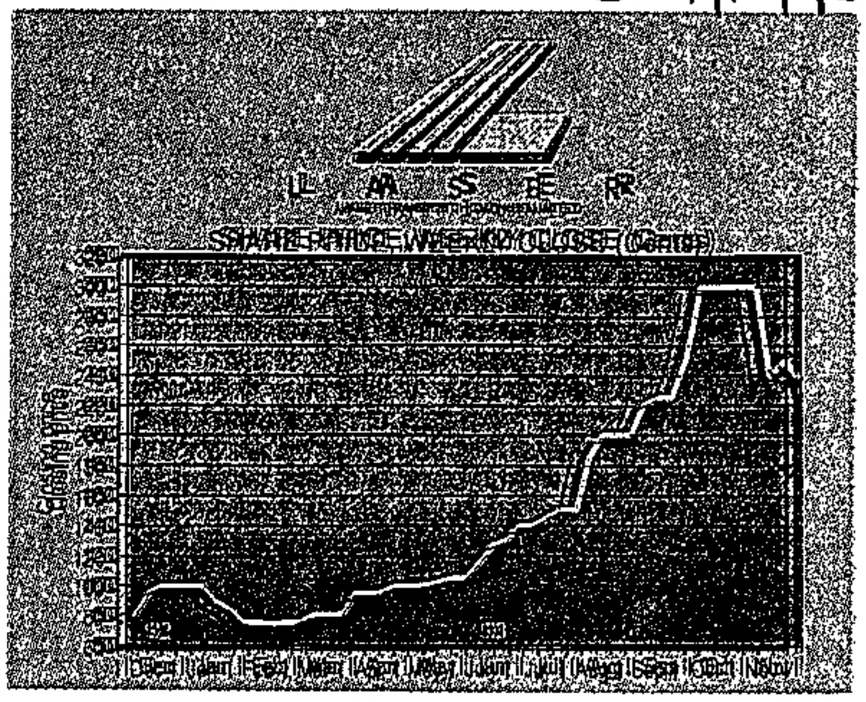
Dawie Louw has been appointed manager of the Touws River branch of FNB.

Pat Gorvalla has been appointed a member of the Regional Committee of the Small Business Development Corporation in the Western Cape.

Business Editor

RATIONALISATION and tight cost control enabled Laser Transport Holdings to achieve a dramatic turnaround in the year to September.

Earnings were 38,9c a share compared with a loss of 28,3c the previous year. This was achieved on a turnover of R119,3m (R116,2m). No dividend will be paid, because the directors have decided to strengthen the balance sheet.



Operating income was R6,7m (R4,1m). Last year the operating income was further reduced by R3,3m rationalisation costs — in 1993 there were no such costs, and the interest bill fell to R3m (R4,9m).

The tax bill fell to R201 000 (R1,3m), leaving net after-tax income of R4,4m compared with a loss of R6,7m.

The directors say trading conditions were difficult for most of the year, except for a rise in outbound shipments by the international division.

But CE Denis Kaye said the turnover mix has been substantially affected by the return of international corporations and embassies — "a trend which will surely gain momentum."

A large number of local contracts had been secured. These included one from Alusaf to relocate 800 families to Richards Bay.

Frasers had a R2,5m contract to move 450 tons of equipment to Secunda for Sasol. It would also move sections of the 3,5km long Kiel Bridge which Dorbyl was manufacturing for export to Germany, from Vanderbijlpark to Durban for R1m.

Kaye said the machine moving and rigging division was the only one that had traded at a loss last year. The acquisition of Frasers Machine Moving and Rigging for R5m, in the present financial year, "included capital equipment that should ensure the division's profitability by the end of this financial year."

He also expected big savings in the future because the group had bought properties from which it already traded for R20m and a further property, from which it would trade, for R5,4m.

Sabta to launch probe into missing millions

CT 9/12/93

(332)

Own Correspondent

DURBAN. — The giant SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) is to appoint a commission of inquiry to investigate the alleged disappearance of "millions of rands" of its marketing funds.

Well-placed sources claim that as much as R60 million has disappeared from the association's marketing arm, Taxi SA Marketing (Taxsam).

Mr James Ngcoya, the association's national president, last night referred queries to Taxsam chief executive Mr Ashley Madogaone, who could not be reached for comment.

However, it is known that Sabta officials discussed the matter recently with senior officials of the transport ministry and raised the possibility of setting up a commission of inquiry.

But because there were no allegations of state funds being involved, ministry officials suggested that a government-appointed commission of inquiry would not be appropriate.

Taxis in 21% of road deaths

CT 20/12/93 (332)

Holiday death toll up to 352

Staff Reporter

THE holiday season road death toll climbed to 352 over the weekend, with about 21% of the fatalities being attributed to minibus taxi collisions and 16% to drunken driving, the National Traffic Information Centre said yesterday.

According to police, 133 people have died in collisions in the Transvaal, 105 in the Cape, 78 in Natal and 36 in the Free State since the start of the school holidays on December 1.

In its daily report the NTIC said 47 people, including several children and a family from Vereeniging, were killed in collisions over the weekend.

The highest number of deaths, 117, were in passenger vehicles and 107 were pedestrians.

A NTIC spokesman said nearly 50% of collisions occurred at night, of which head-on collisions, rear-end collisions and collisions with pedestrians, trees and road signs made up the largest fatality percentage.

Taxi collisions over the festive season had claimed the lives of 71 people — about 21% of all fatalities on the road.

In its report the NTIC quoted the organised taxi industry coordinator Mr Simon Mathysen as saying that although there was no decrease in the number of fatalities compared with the same period last year, taxi drivers had been found to have a better awareness of traffic safety.

"The main reason for taxi fatalities are single vehicle collisions. Factors such as defective tyres and driver fatigue resulting in lack of concentration on the traffic environment contribute towards these collisions," Mr Mathysen said.

He said eight vehicles were used by the industry to patrol routes, act against reckless drivers and assist in emergency situations such as breakdowns. Action was also taken against drivers overloading or speeding, and vehicles were checked for roadworthiness.

SA permits for Zim taxis

BULAWAYO. — The Zimbabwe International Long Distance Taxi Association (Zildta) has been granted temporary permits to operate from Bulawayo to Johannesburg, its spokesman Mr Malcolm King said yesterday. (332)

Formerly, Zildta members could only operate from Bulawayo to the border at Beit Bridge where South African taxis would collect commuters. CT 17/12/93

Mr King said 27 permits were granted.

The permits expire on January 20. — Sapa

New black airline set to take off

(332)
CT 2/12/93

By AUDREY D'ANGELO
Business Editor

A NEW regional airline formed by black and Canadian business people will start operating from Cape Town on March 15.

It will have "a strategic alliance" with SA Airways (SAA), which will provide reservations, ground handling and other facilities at economic rates and there will be a code-share agreement between the two.

The new company, set up by a consortium of black business people led by Thebe Investment Corporation, which has connections with the ANC, and a Canadian consortium led by Lardel Holdings Inc — which has interests in airlines in North America — is Southern African Airline Holdings. It will trade under the name SA Express Airlines (SA Express) and may provide as many as eight flights a day on busy routes.

Alliance Airline Holdings, in which Thebe is an investor, will be the major shareholder but the operating company will initially be managed by the Canadian consortium, SA Enterprises.

However, SA Enterprises plans to transfer its experience, systems and technology to a trained SA management team within five years.

Vusi Khanyile, MD of Thebe, said it was intended to go for a JSE listing once the company was fully established. Shares would be offered "with preference for the black community."

Khanyile said the SA domestic market offered "a tremendous aviation business opportunity.

"We believe our formula of using international management expertise and capital coupled to strongly developed affirmative action programmes will be a winning one."

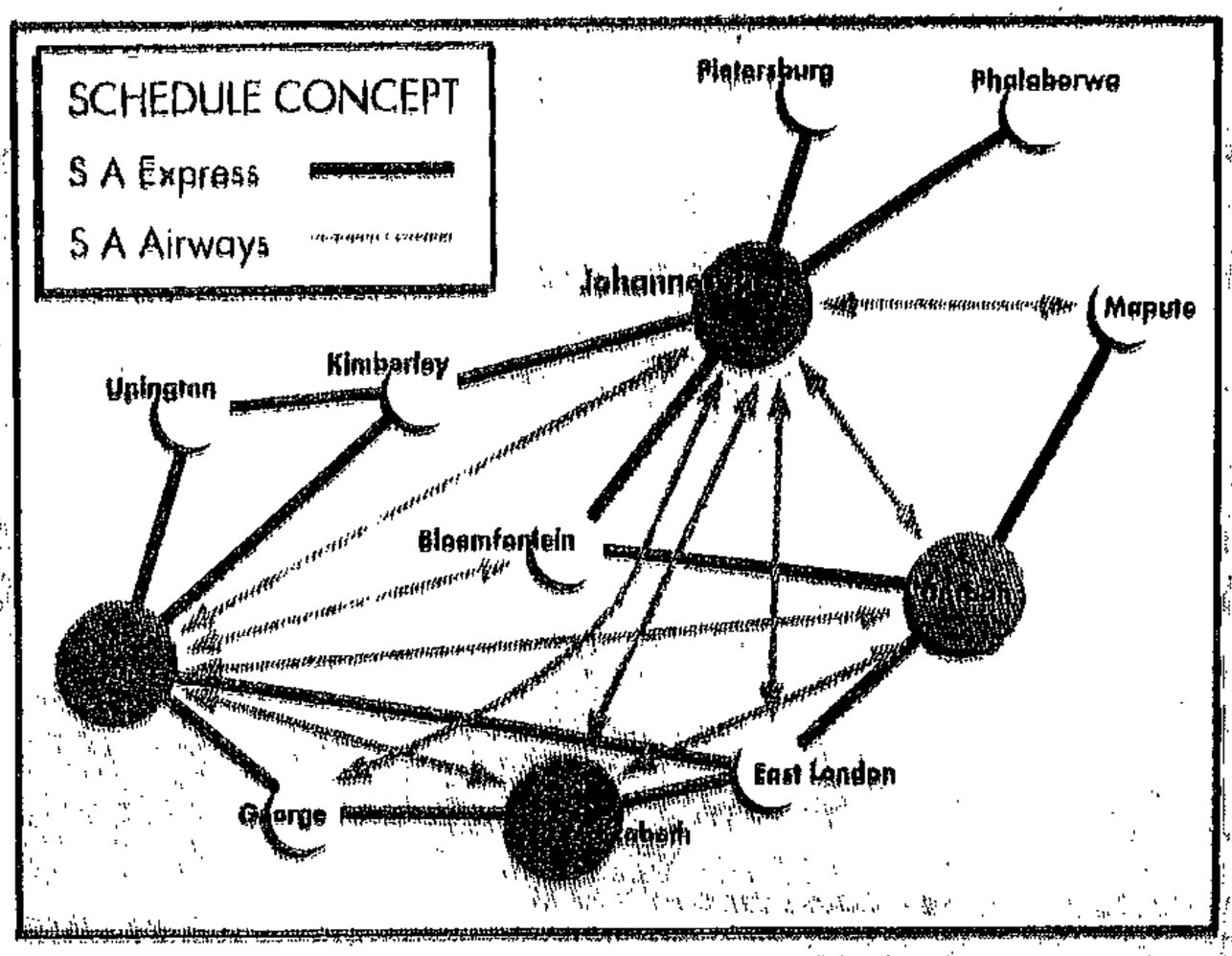
SA Express has bought 12 De Havilland 50-seat wide-bodied turbo-prop aircraft and has the option to buy six more. In a statement issued yesterday it said: "The transaction is valued at about half a billion rands. Financing for the aircraft will come primarily from offshore sources."

William Deluce, President of Lardel Holdings, said SA Express would aim mainly at business travellers. The flights would be one-class with fares comparable to SAA economy class "but we shall provide a premium service, with meals and beverages geared to demand and to the time of day.

"We expect our passengers to be between 65% and 70% business travellers and 30% to 35% leisure.

"Our services will aim at connecting regional communities, with flights to places like Cape Town to Upington rather than challenging SAA, Flitestar and Comair on the Golden Triangle between Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban."

Initially SA Express will serve only destinations inside SA, apart from a flight between Durban and Maputo. But Deluce said that as trade with the rest of Africa grew it could introduce new destinations outside the borders of SA.



ROUTES . . . This map shows the routes the new regional airline, SA Express Airlines, will serve from March 15. It will use small, 50-seater planes and aims to provide a frequent "feeder" service for South African Airways (SAA).

Taxi alliance asks govt to fund launch

B/Day 23/12/93

THEO RAWANA

The Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) had asked government for R4m to help the group set itself up as a new representative of the industry, the Transport Department confirmed yesterday. (332)

The OTI, which succeeded a previous taxi task group, had applied to government for recognition as the sole representative of the industry, and had requested R4m to set up structures in regions throughout the country, an industry source said.

Among organisations represented in the new organisation were the SA Black Taxi Association, the SA Long Distance Taxi Association and the National African Federated Transport Organisation.

Transport deputy director-general Malcolm Mitchell said the group had sought funds from government because representatives said they did not have enough money to set themselves up as an organisation.

He confirmed they had sought R4m to set up structures in 19 regions. "But we are still talking to them, discussing what amount would be needed to do this."

Sapa reports from Durban that OTI committee member James Ngcoya said government had promised an undisclosed amount of sponsorship for development.

Ngcoya said the industry was planning to establish communication centres to train taxi drivers and to liaise with community leaders and commuters. The sponsorship would help raise industry standards.

Air freight rate increase 'is inevitable'

B/Day 27/12/93

INGRID SALGADO

A RISE of between 5%-15% in air freight rates is inevitable because of airlines' increased expenses, industry sources say.

An aviation fuel price rise and an increase in landing and operation fees charged by airport operators the Airport Company meant the aviation industry was suffering, cargo industry operating committee chairman Daan Smit said. There was already an understanding that international market rates would increase. He said SA's air freight rates were low compared with international levels. (332)

Other sources said air freight costs had in recent years been pegged at 1980s rates.

An SAA spokesman said airlines could no longer afford cut rates. Competition had kept rates low in the past but airlines could not continue to reduce prices in real terms.

A Grindrod Airfreight spokesman said that with increased airline competition, air cargo had become a more viable transport choice and was gaining dominance for low volume, high value goods such as electronic equipment. Certain airlines had also taken on shipping lines in what had been their exclusive cargo categories, such as exotic hardwoods, and won there as well.

R3,9-m turnaround for Laser

(332) ARG 7/1/93

ALIDE DASNOIS
Business Staff

AN impressive turnaround in the year to end September justifies the recent surge in Laser Transport Holdings' shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

The Cape Town-based furniture removals group reported a healthy R3,9 million at bottom line after slipping R2,8 million into the red in the previous financial year.

Directors said trading conditions in the period under review remained difficult, with only the group's international division experiencing an increase in outbound shipping.

The tough market was reflected in the slender 3 percent rise in turnover to R119 million.

However, trading margins showed a marked improvement — leaving operating income up a hefty 62 percent at R6,7 million.

Rationalisation — which cost the group almost R3,4 million last year — no longer cut into profits and the interest bill was slashed from R4,9 million to R3 million.

Capital expenditure for the year was up from R6,3 million to R16,4 million and the group plans future capital spending of R22,3 million.

The directors said since the year-end Laser had acquired properties worth R25 million from which to trade.

The acquisition of Frasers Machine Moving and Rigging, for R5 million, should contribute to profits in the medium term, they said.

Strong growth occurred in Lasertrans, which specialise in logistics and distribution.

Lasertrans manages the supply chain from point of manufacture to point of sales, including invoicing, which has major growth potential.

No dividend was declared, with the directors preferring to strengthen the balance sheet for the moment.

Laser will significantly upgrade its fleet to take advantage of a new road ordinance allowing larger-capacity trailers.

Autonet and Rainbow cut transport deal

MARCIA KLEIN

POULTRY producer Rainbow Chicken and truck transport parastatal Autonet yesterday announced details of a multimillion-rand distribution agreement. 15/12/93

Rainbow MD Rick Griffiths said the contract "provides for the takeover of truck tractors and trailers of Rainbow's distribution fleet". Autonet will also, for a minimum of five years, handle primary distribution from Rainbow plants, mainly to secondary distributors Sacca and I & J.

The contract has produced "an up-front cash inflow of R20m to Rainbow, which was paid on November 1 and will result in a reduction of debt and interest". The service will also result in a R2,4m reduction in operating and interest costs in the second half to March, and R10m a year thereafter. Rainbow will also make a R4,5m profit on the sale of the fleet. (332)

Autonet CE Jan Venter said yesterday the agreement meant that the value of transport undertaken by Autonet on behalf of Rainbow would increase to more than R30m (R9m) a year. Autonet would also offer employment to about 100 former Rainbow employees, mainly drivers.

Progress at talks on fuel subsidies for taxis

B/Day 17/12/93

THEO RAWANA

GOVERNMENT and the organised taxi industry were making good progress in talks on a possible fuel subsidy scheme for the taxi industry, Transport director-general Skippie Scheepers said on Wednesday.

Taxi leaders have always asserted that they, as the second-largest consumer of petrol in SA, should be entitled to some relief — in the same way farmers were.

Scheepers said the parties had had two meetings and were first looking at how the taxi industry could be assisted in setting up a single umbrella organisation.

The second phase would be to look at what subsidisation was possible. "But that will follow after a proper organisation has been set up.

The National Economic Forum said earlier that, separate from its investigations into the liquid fuel industry, it had held discussions with the taxi industry on the question of relief measures for the sector.

The taxi industry had, on November 23, submitted proposals for immediate relief measures and forum constituents had agreed to consider these and respond at a meeting held on December 3. There had been agreement in principle at this meeting on relief for the taxi industry. This would be linked to the need for regulation. (332)

☐ Sapa reports that the Zimbabwe International Long Distance Taxi Association has been granted temporary permits to operate from Bulawayo to Johannesburg, according to the association's public relations officer, Malcolm King.

Owner acts in taxi dispute

CT 29/12/93

(332)

Driver fired and arrested

By PETER DENNEHY

THE owner of a taxi that allegedly overcharged a tourist tracked down her driver in Bonteheuwel yesterday — and fired him, then had him arrested.

The driver, who may not be named at this stage, is said to have charged a German tourist R128 for a roundabout ride from Cape Town railway station to a central city hotel — via Kirstenbosch Gardens.

Ms Dianne Young, the taxi owner, has tried since Sunday to ask her driver for an explanation after Captour went to the media with the tourist's complaint. The tourist had not even mentioned Kirstenbosch, but he said the journey seemed to take a long time.

Ms Young then drove into Bonteheuwel, where she found the driver driving her taxi. She fired him for not reporting back to her, and laid a charge against him for allegedly driving her vehicle without permission.

"If he is guilty, then he must be penalised," she said.

Meanwhile, the driver's erstwhile colleagues from the Cape Town railway station rank issued a statement yesterday apologising for his alleged misbehaviour. They felt he had damaged their name.

"We would like to be known for our good service and good manners," said spokesman Mr Jörg Trammler.

Some of his colleagues also hoped that the driver's public driving permit would be taken away for six months.

Unreasonable

Others wished Mr Gordon Oliver of Captour would stick to cleaning up the city, instead of going public with problems which they felt could be sorted out without publicity.

Questioned, one of the rank drivers said R128 for a fare to Kirstenbosch and back was not necessarily unreasonable in itself, as some taxis charged R4 a kilometre, but it was unreasonable if the tourist did not want to go there. A tourist's poor English was no excuse, said driver Ms Avon Coverly.

Mr Sonie Swartz said he would like all sedan taxis to be made to charge the same rates, and have the same status.