

TRANSPORT — PRIVATE — GENERAL

1994

~~ITINERARY~~ — ~~REPORT~~.

Taxi offences 'are tackled'

Staff Reporter

THE Traffic Department yesterday denied public suggestions that it ignored serious traffic offences committed by minibus taxi operators in Strand Street, saying it had a special taxi team which concentrated on taxi drivers' offences.

Acting traffic manager Mr Noel van Rooyen yesterday described as "absolutely untrue" accusations that traffic police did not hesitate to fine

the public for forgetting to keep their parking meters full but ignored serious traffic offences by minibus taxi operators.

Mr Van Rooyen said there are two teams of traffic policemen trained to deal with offences committed by the city's 3 000 minibus taxi operators, and he hoped problems in Strand Street would be sorted out when the new terminus on the station roof was completed "by the beginning of winter".

CT5/1/94 (332)

Minibuses take voter education to masses

THE interim constitution and voter education campaigns were set to reach SA's furthest rural areas through taxi ads, Taxinet marketing director Ken Varejez said yesterday.

Taxinet brings together three companies as subsidiaries — Trans Ad, Star Music and Commuter Reach.

Varejez said that with 85 000 minibuses taxis, the taxi industry had become SA's biggest transporter of commuters, carrying more passen-

THEO RAWANA

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gers than buses and trains combined.

Trans Ad had been launched in 1990 and, after its successful AIDS education campaign more than a year ago, had become SA's biggest exterior taxi advertising company, he said.

Taxinet had signed an agreement with advertising agency Hunt Las-caris to help educate voters and in-

roduce the interim constitution.

Star Music had successfully promoted products and services for six years, he said, through music tapes in 19 000 taxis, each tape featuring ads alongside the latest hits.

Commuter Reach provided marketers with an opportunity to make contact with millions of economically active commuters via 30 information kiosks at major taxi ranks throughout SA, Varejez said. (332)

SAA set to buy shares in Thebe's SA Express

Star 8/11/94

MANDY JEAN WOODS

SOUTH African Airways is considering taking up its option to buy shares in the country's newest domestic airline, SA Express, in which ANC-aligned Thebe Investments is the majority shareholder.

A meeting between SAA and SA Express (SAX) executives is scheduled for next week in Johannesburg.

According to SAX chief executive Bill Deluce the memorandum of understanding between SAA and SAX allows for SAA to become a "substantial minority shareholder" in SAX.

"Originally, SAA indicated to me it would be interested in taking up the offer in early 1995 but then they called me and scheduled a meeting for next week to discuss the matter," Deluce says.

At present, Deluce brothers Bill and Bruce and South African Michael Gray are partners in Canadian-based Lardel Holdings, a 49 percent stakeholder in SAX. Thebe Investments, which is the investment company of the Batho-Batho Trust, of which ANC president Nelson Mandela and deputy

president Walter Sisulu are trustees, has a 51 percent stake. (332)

Financing of all capital equipment (half a billion rands) is coming from Canadian aircraft manufacturer Bombardier and start-up capital being put up by the two SAX shareholders is R14 million, Deluce says. De Havilland is negotiating with the Canadian government regarding assistance for the capital financing.

SAX is targeting mid-March as its start-up date. SAA is expected to withdraw completely from two of its nine domestic routes (Kimberley and Upington) and operate perhaps only one or two flights a day during peak times on two others (George and Bloemfontein) to allow SAX to enter the domestic market.

SAX has placed orders for 12 new De Havilland Dash 8 passenger aircraft to use in South Africa, which has been the cause of some controversy in the past few weeks.

Shortlisted for the lucrative contract were De Havil-

land and Franco-Italian manufacturing consortium, Avions Transport d'Regional (ATR). ATR says it was contacted in late November by Thebe board member (ANC PWV chairman) Tokyo Sexwale, and told it had been awarded the R500 million contract. Two weeks later, at a press conference, it was announced that manufacturer Bombardier had secured the contract.

ATR says it was surprised to learn "on the radio" that it did not have the contract as it had been informed by Sexwale. Deluce denies this, saying he personally phoned ATR president Henri Paul to notify him of the board's decision to award the contract to Bombardier.

Such is the controversy this has caused that an official diplomatic letter has been sent by the French ambassador in South Africa to Mandela about the matter. It is believed French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, scheduled to visit SA from January 16-19, will also raise the matter during his visit.

Sexwale could not be reached for comment.

Shots fired at minibus in OFS

Passenger killed in attack on black taxi

■ CRIME REPORTER

Two men tailed a packed minibus taxi for several kilometres near Odendaalsrus in the Free State on Saturday and opened fire on the passengers, killing one man and injuring another in an apparently racially motivated attack. (332)

Free State police spokesman Major Johlene van der Merwe said two white men in a grey Volkswagen Jetta had followed the bus from the taxi rank in Odendaalsrus at about 5.30 pm.

The taxi, carrying 13 black passengers, was heading for Allenridge when the men in the Jetta suddenly overtook the minibus and opened fire.

One passenger was killed and another — who was shot in the face with a shotgun — was seriously injured. Their names have not yet been released.

■ Police have released the names of nine rightwingers detained last week in connection

RACIAL hatred appears to be the motive as whites follow vehicle and then open fire with rifles

with the racial attack on black travellers near Randfontein on December 13.

Four people were shot, hacked or burnt to death on the Randfontein-Ventersdorp road. Three were seriously injured.

The attackers allegedly questioned the travellers about their political affiliations before launching into the killings.

Police named the nine detained AWB members as "chief commandant" Phil Klopper, "commandant" Deon Martin, "candidate officer" Geri Diederichs, Piet Matthews, Andre Visser, Etienne Visser, Carol Meiring, Marthinus van der Schyff and "junior officer" Jaco Badenhorst.

Station roof taxi rank criticised

CF 10/11/94
Staff Reporters

STRAND STREET minibus taxi drivers yesterday criticised the City Council's plan to relocate the taxi rank to the parking area above the railway station this winter.

But the City Council insisted the taxi drivers would have to move.

"The City Council has an agreement for the station deck now, and we will be issuing rank tokens to all taxis," said acting city administrator Mr Alan Dolby.

The problems with the Strand Street venue were evident yesterday as both car owners and taxi drivers jostled for space on the four-lane street. Taxis also make it difficult for motorists coming towards town to turn left under the archway of the Golden Acre shopping centre.

Of the only two traffic policemen spotted in the area by Cape Times reporters over a two-hour period yesterday morning, neither one stopped to prevent taxis from double parking and blocking off two lanes of Strand Street.

In spite of the congestion, many taxi drivers were adamant that they would not move from their current taxi rank onto the station roof.

"They will have to drag me up there," said driver Mr Gaidien Flynn.

Concerns about the site included losing customers to buses and trains, the difficulty for old people in getting on to the station roof and bad weather.

Zimbabwe buys SA diesel taxis

CAPE TOWN — Atlantis Diesel Engines and Nissan SA had begun exporting diesel-powered minibuses to Zimbabwe to take advantage of the deregulation of transport in that country, an Atlantis spokesman said yesterday. *BIDOM 11/1/94*

Although it was early days yet — only 30 Nissan E20 minibuses had so far been converted to diesel — the Zimbabwean government wanted to establish a minibus taxi industry similar to SA's and had removed import duties on the vehicles.

Diesel was also cheaper and more freely available than petrol in Zimbabwe.

The spokesman said Atlantis was lobbying for support locally to get government to increase the price differential between diesel and petrol to make diesel-powered minibuses viable in SA.

Conversion to diesel would ensure longer engine life and lower fuel consumption. Diesel was as environment-friendly as unleaded fuel.

SA exported large quantities of surplus diesel production.

A spokesman for the ANC economics

EDWARD WEST

department said it was investigating promoting diesel-powered taxis as part of a plan to make industry more competitive and to increase government revenue.

Diesel consumption would become entirely commercially productive and a future government could lower the tax on diesel to promote business. *(252) (332)*

Petrol tax could be raised to increase government revenue as a form of wealth tax, the spokesman said.

Nearly 80% of SA's petrol was consumed by private cars, with only a small proportion consumed by essential services such as doctors.

The remainder was consumed by minibus taxis, he said.

The Atlantis spokesman said diesel-powered taxis were the norm around the world, but the local taxi and motor manufacturing industry believed that the price of diesel was not yet low enough in relation to petrol to make diesel-powered minibuses viable in view of the higher price of diesel engines.

Putco seeks to minimise the effects of unrest

BIDON 17/11/94

(332)

MICK COLLINS

COMMUTER transport company Putco is attempting to minimise the impact of unrest and stayaways on interim earnings and dividends.

MD Mike Oldham says the end-December dividend, due to be announced next month, could be affected. However, he adds that all costs and expenditures are being closely looked at and the picture is not all gloom.

Having paid a 14c dividend for the same period last year, Oldham says there is a possibility that this could be maintained. "We are now more proactive in reacting to changing circumstances and I am optimistic for the future."

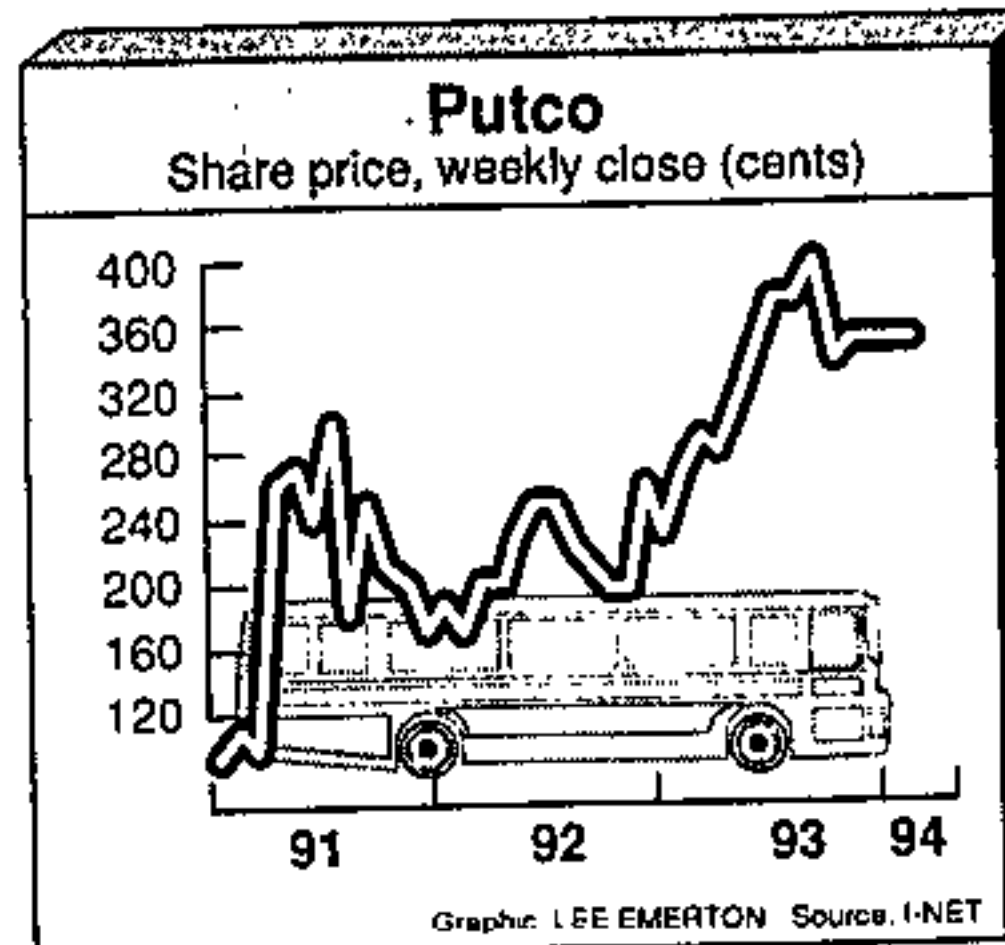
The company has come a long way since the late '80s when it was ripe for the plucking by the highest bidder. The alternative at the time was to close its doors and sell off its assets.

Listed on the JSE's transportation sector, the company's share price has shown remarkable resilience since languishing at 85c in 1991 to rise to its current 350c level.

Putco recently took over the running of the Alberton municipality's white bus service, which is now fully integrated.

It also took over the running of the Germiston City Council's black services and both acquisitions are proving profitable.

"We are looking at opportunities all the time — at rationalising ser-



vices. One needs to rationalise transport in SA. That includes taxis, buses and trains. I believe there is still a place for an efficiently run bus operation," he says.

"The Alberton deal means we are using our fleet more effectively and are able to intergrate and rationalise. It is a worthwhile addition to our operation. We are not interested in taking over routes which are non-viable."

Oldham says Putco's fleet level has steadied with 2 300 vehicles operating. "We have 1 870 on the road with the remainder on standby as workshop spares. Our fleet level has stabilised and is now in fact growing gradually."

Although it is true that the company's fleet is ageing, one out of 10 buses is rebuilt or refurbished each year.

"It is our policy to replace engines, gearboxes and other components with technologically updated new

components. Rebuilding our fleet is a major financial undertaking. During the 1992/93 financial year the cost of major rebuilds amounted to R38m," says chairman Albino Carleo in the annual report.

The company is still beset by township unrest, especially on the East Rand where Oldham says the net result is passengers are not going to work or are being prevented from attending work.

"The April 1993 murder of Chris Hani seriously disrupted services. In addition, operating conditions since April were unfavourable on the East Rand and in certain areas of Natal. Stayaways are costly and reflect directly on the profit performance of the group," Carleo says.

"The group had to contend with escalating damages to the fleet, the most serious of which were on the day of the funeral of Chris Hani. Buses were so severely damaged that they could not be repaired quickly so commuters were subjected to a period of inconvenience."

Added problems encountered were theft and the hijacking of service vehicles and buses. A number of buses were destroyed.

Considering the many service disruptions and management's decision to absorb the April 1993 fuel price increase, Carleo considers the group pre-tax profit of R27,9m satisfactory.

"Our fares, which are revised annually at the beginning of July, were reasonably well accepted by the passengers," Carleo says.

Taxi protest in Wynberg

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN

Crime Staff

(332)

ARC 20/1/94

ABOUT 100 minibus taxis disrupted traffic in Wynberg today when they blocked Station Road to air their grievances.

The drivers were facing several traffic summonses.

A spokesman for the aggrieved drivers said they had been promised a meeting with

a senior council official at the rank about 8am today but by 11am no one had turned up.

After negotiations the drivers agreed to remove their minibuses. A traffic officer said his department would not fine taxis parked in the road until an agreement was reached at a meeting set for tomorrow.

Another airline chooses the Cape

DALE KNEEN

Weekend Argus Reporter

SINGAPORE Airlines has joined the burgeoning number of airlines flying to Cape Town, a move which is likely to stimulate tourism and trade in the Western Cape.

Their decision to fly to Cape Town is regarded as recognition of the Cape's importance as a tourist destination and an indication that there may be an increase in tourists from Pacific Rim countries visiting the city.

The airline will begin an additional weekly service to Cape Town via Johannesburg from March 25.

It already provides three weekly services to Johannesburg, a direct service from Singapore, another via Mauritius and the third to Durban via Johannesburg.

Seven other airlines fly to international destinations out of Cape Town. They are: South African Airways, Lufthansa, British Airways, Swissair, KLM, Air France and Air Namibia.

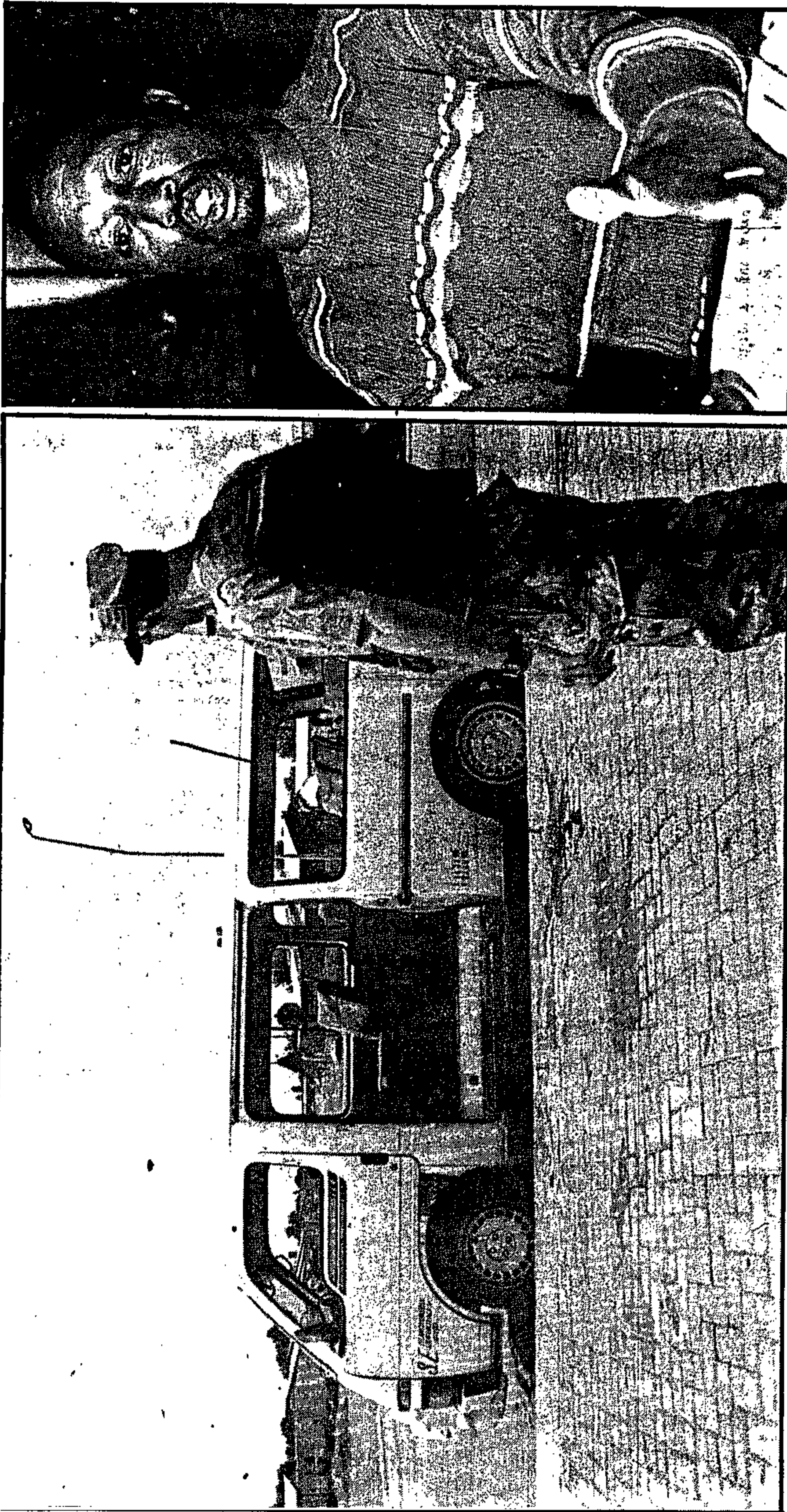
Direct flights are to Miami, Frankfurt and Amsterdam on SAA, London on British Airways and to Windhoek on Air Namibia. Other flights to Frankfurt, Zurich, Amsterdam and Paris on Lufthansa, Swissair, KLM and Air France are via Johannesburg.

Varig Airlines used to fly from Cape Town to Brazil, but discontinued this service about a year ago.

Captour's Gordon Oliver welcomed Singapore Airlines' decision to fly to the city, saying it was "very good news for Cape Town".

"We know the people from the East are working hard at marketing both ways and this is good for us as it helps us market Cape Town in the East, particularly in the Pacific Rim countries.

"I believe the Pacific Rim is going to become an increasing factor for tourism and business generally."



MORE TAXI BLOOD ... The death vehicle in which six people were gunned down for not obeying hostel warlords' instructions. Some arrests have been made.

By MOSES MAMAILA

THE bloodbath in Vosloorus on the East Rand, which left six people dead and nine others wounded this week was apparently sparked by a taxi driver's refusal to obey hostel warlords' instructions for taximen not to ferry township residents.

The driver of the taxi which was ambushed by gunmen wielding

AK-47's, this week gave a chilling account of the terror operation.

Detailing the well-planned attack, Oupa Simelane, 42, said the ordeal started at about 5.30am on Friday while he was transporting people to Boksburg.

He said he was driving on the MC Botha road when he drew up at a stop-sign near the

Mnguni Hostel. He saw a taxi operator rushing to a minibus parked next to the road.

"The minibus flashed, apparently signalling that I was the correct target. Suddenly I saw eight men, all armed with AK-47 rifles, emerging at the other end of the road.

"The gunmen start-

ed firing at my vehicle. They emptied their magazines and there is no doubt that they wanted to leave no survivors," said Simelane.

He said he did not remember how he left the minibus and managed to escape unhurt because there was a lot of firing.

"I was shocked that I survived the attack

because I was the gunmen's main target," said Simelane.

Six commuters were not so lucky. They died in the hail of bullets which lasted for at least five minutes.

The wounded were taken to Natal's Boksburg-Benoni hospitals.

Simelane said ac-

Hostel tactics in taxi bloodbath

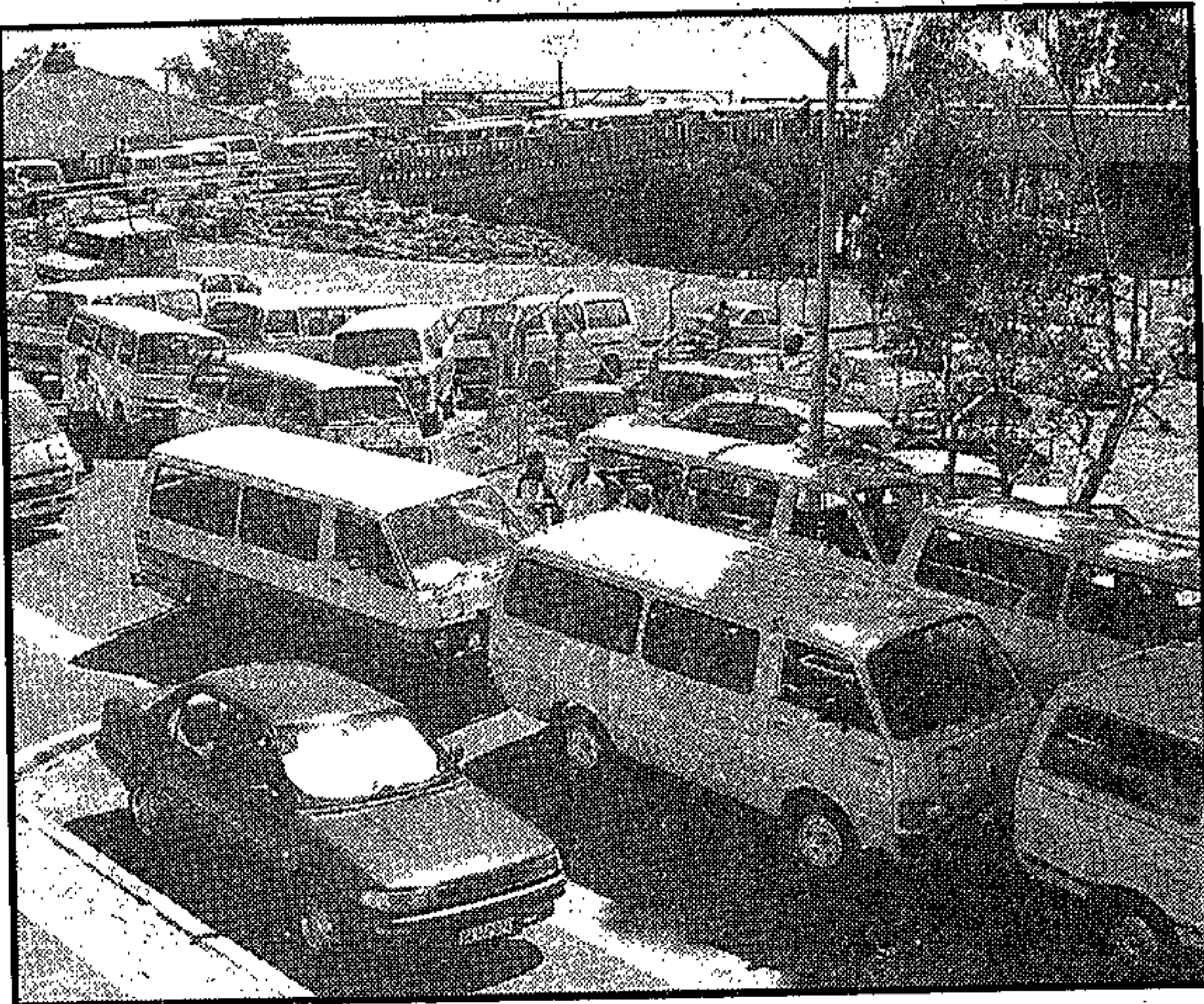
cording to a taxi driver who operated from the hostel, taxis were supposed to start at Somhlolo, a rank next to the hostel.

Simelane opposed this suggestion because township residents would be forced to walk several kilometres to the rank, which was itself not safe.

LUCKY ... Driver Oupa Simelane was apparently the main target.

He said while the "warlords" had wanted to ignite war in the township a long time ago, their plan gained momentum this week when they forced residents to heed a Zulu stayaway call.

In a bid to track down the killers police raided Mnguni Hostel hours after the attack. Thirteen hostel dwellers were arrested in connection with illegal firearms and dagga.



Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

IMMOVABLE: Minibus taxis blockade Wetton bridge and Morom Road in Wynberg today. 332

100 minibus taxis in Wynberg roads blockade

STEFANS BRÜMMER
Staff Reporter

TRAFFIC came to standstill for almost two hours in part of Wynberg today when more than 100 minibus taxis blockaded roads.

About 10am Codeta drivers abandoned their taxis on Wetton Road bridge and Morom Road leading to the Wynberg station, demanding the release of colleagues arrested and taxis impounded.

The blockade was lifted at 11.45am after tense street negotiations involving the drivers, police and traffic authorities.

A police spokesman said members of the vehicle branch and the traffic department moved in early today to confiscate two allegedly stolen vehicles. He said other drivers became angry and began to block Station Road.

Codeta officials said police arrested between 40 and 50 drivers and some taxis were impounded.

Police and traffic department reinforcements arrived.

A Lieutenant Wiese, the internal stability unit commander on the scene, told the drivers their colleagues were being released and had been warned to appear in court at a later date.

The drivers were not satisfied, demanding to see their colleagues before they lifted the blockade.

Police asked drivers to make way for two cars held up by the rumpus since about 10.30.

Peter Nairn, the occupant of one, said: "I was in this traffic — and suddenly it stopped."

Taxi drivers grudgingly allowed them out after 45 minutes. One taxi driver said: "They (police and traffic authorities) worry for them because they are white."

Cape Town traffic chief Wouter Smit arrived about 11am and asked the ISU to help clear the road.

"We had an agreement they would not block the road. If they block the road we will open it. They are holding the city and its people to ransom," he said.

A traffic department tow truck backed up to move the first taxi, but drivers swung the taxi sideways to make it inaccessible. A stand-off ensued.

Again Mr Smit pushed the ISU for action. Lieutenant Wiese said back-up forces were still "far away" and warned of consequences should force, rather than negotiations, be relied on.

About 11.30am taxi leaders agreed to move. Police withdrew and the taxi is roared off.

● There has been controversy about a new site for the Wynberg station taxi rank — the area is congested outside the Wynberg Town Hall above the railway line — and last week about 100 taxis blockaded Station Road.

Grincor makes headway despite the doldrums

BIDAY 28/11/94

SHIPPING and transport group Grindrod Unicorn (Grincor) weathered a tough trading year to post an 8% rise in turnover to R704,7m (R654,6m) for the year ended December 31. (332)

Operating income was virtually unchanged at R50,5m (R50,4m). Grincor chairman Murray Grindrod said the figure was significantly enhanced by profit on the sale of two roll-on, roll-off vessels and a supply vessel.

The group's interest charge doubled to R14,7m (R7,4m), which saw income before tax slide 17% to R35,7m (R43m). An adjustment to deferred tax for prior years, largely as a result of a reduction in company tax rates, led to a substantial write-back of R20,7m compared with a tax bill of R3,2m during the 1992 financial year.

This resulted in a 42% hike in income after tax to R56,4m (R39,7m). Associated companies contributed R732 000 (R1,5m) and outsider shareholders' interest rose to R22,6m (R16,2m).

Attributable income increased 38% to R34,6m (R25m). An 8% rise in the weighted average number of shares issued to 35 827

ROBYN CHALMERS

(33 304) shareholders left earnings up 28% at 96,5c against 75,3c a share during the previous comparable period.

Directors declared a dividend of 33c a share, which represented a 10% increase over 1992's dividend of 30c a share.

Grindrod said the year had been marked by the loss of the supply vessel Voortrekker. However, the ship had been adequately covered by insurance.

"Trading conditions in 1993 remained depressed. Several operating divisions showed good profit growth, but this was more than offset by poor results in certain shipping activities."

Capital expenditure increased to R207m (R112,9m) and included the acquisition of three multi-purpose ships, payments on the container ship Bastion and progress payments on a new container ship.

"There are signs that the domestic recession is abating. As a result, operating profit from core activities should improve. Political uncertainties make it difficult to forecast earnings for 1994," said Grindrod.

Star 28/1/94

Tax break boosts Grindrod

■ BY STEPHEN CRANSTON

A lower tax rate was the main reason for a 38 percent rise in Grindrod's attributable earnings to R34,6 million in the year to December (332).

Turnover in the shipping group was up eight percent to R704,7 million, but operating income was virtually unchanged at R50,5 million.

Taxed profit rose 42 percent to R56,4 million, aided by a R20,7 million write-back resulting from the reduction in the deferred tax provision because of the lower company tax rate.

Earnings per share were up 28 percent to 96,5c. The dividend is up 10 percent to 33c.

Chairman Murray Grindrod

says satisfactory profit growth in some divisions was offset by poor results in certain liner shipping activities.

The roll-on, roll-off ships Border and Barrier and a supply vessel Voorspeler were sold at a profit.

The supply vessel Voortekker was lost, but the ship was covered by insurance and there was no loss of profitability.

Capital expenditure was R207 million and included the acquisition of three 22 000-ton multi-purpose ships for the international fleet, payment on a container ship delivered in Poland in October and progress payments on the second new container ship due for delivery next month.

Taximen sign an uneasy truce

Sowetan 2/2/94

332

By Joshua Raboroko

TWO feuding Soweto taxi factions yesterday reached an uneasy truce, ending a bloody battle which has claimed the lives of 35 taxi drivers during the past six months.

The situation is, however, still tense following the killing of two drivers, the hijacking of two kombis and harassment of members of the two rival associations at the weekend.

Mr Isaac Mpiyake Hlatshwayo of

105B Emndeni and Mr David Kehla Selepe of White City were shot dead at Mapetla's Merafe Station rank at the weekend.

At the centre of the row was the refusal by the Soweto Taxi Association to recognise the office of the Soweto Transport Service, which controls the majority of taxis in Soweto.

The agreement was reached at a meeting at Protea police headquarters.

The STS members, who had stopped their operations in fear of their lives, will return to work today. The parties also resolved to hold another meeting next Wednesday.

GRINCOR
Fm 4/2/94
Preparing for more trade

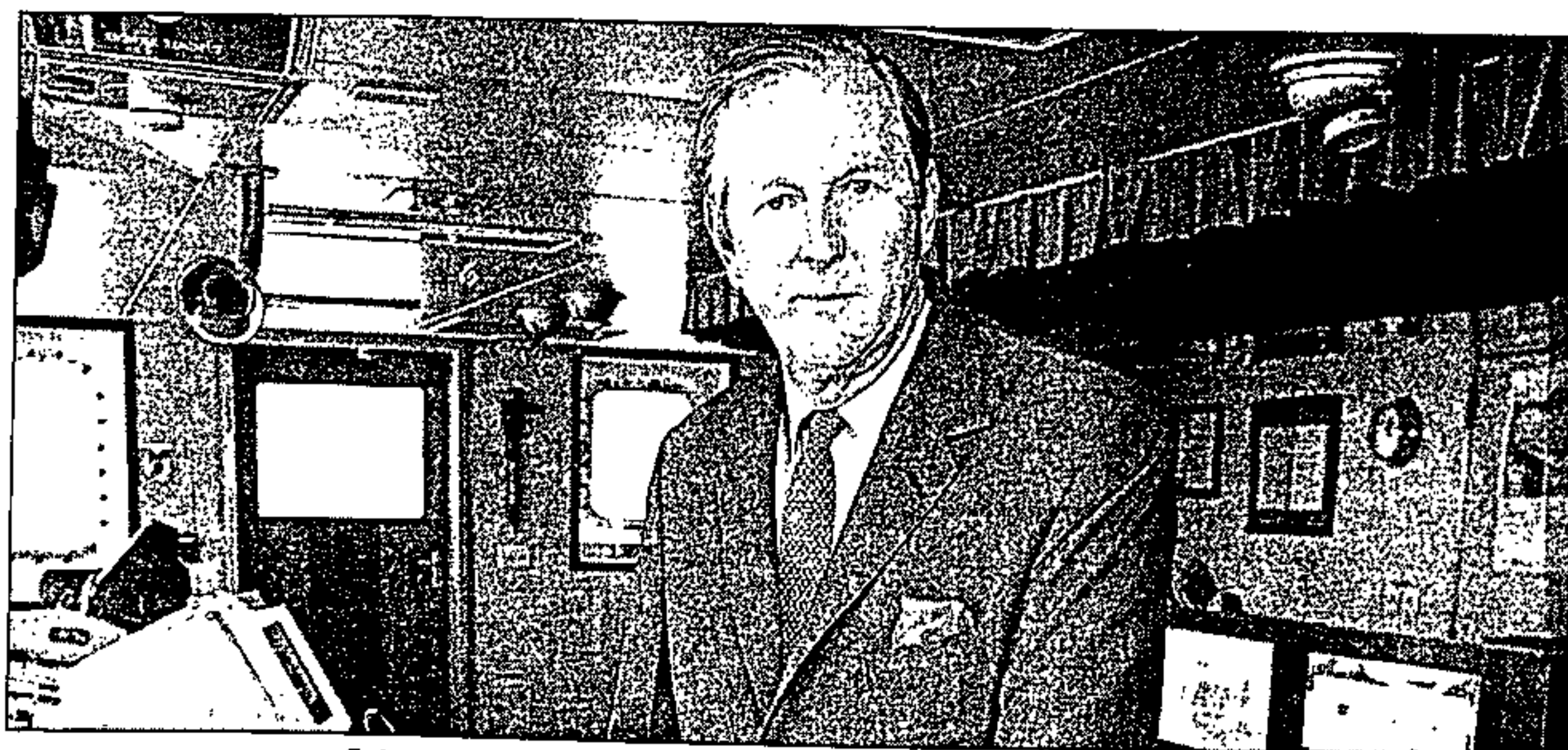
The lower corporate tax rate offered a lifeline to Durban-based shipping and transport group Grindrod Unicorn (Grincor), turning a 17% decline in pre-tax income to a 42% increase, to R56,4m, in taxed profit. (332)

A deferred tax add back of R20,7m, mainly from the lower corporate tax rate but also reflecting Grincor's conservative tax policy, equalled 15,2c per share. Without the one-off tax benefit, EPS would only have grown by about 8%, compared with the actual 28%

OPERATING TROUGH

Year to December 31	1992	1993
Turnover (Rm)	655	705
Operating income (Rm) ..	50,4	50,5
Attributable (Rm)	25,1	34,6
Earnings (c)	75,3	96,5
Dividends (c)	30	33

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Grincor's Grindrod ... more opportunities for us

advance.

Still, the bottom line increase reversed the decline of nearly 5% in EPS shown in 1992.

And while results were depressed by a doubling in interest payments (to R14,7m), that follows capital spending of R207m, largely

FOX

Fm 4/2/94
for three new multipurpose vessels for the international fleet, payments on a new container ship and progress payments on a second container ship due to be delivered this month. (332)

While the increase in debt, about R156m in net borrowings, might strain the balance sheet, the new vessels should allow Grincor to exploit any increase in trade to and from the Continent. Chairman Murray Grindrod is reluctant to forecast earnings for 1994 because of political uncertainties, but he notes signs of growth in the local economy next year with a small improvement in the world economy.

He expects operating profits from core

Fm 4/2/94
activities to improve, though he says there are two sides to the likely opening up of trade in a post-sanctions era. (332)
"On the one hand, there will undoubtedly be a great deal more opportunities for us, but, at the same time, more shipping lines, which kept away from SA during sanctions, are looking at the country. That will lead to increased competition in what is already a competitive environment," he says.

Satisfactory profit growth in some divisions was offset by poor results in certain liner shipping activities, particularly the West Coast trade, hampered in part by disruptions from the war in Angola.

"Generally, building up trade involves a lot of start-up expenses, which also affected the foreign trade," Grindrod says. He adds that international operations continue to make a useful contribution to profit.

While turnover grew 8% over the year, compared to a 6% increase at the interim, operating profit remained stagnant, reflecting a margin which declined from 7,7% to 7,2%. Operating income was significantly strengthened by profit on the sale of three vessels.

Despite the share's poor ratings, below the average for the industrial holding sector and competitor Safren, the price has made strong gains over the year, climbing from a low of about R4 in May to R6 now. Grincor's prospects seem reasonable, which could make the share a recovery stock. *Shawn Harris*

Solid results from Unitrans

MICK COLLINS

ROAD transport group Unitrans turned in a solid performance for the six months to end December 1993 with turnover showing a 22,8% increase to R217,3m (1992: R176,9m) despite difficult operating conditions.

However, results for the current period included those of Greyhound Coach Lines and Unitrans Motors for the first time. **8/2/94**

If the results of these two companies were stripped out the increase in turnover would have been 11,8%.

Operating profit was up 15,5% at R28,7m (R25,7m).

Pre-tax profit was R22,1m (R21,7m) as the interest burden increased significantly.

Earnings rose 10,6% to 49c a share from 44,3c. On a fully diluted basis, assuming full conversion of debentures into shares in 1997, earnings a share at 41c were 12,6% higher than

in the same period last year.

The half year dividend was raised to 11c from 10,5c. The dividend for the past full year was 30c. **(332)**

Unitrans CE Eduardo Garcia said both turnover and profit were adversely affected by the drought which had a severe impact on the company's sugar operations.

Also to blame, he said, was the late start of the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme's Katse Dam and disruptions in international traffic caused by shortages of foreign currency, border delays and permit restrictions.

On the outlook for the second half of the year, Garcia predicted better results than those reported in the comparative period last year.

"I am quite positive on the second half, barring unforeseen problems with the elections," he said.

Star 8/2/94
Unitrans profit up

The acquisition of Greyhound Coach Lines and Unitrans Motors boosted turnover at Unitrans by 23 percent to R212,3 million (R167,9 million) in the 1993 second half.

However, poor trading conditions in other areas reduced the increase at the eps level to 10,6 percent at 48c (44,3c). The interim dividend was raised from 10,5c to 11c a share.

Excluding acquisitions, turnover would have improved by only 11,8 percent, as a result of the drought, which had a severe impact on sugar cane operations, the late start of the Lesotho Highlands' Katse dam and disruptions to regional traffic, says CE Eduardo Garcia. — Business Staff

(332)

Police warn minibus drivers

POLICE appealed to minibus operators in the Western Cape yesterday not to flout the law and warned that law enforcement bodies would have no option but to take the necessary steps should they continue to do so.

Police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said numerous complaints had been received from members of the public regarding violations of traffic regulations by mini-

bus taxis.

The complaints included illegal parking, reckless driving, blocking of roads and unroadworthy motor vehicles. CT 9/2/94

Meetings between police and the traffic authorities have consequently been held and a plea was now being made to these operators to adhere to the law or face the consequences. — Sapa

CT 11/2/94
**Golden Arrow
escort killed**

Staff Reporter **332**

A SECURITY officer escorting a broken-down bus through Khayelitsha was last night shot dead in the township.

Police said Mr Andries Faure, 32, of Ruyterwacht, was escorting a broken-down bus about 8pm, when four to six shots rang out from a taxi rank.

She said since September last year three Golden Arrow staffers — including Mr Faure — had been killed in township violence.

● Bus share donation to set up charity — Page 4

Bus company starts community fund

CAPE TOWN — Bus company Golden Arrow had founded a trust company which its shareholders had endowed with a 50% shareholding, chairman Nic Cronje said yesterday.

He said this move, a first for a private enterprise operation, would ensure the Golden Arrow Fund benefited with 50% of company dividends.

However, as there had been no dividends since 1992, and no prospects for one in 1994, the fund would

be endowed with R30 000 a month for the next year to "get it going".

The purpose of the fund was to ensure participation in the benefits of the company, he said. Moreover, two trustees would sit on the company's board to represent the interests of the local communities.

This was the most efficient means of sharing the company's benefits with the poorer sectors of the community, Cronje said. — Sapa.

Don't let thugs (332) take over in taxi industry, operators warned

ARG 22/2/94

The Argus Bureau

PORT ELIZABETH. — The taxi industry is unpopular because of the violence associated with it, a taxi indaba has heard.

Calls were made to more than 300 taxi operators attending the National Transport Policy Forum's Cape taxi indaba in Port Elizabeth at the weekend not to allow criminals or to have a "community of thugs" in the taxi industry.

Forum chairman George Negota said the taxi industry had become so unpopular that if a taxi operator introduced himself as such at a social gathering, he immediately lost respect.

Drivers were looked upon as killers, he said.

"The community sees you, the driver, as a person who does not want to understand, who is reckless and negligent.

"It is your responsibility as operators to watch over your image. Let us not create a space for criminals or for wrongdoers in the taxi industry."

Mr Negota said the frequency of violence was such that if taxi operators failed to arrive at their homes by 10pm their families become worried.

He said this problem needed to be dealt with. South Africa could not have a "community of thugs" in the taxi industry.

The secretary-general of the Cape Organisation for a Demo-

cratic Taxi Association (Codeta), Morris Nomala, said his organisation was pleased to be part of a conference aimed at bringing about peace and formulating a strategy for co-operation in the taxi industry.

Codeta's two years of existence had marked a significant development in the industry of the Western Cape. The former rival groups, Lagunya and Webta, once bitter enemies, had united to resolve their differences.

Mr Nomala said Codeta had now gained the confidence of communities, the authorities, the business community and their membership.

"However, problems have plagued us. Conflicts within Codeta have claimed many lives, including that of our former vice-chairman Siphiso Mooi."

Mr Nomala said certain weaknesses on the part of Codeta management were exploited by forces intent on destroying unity and this resulted in a small group of members creating chaos within the industry, leading to many deaths.

ANC stalwart Andrew Mlangeni, of Johannesburg, said violence in the taxi industry was a "worrying factor". Prospective overseas investors expressed their concern about it.

Taxi violence, unlike political violence which could be controlled after the April 27 elections, was driving the potential investors away, he said.

Trencor divisions fail to hit targets

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Blue chip Trencor lifted earnings 5,8% to 38,4c (36,3c) a share in the six months to end-December 1993 as difficult trading conditions took its toll on the group's manufacturing, trading, container export and transport operations.

Trencor usually published its interim results at this time, but because the results of W & A Investment Corporation, in which Trencor has an effective 30% joint controlling interest, would only be available during March, the results did not include those of W & A.

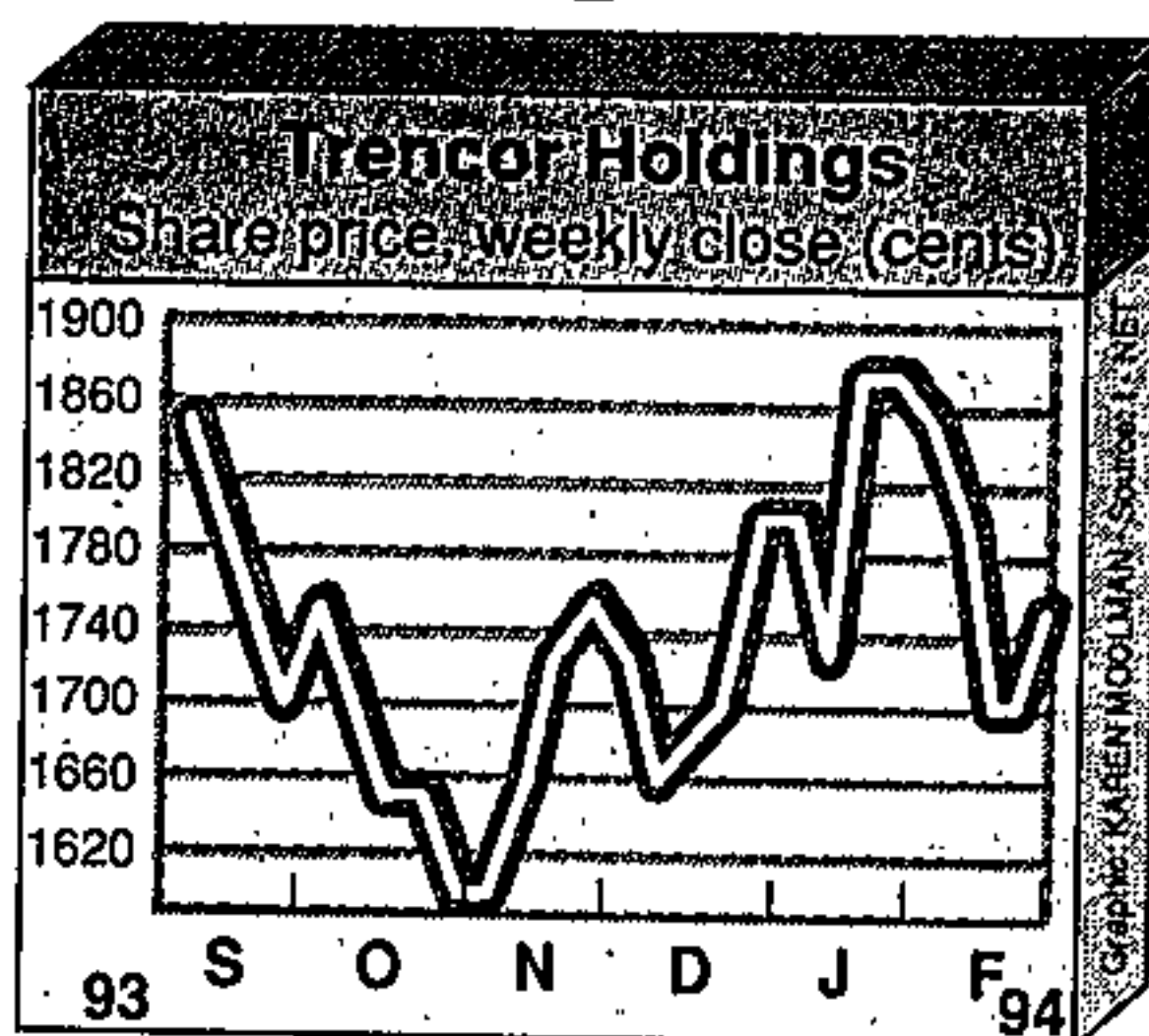
A full interim report would be published once W & A's results were known.

Trencor's turnover for the half year climbed 3% to R393,6m (R381,5m). Attributable income improved to R55,8m (R52,7m). The interim dividend was held at 9c. Mobile Industries, which had as its major investment a 47% holding in Trencor, declared an unchanged interim dividend of 2,2c.

Executive chairman Neil Jowell said earnings a share, while above those of last year, were less than anticipated.

"Trading conditions were difficult and none of our divisions achieved targets, although the container division as a whole improved on its performance for the same period last year."

Group results for the year to June were



difficult to forecast, but were not likely to equal those of last year.

This applied particularly to the container export operations, where the world market and prices continued to be weak.

This operation was also unlikely to repeat last year's performance when profits in the second half were boosted by a material decline in the rand/dollar exchange rate, he said.

Trencor remained liquid with minimal borrowings, large cash surpluses and further positive cash flow generation expected in the remainder of the current financial year, said Jowell.

The recent W & A announcement that it would not return to profitability or pay a dividend for 1993 would have little cash flow impact on Trencor, he said.

ANC will not tolerate violence — Yengeni

VUYO BAVUMA
Staff Reporter

AN African National Congress government will not tolerate senseless township violence, including the killing of innocent bus drivers and passengers in Khayelitsha by a few taxi drivers, says Tony Yengeni.

At an ANC campaign meeting at the Bantu Church in Guguletu last night, attended by about 500 people, the ANC regional executive member said hooliganism would be discouraged and fought with the "same vigour" displayed by the people during the struggle against "the Boers".

People could not be held to ransom by a few taxi operators who were trying to dictate to the community by killing innocent bus drivers and passengers.

"Another headache is that in the townships the crime rate is terrible. Girls are raped. Some gangs randomly block traffic in the streets. It seems we have lost control of our own people."

"This type of anarchy cannot be tolerated at all. Once we assume power, we'll have the control of the police force, the army and the prisons — we'll use these weapons to fight these problems."

Earlier, Rose Sonto, regional secretary of the South African National Civic Organisation, criticised the Democratic Party for trying to steal votes in the townships while "we have never heard the DP saying we should get better houses".

(News by V S Bavuma, 122 St George's Mall, Cape Town)

● See page 5

Get rid of the taxi hooligans, say drivers at meeting with authorities

SHARKEY ISAACS
Transport Reporter

CITY taxi drivers have called on the traffic department and the police to act against hooligans in their ranks who are tarnishing the image of the taxi industry.

Their appeal was made today in formal resolutions at discussions in the Cape Town civic centre.

The talks were attended by members of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), the chairman of Cape Town Taxi Liaison Committee, Frank van der Velde, traffic manager Wouter Smit, and the regional head of the Internal Stability Unit of the police, Colonel Fanie Bouwer.

James Mafuya, deputy chairman of Codeta, chaired the meeting.

Codeta delegates asked the police to act against hooligans at taxi ranks and urged a police presence at taxi ranks, especially at Wynberg.

They stressed there was a need to protect commuters and they were prepared

to point out culprits known to the taxi fraternity and the community. They also urged people with guns to leave them at home.

Delegates called on the traffic department to act ruthlessly against taxi drivers who used roadblocks to air grievances. They asked members to rather channel their grievances through Codeta's executive which had direct links with the traffic authorities and the city's taxi liaison committee, which liaised with about 30 taxi associations in the Peninsula.

They urged the police to contact Codeta offices if a "wrong-doer" was found to be a member of the their association.

Mr Van der Velde, described the meeting as historical because it was the first time drivers had asked the authorities to act against members within their ranks.

He said the important outcome of the meeting was that delegates were aware that they had forums to take up their grievances and to address their problems. Mr Smit said he found the talks very encouraging.

CAPE/NATIONAL

Bus services in Khayelitsha 'back to normal'

Staff Reporter

332 ARG 8/3/94
KHAYELITSHA'S bus services are to operate as normal "with immediate effect" after an agreement was reached between the Convention of a Democratic Taxi Association, Golden Arrow Bus Services and long-distance bus and taxi services.

Golden Arrow's service to Khayelitsha was suspended in September when buses became a major target of angry taxi driv-

ers who took part in blockades to protest against the seven cents a litre petrol price increase.

Bus drivers were shot and killed, passengers attacked and buses stoned.

"Different operators ... have found solutions to many problems which have previously bedevilled their relationships," said a statement issued by Codeta, Golden Arrow Bus Services and Long Distance Bus Operators.

The organisations would try to help each other and to work closely with the police to stamp out hooliganism and violence.

They appealed to people to report wrongdoers to the police.

They asked the police to maintain a strong presence at taxi ranks and bus termini and to take "determined action against all suspected offenders, including layabouts and vagrants".

Edited by Jeremy Woods

Sky's the limit for Airports Company

SITimes [C] Metro 13/3/94

By JEREMY WOODS

CAPE Town's D F Malan is set to become the fastest growing business unit in the Western Cape under the newly commercialised Airports Company. (332)

Mr Braam Loots, managing director of the Airports Company, said in Cape Town this week: "A year ago there were three international airlines flying into Cape Town and 12 000 visitors a month moving through the airport. Now there are nine international airlines flying into D F Malan and 28 000 people passing through the airport. That's real growth and it looks like escalating."

Mr Loots confirmed that he was talking to another "four or five airlines who would like to fly into Cape Town", while a complete review of facilities both for passengers and airlines was close to completion.

Mr Loots said people had no idea how the commercialisation of the airports would affect the individual facilities.

He said all the major airports had been set up as individual business units with their own management, who were able to implement the changes necessary to bring the airports up to date.

"Let's look at D F Malan. There is a management team there looking at problems like arrival queues, better facilities for passengers, more offices for airlines, better cargo facilities," said Mr Loots.

"I look at the development of D F Malan as a partnership between the businesses of the Western Cape, the local people who use the airport and the newly created Airports Company. It's an exciting challenge and it's happening now," he said.

Mr Loots said the growth potential of the Western Cape on the economic and tourism front was "enormous".

"That means D F Malan will have to grow fast to support the local area. The best way we can do that is to talk together, plan together. D F Malan will be the fastest growing business unit in the Western Cape and it now has management there keen to talk to local business about the shape of that expansion."

Mr Loots said that there would be no problem about funding necessary improvements to bring the airport up to international standards.

"We intend running the airports in this country on a commercial basis," he said.



FLYING HIGH . . . Braam Loots, managing director of the Airports Company.
Picture: AMBROSE PETERS

Bid to prevent another taxi war

(332) CT 17/3/94

Crime Reporter

NYANGA taxi drivers are to hold a meeting in the township today in a bid to prevent another taxi war in the wake of the latest flare-up of violence in the area.

A taxi driver and two passengers were wounded when four taxis were fired on in New Eislleben Road, Nyanga, on Tuesday night.

Taxi drivers at Bellville railway station taxi rank said they would meet with other drivers at Nyanga taxi rank to discuss the increase in attacks on taxi drivers.

Apparently the problem flared at the weekend when Codeta members tried to force non-Codeta members to join them.

A police spokesman said the SAP's internal stability division was "monitoring the situation in Nyanga".

Mr Tembakosi Solontyi was shot and wounded in the back when gunmen opened fire at a taxi in which he was travelling around 8.30pm, a police spokesman said.

An hour earlier, driver Mr Columbus Mzinkhulu was shot and wounded in the chest and passenger Mr Bulelani Cwama was wounded in the lower back when the taxi in which they were travelling came under fire.

In a third incident around 9pm, Mr Mohloekesi Laphalla, age unknown, was shot at.

He was not injured, although bullets pierced his taxi.

A police spokesman said a 9mm shell was recovered at the scene yesterday.

No arrests have yet been made.

Shot minibus driver 'critical'

Staff Reporter

A KHAYELITSHA minibus taxi driver was shot and seriously wounded by gunmen as he was driving home last night.

A police spokesman said Mr Mzukisi Ntabeni, 23, was driving his taxi down Lansdowne Road about 8.35pm when he came under fire.

He was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital, where his condition was described as "critical".

Thugs blamed for taxi violence

CT 18/3/94 Staff Reporter (332)

THE taxi organisation Codeta yesterday denied a taxi war was looming, blaming the latest wave of attacks on taxi drivers in the townships on "hooligan elements".

These people were intent on stirring up trouble in the run-up to the April elections, it said.

Spokesman Mr James Mafuya said yesterday: "We will not be discussing the problem with our members because there is nothing to discuss."

He conceded there were "minor internal problems" like any other organisation but said there was no trouble between rival taxi operators.

Yesterday about 60 Nyanga and Guguletu taxi owners discussed the possibility of merging two taxi ranks in Strand Street. Both ranks were used by Codeta drivers and there was no point in keeping them separate, a spokesman said.

He denied the recent spate of attacks on taxi drivers over the weekend resulted when Codeta members tried to force non-Codeta members to join them. Non-affiliated taxi drivers based in Langa, who have for years been plying the Mowbray route, claimed Codeta members were trying to take over the route.

Taxi peace meeting ³³² called off

Staff Reporter

CODETA officials failed to attend a meeting initiated by the Western Cape Peace Committee in Langa on Thursday night to avert the escalating conflict between taxi drivers in the townships.

Codeta secretary Mr Morris Nomala said the organisation had informed the Peace Committee on Thursday they would not attend because one of their drivers had been shot in the townships this week and they did not think the venue of the meeting in Block B, Langa, was safe.

Mr Wayne Ntshona of the Peace Committee confirmed this and said a follow-up meeting was planned for today.

The renewed taxi violence follows alleged attempts by Codeta members last weekend to force non-members to join the organisation.

However, Mr Nomala blamed the latest wave of attacks on taxis and buses in the townships on hooligan elements who, he said, were "trying to cause trouble in the run-up to the April election".

Taxis in drive for poll education

Star 19/3/84

THE age of taxi advertising — through Taxinet — has finally come of age with the news this week that taxis will form the core of a massive voter education campaign sponsored by the Business Education Fund.

Up to next month's election, more than 10 000 taxis will carry messages of peace and democracy. Taxinet subsidiary Star Music will distribute 19 000 music cassettes carrying peace and democracy messages.

This is a dedicated tape featuring a variety of music, such as gospel, which differs in style and content from the tapes we distribute bimonthly. The songs on this tape are aimed at promoting peace, democracy and harmony, says Taxinet director Brendan Taylor.

These messages will be reinforced

through promotions at the kiosks of another Taxinet subsidiary, Commuter Reach, placed at 20 of the biggest taxi ranks in South Africa. (332)

"We are hoping to reach the bulk of South African consumers through Taxinet's media. With the messages on the tapes, we want to link into the word-of-mouth chain in black communities," says Ogilvy & Mather Cape media director Yvonne Johnston.

"In the changing South African environment, media planners will have to look at media afresh. Taxinet really understand their market, its mechanics, the people, the cult heroes and the music — something which can't be said for advertising agency staff. They have been stunning to deal with — I have put them forward as Media Innovator of the Year," she says.

Taximen *Sowetan* act against violence

By Joshua Raboroko

SOWETO taxi drivers are to march on the Protea police station on March 26 to protest against the ongoing violence in the troubled industry in the townships. 21/3/94

The decision was taken at a meeting between the Soweto Taxi Services, civic associations, women's groups and student and church organisations at the weekend.

The meeting, which was facilitated by the Witwatersrand Vaal Regional Peace Secretariat, resolved to form a task committee because of the increasing violence in Soweto.

STS secretary Mr Decker Njutshana said yesterday that some of their members were shot and wounded and had their vehicles' windows broken on Saturday night in what is believed to be an escalation of taxi violence. (332)

He said the situation might become worse today when most taxi drivers take a day off to observe the Sharpeville Day commemoration.

A spokesman for the Taxi Task Committee, Mr Sipiwe Thusi, said they were concerned about the number of taxi robberies and hijackings allegedly perpetrated by rival groups.

Bus company cancels services over violence in Khayelitsha

EDWARD MOLOINYANE
Staff Reporter

SHOCKED at the new upsurge in violence involving taxis, the Golden Arrow bus company has thrown in the towel in Khayelitsha and services will be withdrawn immediately.

This bombshell came from company general manager Frans Mayoss at a meeting yesterday aimed at restoring bus services in the township, in the balance since violence began after the fuel-price increase last September.

The meeting, co-ordinated at the Site B hall by the regional Peace Committee, was attended by several of the organisations involved. These included the African National Congress and its allied organisations, the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), a representative from the Goldstone Commission, Transport and General Workers' Union representatives, observers from the European Community and a host of monitors and several residents.

Yesterday's meeting, the 36th since attacks on bus drivers began last September,

came after renewed violence between taxi operators. Several taxi drivers and passengers were shot and injured in Nyanga and Belville on Monday.

On learning of the latest upsurge in violence from a Codeta delegation — which was two hours late for the meeting — Mr Mayoss said his company would cease bus services in Khayelitsha immediately.

He said his group had looked forward to yesterday's meeting after it was decided at the last gathering of the parties on January 17 that the Khayelitsha community would have been informed and its co-operation sought in attempts to normalise the situation.

Among the problems the company faced was that, although the security forces had provided escorts for buses to enter the township from the N2 bridge, this was inadequate and most drivers still were scared to go into the township.

While the bus company received a government subsidy, Mr Mayoss said, this did not apply to the "minimal service" presently being rendered.

"We were hoping the bus service would go back to normal after today's meeting as our last one resolved to call Codeta drivers and the community at large to put their case," he said.

He added that he "began despairing" when the Codeta delegation told the meeting about the latest violence.

Earlier, the Codeta delegation said they had come from another meeting at the Cape Town civic centre where all Codeta members had gathered after the latest incidents.

The men painted a grim picture of the situation, saying there were elements within Codeta opposed to the return of the buses to the township.

They said a faction yesterday ordered taxi owners to accompany their drivers to the Nyanga terminus. The owners were told they had to contribute R100 each to finance what the delegation believed would be a "third force" to wreck the entire negotiation process.

The men told the meeting that the group, based in Old Crossroads, had kidnapped a driver last Friday.

Call for SADF bus escorts (332)

CT 23/1/94
Staff Reporter

THE SADF is to be asked to escort Golden Arrow buses into Khayelitsha to "normalise" commuter services in the township.

At a meeting in Khayelitsha yesterday of the Transport Crisis Forum — representing a variety of organisations — it was resolved that the SADF be asked to help.

Golden Arrow buses have been unable to enter the township for some months following violence involving mini-bus taxi operators.

Golden Arrow general manager Mr Frans Mayoss told the meeting yesterday that in the last 17 months six Golden Arrow drivers had been killed and many passengers injured in violence in the township.

However, he said Golden Arrow was prepared to resume services to Khayelitsha once the community there endorsed the service.

"We are ready to go in if my staff's safety is assured," he said.

The Western Cape Peace Committee is to ask the SADF for assistance.

Unrest erodes Putco profits

ROBYN CHALMERS

COMMUTER transport company Putco posted an 11% rise in revenue to R235,4m (R211m) for the six months ended December, but bottom line profits were reduced by unrest and stayaways.

MD Mike Oldham said increased unemployment, coupled with violence and unrest particularly in the eastern and southern Witwatersrand areas, had a detrimental effect on the number of passengers transported.

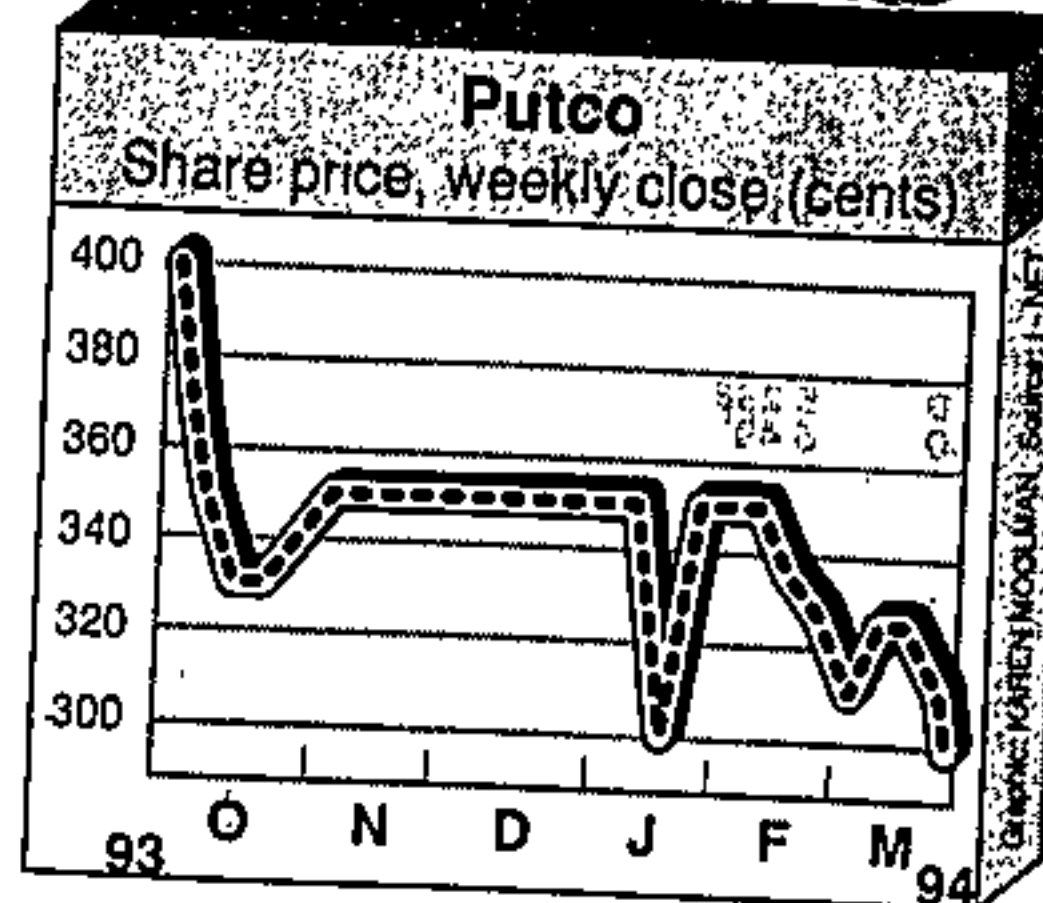
The spinoff was a 12,6% increase in operating costs to R223,5m from R198,4m during the previous interim period. Operating profit was reduced to R11,8m from R12,6m.

Pre-tax profit fell 11,7% to R14,1m (R15,9m) but the tax bill was reduced to R6,2m from R7,7m, leaving attributable profit 5% lower at R7,9m against R8,3m.

This translated into earnings of 29,8c (31,4c) a share and an interim dividend of 15c (14c) was declared.

Revenue for the year would be reduced by R4m as a result of the shortfall between proposed passenger subsidies and the final figures approved by the Transport Minister.

Overhaul expenses of R43m against R37,8m during 1993 would be included in the cost of operating and trading during the current year.



Oldham said the uncertainty in the run-up to the elections could affect Putco's results for the full year, but the interim level of profitability should be maintained if operating conditions were stable.

Putco Properties increased gross rental turnover 10% to R7,9m from R7,2m during the interim period.

Operating costs down to R195 000 (R290 000) and higher interest received of R163 000 from R138 000, together with a reduction in interest payments of R3,4m (R4m), left pre-tax net income 50% higher at R4,5m (R3m).

After-tax net income was higher at R2,5m (R1,6m) which translated into earnings of 9,6c (6c) a share. Directors declared an interim dividend of 5c (4c) a share.

QUICK HOLDINGS Quantum leap

Activities: Trade, world-wide bulk transport contracting, shipbroking services, container and bulk logistics, customs clearing, international forwarding and port services.

Control: Directors (directly and representative) 60%.

CEO: M S Irving.

Capital structure: 428m ords. Market capitalisation: R64,2m.

Share market: Price: 15c. Yields: 5,1% on earnings; p:e ratio, 19,5; 12-month high, 25c; low, 8c. Trading volume last quarter, 26,5m shares.

Year to Aug 31	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	3,5	1,6	2,6	2,8
LT debt (Rm)	1,7	0,8	0,7	0,9
Debt:equity ratio	0,93	0,87	1,03	0,08
Shareholders' interest	0,27	0,24	0,21	0,26
Int & leasing cover ..	—	1,13	1,35	4,23
Return on cap (%) ..	—	7,0	6,0	9,5
Turnover (Rm)	25,5	8,4	11,0	100,1
Pre-int profit (Rm) ...	(1,1)	0,8	0,9	3,1
Pre-int margin (%) ..	—	10,9	8,1	3,1
Earnings (c)	(1,9)	0,11	0,22	0,77
Tangible NAV (c)	5,3	2,4	2,7	2,0

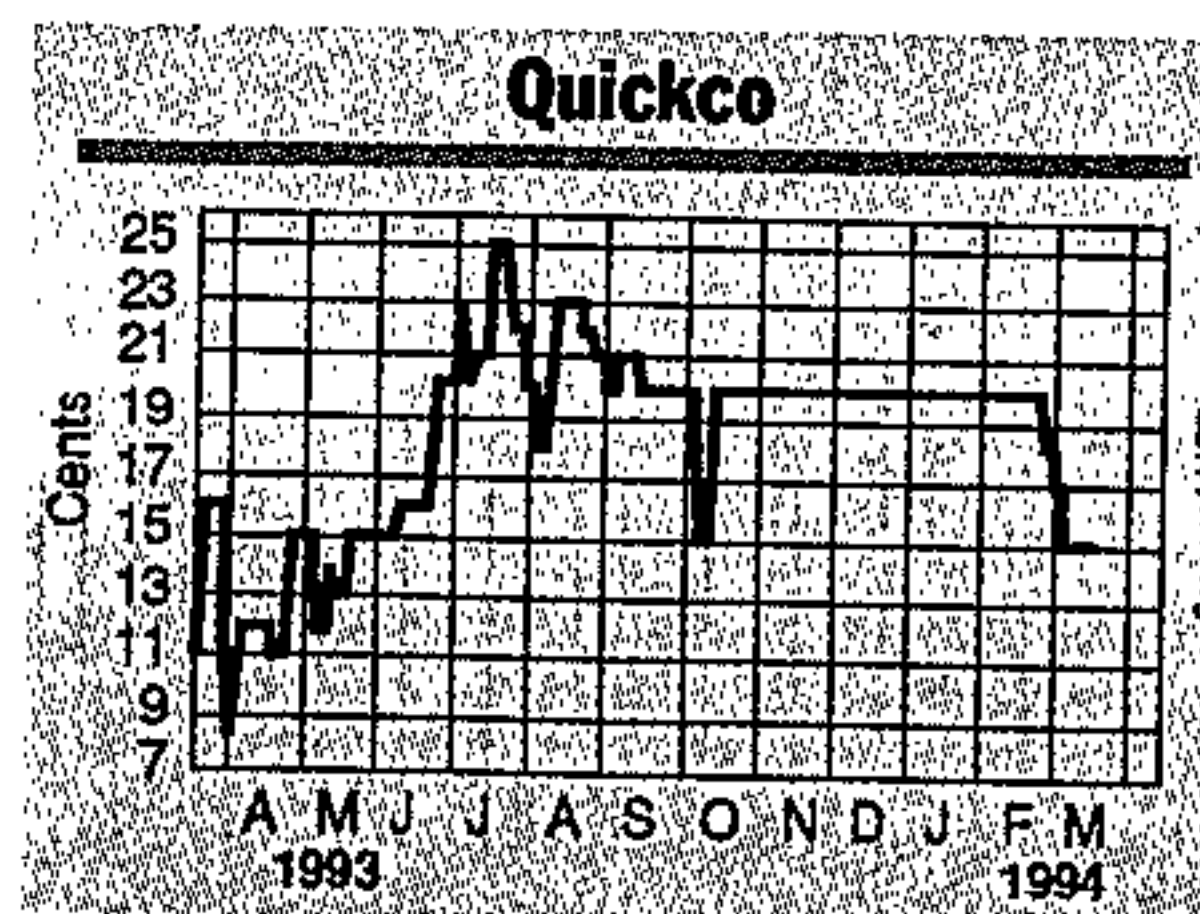
DCM-listed Quick Holdings, which started in Cape Town in 1907 as Quick Lowe & Moore, might finally have shrugged off its sleepy image. Four acquisitions were made during financial 1993 for a total cost — all paid by issue of shares — of R18,5m. Turnover increased tenfold to R100m.

The stronger balance sheet (gearing plummeted from 103% to 6%) and improved income statement stem largely from February's purchase of Intercontinent Carriers SA (ICC) — a Luxembourg-based international

transporter of bulk commodities. ICC contributed R2,5m (90%) of Quickco's profit last year. CE Max Irving says this is expected to be sustained by "ICC expanding its influence and transport philosophy into the CIS." A real rise in earnings is forecast for Quickco this year.

The deal delayed the publication of the year-end report and resulted in a warning from the JSE committee — the second in as many years. Irving explains: "The ICC acquisition, which took seven months to have ratified by the SA Reserve Bank and JSE, hinged on a full audit of each of ICC's operations in nine countries and certain performance guarantees given by ICC vendors." A huge task indeed.

Issued shares increased by 172m to 428m; six years ago there were only 20m in issue. Minorities' interest is diminishing but return on their investment is appreciating. However, while turnover jumped, the pre-interest margin fell to only 3,1%. The share price has almost doubled, from 8c to 14c, but the p:e is a high 18 and there is limited asset backing: at year-end tangible NAV — after deduction of R11,1m premium on acquisitions and R2,8m financial rand premium — was only 2c a share, well down on the 5,3c of 1990.



These results could enable a move to the main board, which might attract a wider investor following. It would be prudent to see how the acquisitions are absorbed before rushing in.

Kate Rushton

Trencor writes off W&A debts

MARCIA KLEIN

TRANSPORT group Trencor has written R106,9m off the value of its investment in the troubled W&A group, in which it has a 30% joint controlling stake.

The write-off follows W&A's recent announcement that it had lost R155,7m in the year to December. The value of Trencor's investment has been dropped to R76,9m.

It invested almost R300m in W&A to secure joint control.

In its interim results to December excluding W&A's performance announced last month, Trencor said earnings had risen marginally.

But results that include W&A published today show a 9% decline in earnings to 33,1c (36,3c) a share.

Trencor's share of W&A's losses totalled R7,7m, bringing income from associates down to a loss of R3,3m (income of R11,4m).

Turnover was marginally higher at R393,6m (R381,5m) and pre-tax income was 24% up at R83m (R66,8m).

Income after interest and tax was 20% higher at R53,9m (R45m). Attributable income was 9% lower at

R48,1m (R52,7m). The interim dividend was maintained at 9c a share.

Results for the year to June were unlikely to equal those of last year, the group said. (332)

Meanwhile, it appears that W&A is to sell its interest in motor group Varex, held through Vektra, as part of its strategy to bring down its gearing of 142,4%. (332)

W&A, Vektra and Varex cautioned shareholders yesterday that they were involved in negotiations. Analysts said the group could expect a small premium on the market capitalisation of close to R140m.

It was not clear who would buy the company, but analysts speculated it might be McCarthy.

On the JSE yesterday Trencor shares were reflected at their yearly low of R14, well off July's high of R19,50.

Varex gained 50c or 8,3% to close at a 650c high, while Vektra closed unchanged at 560c.

Natrawl sunk by low prices

MUNGO SOGGOT

NATAL Ocean Trawling (Natrawl) recorded a loss a share of 0,67c (earnings of 0,63c) for the year ending December 1993, after reporting poor demand and low prices for the prawns.

Turnover slipped to R14,5m from R15,9m, but operating income was lifted 19% to R1,9m (R1,6m).

Interest paid climbed to R1,8m from R1,4m in 1992. Net liabilities were R5,6m, compared with assets of R2,3m the previous year.

Chairman Jack Walsh said Natrawl was holding discussions with its bankers about the treatment of its current liability.

The company's long term debt consisted of bonds on its vessels which were due for repayment.

Net income before tax fell 67% to R85 000 from R257 000, and the company's lacklustre performance was reflected in its share price which fell from its March 1993 high of 30c to its current low of 12c a share.

No dividend was declared.

Walsh said the liquidator of Natal Ocean Trawling (Mozambique) had lodged a claim for R3m.

"No provision has been made in the results for this amount as the directors are of the opinion that the claim is unsubstantiated. The company's results were adversely affected by problems and costs relating to the liquidation of its associated company in Mozambique."

Walsh said that after a very difficult year prices and landings showed an encouraging improvement in the current year.

All the "outstanding matters" in these provisional unaudited results would be cleared up before the company published its financial statement on June 30.

CURNOW

Plenty of promises

Pen 11/4/94

Activities: Supplies materials for the repair, manufacture, protection and restoration of all modes of transport.

Control: Elzet Industrial 57%.

Chairman: P Brunnschweiler; MD: T Scarborough.

Capital structure: 31,6m ords. Market capitalisation: R12,6m.

Share market: Price: 40c. Yields: 5% on dividend; 9,25% on earnings; p/e ratio, 10,8; cover, 1,85. 12-month high, 40c; low, 17c.

Trading volume last quarter: 464 000.

Year to Dec 31	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (R000)	2 958	4 119	2 740	3 349
LT debt (Rm)	—	—	0,7	1,0
Debt:equity ratio	0,6	0,7	0,4	0,5
Shareholders' interest	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4
Int & leasing cover	2,6	2,0	2,4	1,7
Return on cap (%) ..	22,3	18,1	19,2	10,8
Turnover (Rm)	39,1	44,6	46,8	54,5
Pre-int profit (Rm) ..	3,1	2,8	2,7	2,3
Pre-int margin (%) ..	7,9	6,2	5,9	4,3
Earnings (c)	5,6	4,6	4,9	3,7
Dividends (c)	2,3	2,0	2,0	2,0
Tangible NAV (c)	23,4	25,6	27,6	29,6

Curnow is a company which appears to have been put together for everyone's benefit except that of minorities: former executives seem to have done particularly well out of it.

Meanwhile, turnover goes on rising and profits keep on falling. The pre-interest margin, for example, has gone downhill steadily: 7,9% in 1990, 4,3% last year. Logically, EPS have gone the same way and the dividend has been 2c a share for three years.

There are some interesting threads in this story. The first is that control has changed

hands: previously, Curnow was owned largely by AECI and W&A which held 71,4% of the equity. W&A, in serious trouble (see *Fox*), sold out in November to Elzet Industrial for R2,7m. Elzet then pumped in a company called Harveys Equipment, previously Curnow's principal competitor in the western Cape, in exchange for shares and it now holds 57% of an enlarged issued capital.

New chairman Peter Brunnschweiler immediately brought in a new MD and sales director. To quote Brunnschweiler, they "embarked upon aggressive and much-needed initiatives." I need hardly add that the comprehensive list supplied by Brunnschweiler covers every aspect of the business. "I am happy to report that the effects of these initiatives have already been felt."

Well, here is the second thread. Arising out of this, I am bound to ask why it was that in 1992 MD Mervyn Bloom was rewarded with a handsome R200 000 restraint-of-trade payment. Financial director Michael van Niekerk was also well looked after.

Neither of these men is now with Curnow. Yet at the time, Bloom defended his tax-free gift with the statement to the *FM*: "I've been in the business for 38 years and I'm a specialist." Really? I wonder, then, why it is that his services are no longer needed and why are the new managers rushing about with double-headed brooms?

While I am on this subject, I must also point out that the decisions to elevate Bloom and Van Niekerk's remunerations were taken by a board of directors chaired by a W&A

executive (Alan Schlesinger, also since resigned) and including two AECI appointees. Why is it that SA shareholders never attend AGMs to call their stewards to account on matters like these?

Curnow's performance over 1993 leaves much to be desired. Brunnschweiler says trading "was marked by fierce competition, particularly in certain segments of the PWV market wracked by a price war which benefited neither customer nor distributor."

The results are plain for all to see: profits down, margins slashed, debt growing. In the face of this, I am unable to explain why the counter is trading at a 12-month high unless it is a case of *Great Expectations*.

Curnow is the major distributor of AECI's Dulux products along with a host of others, all related to fixing and restoring bent motor vehicles.

It is obviously a tough market to be in. And it can't help much if your company is engaged in clearing up fall-out from the last managers.

Brunnschweiler says he's hopeful about growth and improved profitability; of course he is — he wouldn't have bought Curnow if he weren't, and MD Tim Scarborough tells me Harveys is well run and profitable, so that is a promising start.

I wish the new controlling shareholders well but in my book this company has issued promises enough. Investors should wait until there is clear evidence that the managers can adequately reward earlier shareholder commitment.

David Gleason

Seven million out of work

ET 4/4/94
MORE than seven million South Africans are out of work and the situation worsens every year, with each new batch of school-leavers, says Sanlam's general manager in the Cape Mr Johnnie Roelofse.

Speaking at a function in Langa, he said only 3% of the estimated 400 000 new jobseekers entering the market annually were expected to find jobs in the formal sector.

He said the informal sector was thriving, but needed training and capital. — Sapa

(335)

Bumpy ride for voters' transport

STimes 10/4/94

BY MICHEL MULLER

SOUTH Africa's volatile transport industry, plagued by rifts and violence, is gearing up for a bumpy ride to the election as the movement of voters to the polls is left to political parties.

"The transport industry will never be able to cope with the demand during the elections," the Committee of Concerned Roleplayers in the Transport Industry (CCRITI) said in a memorandum submitted to the Independent Electoral Commission.

The memorandum warns: "It is imperative that transport be seen as being for everybody and not for specific parties."

An estimated four million people are transported daily by rail, bus and taxi, but this figure is expected to treble to 12 million at the climax of the election on April 27 when 22 million people are expected to go to the polls.

The CCRITI, representing unions, bus companies, taxi owners and rail authorities, has been trying since Janu-

ary to organise election transport under the auspices of the IEC, while requesting that a subsidy system be funded by the Transitional Executive Council.

"The management committee dealt with it and decided to refer it to the IEC, but more importantly, to the national party liaison committee (NPLC)," said Dr Theuns Eloff, TEC spokesman in Johannesburg.

"Mancom felt the issue should be dealt with by the parties themselves."

The IEC, reliable sources said, had indicated that transport involved moving political party supporters and for this reason, it was a party political matter.

NPLC chairman Dr Esop Pahad could not be reached for comment on Friday, but Professor Jackie Walters of CCRITI said: "Time has run out. It is too big a task to undertake before the election."

Preparations to trans-

port the voters has been left to the last minute.

IEC spokesman in the Western Cape Mr Phillip Schroeder said: "We could be leaving it a bit late. Apparently the NPLC has come up with a suggestion, but we haven't heard anything yet."

He said the region was waiting for notification and guidelines before acting, but pointed out that political parties had not made any transport inquiries.

"This means transport will be hired by the political parties and identified by logos and slogans," said Prof Walters.

"In my opinion, this could pose a safety hazard. We didn't want this type of situation."

Prof Walters said South Africa had seen enough of taxi wars and ambushed buses and trains.

"There's enough tension in the country already. Party political transport could increase

tensions and lead to a disaster. Can you imagine an ANC bus riding through Natal?"

In a further development, the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), fearing for the lives of passengers and drivers, has called for a meeting with the TEC.

"The TEC must activate its sub-council on law and order to prioritise transport safety," he said.

"If they don't respond by tomorrow, we will approach Mr Nelson Mandela," TGWU general secretary Randall Howard said.

"The TEC, as the responsible transitional authority, must take steps to curb violence and intimidation in the passenger industry," he said.

The TGWU identified flashpoints as Khayelitsha in Cape Town, where six bus drivers have been killed and Golden Arrow buses have ceased operations since September last year, and the Baragwanath-Natal route.

"At the end of the day, no company is going to send a driver into a flashpoint area," said Prof Walters.

He estimated bus companies, which are subsidised by the state per ticket sold, could lose R20 m during election week with the anticipated closure of some businesses and factories.

● Spoornet spokesman Yvette Olwage said in Cape Town that no political parties had requested special election trains.

Golden Arrow spokesman Jeanne Welsh said the bus company had been approached by political parties.

(News by M Muller, 122 St Georges Mall, Cape Town)

Flitestar crisis meeting today

(332)

DT 11/4/94



JOHANNESBURG. — Flitestar management will hold an emergency meeting this morning to discuss the future of the airline, Sairen chairman Mr Buddy Hawton confirmed last night.

Mr Hawton said the meeting had been called to discuss "whether to continue or not", and management would probably issue a statement this afternoon on the future of Trek Airways, which operates Flitestar.

Flitestar first took to the runways in October 1991 with daily return flights between Johannesburg and Cape Town.

For the first time domestic passengers had the choice of competitive prices on routes in direct opposition to SA Airways, signalling the start of a ticket price war.

An SAA spokesman confirmed yesterday that the national carrier had taken over "a few" Flite-

Airline

may

close

star flights yesterday, but said this was because Flitestar aircraft were undergoing normal maintenance checks.

Sairen is a major shareholder in Trek Airways. The chairman of Flitestar Pilots' Association, Captain Terry Redman, said last night that pilots "were in the dark" about Flitestar's future.

He said rumours began about Flitestar closing when Durban flights for today and tomorrow were cancelled yesterday.

"Something is obviously cooking," he said, adding he was flying to Johannesburg today to try to find out what was happening.

"At this stage nothing is official — there are a lot of rumours," he said.

He had been inundated with queries from colleagues but attempts to contact senior managers had been unsuccessful, he said.

However, Fleet Captain Des Steinhobel had told him an announcement would be made today.

"Any announcement of this kind would be quite traumatic," Captain Redman said.

About 80 cockpit crew (20 from Luxavia and about 60 from Flitestar) would be affected.

"It's not easy to move sideways in this industry," said Captain Redman, who was with SAA for 13 years.

If he had to re-apply for a job with SAA he would have to start at the bottom, he said.

Flitestar rent their aircraft from Guinness Peat Aviation, an Irish-based company that is part of the General group. — Own Correspondent, Staff Reporter

Flitestar and Luxavia crash

ET 12/4/94 (332)

SOUTH AFRICA's largest independent domestic carrier, Flitestar, and its sister airline, Luxavia, permanently ceased operations last night because of heavy financial losses.

The announcement yesterday afternoon followed the exclusive story in the Cape Times yesterday that the airline was in trouble, and would hold a crisis meeting yesterday.

The airline said all Flitestar and Luxavia tickets could be used on SA Airways flights, and no refunds would be made. Travellers would have to rebook their flights with SAA.

Travellers booked to Luxembourg, a destination SAA does not serve, will be rerouted.

A last-minute appeal to the government to restore "limited regulation" to the domestic airline market, which would have had the effect of limiting competition in an attempt to save loss-making Flitestar, was turned down.

Flitestar was launched in competition to South African Airways in October, 1991.

The decision to close means about 1 000 jobs will be lost — some with immediate effect and some at the end of May. A spokeswoman said severance packages would be negotiated.

SAA still has a competitor on the routes between Cape Town and Johannesburg and Durban and Johannesburg. Comair flies both routes, providing a "no-frills" service at 30% less than SAA ticket prices.

But Comair does not yet fly between Cape Town and Durban.

A newcomer, South African Express, which is owned by a black consortium and Canadian interests, will introduce a service between Cape Town, Kimberley, Upington and Johannesburg on April 24.

This service, in smaller planes, will concentrate on carrying passengers between smaller towns, leaving faster traffic between major cities to SAA and Comair.

SAA said yesterday it would operate additional flights and use larger aircraft in peak times "to assist in coping with additional demand".

● Flitestar's last flight from D F Malan Airport was a sombre occasion as the cockpit crew of Flight GM 856 exchanged handshakes with their ground crew colleagues before the aircraft taxied for the trip to George and Port Elizabeth. — Business Editor, Own Correspondents, Staff Reporter

● See Page 10

Flitestar's demise opens up new SAA routes (332)

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

FLITESTAR'S decision to stop trading makes new international destinations available to South African Airways (SAA), as well as reducing competition in the domestic market.

Flitestar had the traffic rights to fly to Bombay — known to be regarded by SAA as a route with potential for growth — and to Buenos Aires, which SAA served in the pre-sanctions era.

At present the route from Cape Town to Buenos Aires is served only by Malaysia Airways, which has just introduced two flights a week.

Mike Myburgh, CE of SAA, said last night that he regretted the decision by holding company Trek Airways (Pty) to stop operations by Flitestar and Luxavia.

"We have always supported the deregulation of the airline industry and still maintain that this policy is in the best interests of the travelling public and the airline industry."

Myburgh said SAA intended to accommodate Flitestar and Luxavia passengers on suitable alternative flights and would "endeavour to minimise inconvenience to such passengers."

"All Flitestar and Luxavia tickets already issued will be honoured by SAA up until July 31, 1994."

"For travel after this date SAA tickets will be issued in exchange for Flitestar and Trek/Luxavia tickets and this should also be completed before July 31, 1994."

Myburgh asked passengers with Flitestar or Luxavia tickets to contact their travel agents or SAA to have their reservations changed. Those with inquiries about refunds or lost tickets should contact Trek Airways direct.

A helpline — 25 4610 — is available in Cape Town during office hours to deal with customer queries.

Flitestar airline grounded

BY JOHN MILLER

Flitestar, the first major independent airline that dared to challenge South African Airways' 60-year monopoly, has been permanently grounded with almost 1 000 staff out of work.

The closure also means that Luxavia will cease to operate.

For nearly 40 years Luxavia has operated a scheduled service between Johannesburg and Luxembourg (332).

During the height of sanctions, it was the only domestic airline able to overfly Africa en route to Europe.

While the board of Flitestar and holding company Trek Airways were busy closing down the airline yesterday, two of the airline's four A320s

► To Page 3

Flitestar airline closes

From Page 1

were already in the hangars at Jan Smuts being prepared for their trip back to France in two days time.

The remaining two A320s are expected to return to France, to the Airbus factory from which they were leased, by April 30.

The airline's two ATR72s and the routes they flew will continue to be operated by Flitestar until a new buyer/operator is found — which is expected to take a few days.

SAA will guarantee to transport all Flitestar's passengers as well as honouring any outstanding tickets.

Vice-executive chairman Derek Lawrence told The Star late yesterday afternoon that re-trenchment packages had yet to be worked out.

However, SAA would be interviewing some of the staff during the next few weeks.

Lawrence said Trek Airways, which ran Flitestar and Luxavia, had tried in vain to obtain funding or relief from the

Government, but these attempts had failed repeatedly.

In a statement released yesterday, Lawrence said: "Despite achieving a high standard of operation the company has continued to make substantial losses. The directors of Trek, after taking into consideration the probable sub-economic returns on the substantial additional capital now needed, have therefore decided to cease operations with immediate effect."

Challenge

Flitestar took to the skies on October 16 1991.

At the time many South Africans welcomed the challenge it would bring to SAA and its monopoly and stranglehold.

This was the first time that flying passengers were able to have a choice. Many also believed the competition would force SAA into improving its service — which it did.

Within weeks of its inaugural flight, Flitestar began scheduled services

between Johannesburg and Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth as well as several postal excursions.

Competition was short-lived. Within months SAA slashed its domestic fares. Industry sources believed this was SAA's response to competition and their attempt to get rid of it. (332)

Flitestar managing director Jan Blake regularly criticised SAA and the Government protection it received. He also accused them of misusing tax payers money to prop up an unprofitable service.

Joint-managing director of Airlink, Roger Foster, said yesterday there were a number of questions needing answers, saying it appeared odd the airline had not gone into liquidation.

Comair managing director Piet van Hoven said it was a sad day for South African aviation.

Blake said there had not been any offers yet to take the cockpit or cabin crews, but he would meet with his entire staff in the next few days.

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

COMAIR has joined South African Airways (SAA) in offering seats to passengers with valid Flitestar tickets and says it will increase capacity between Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Both SAA and Comair say they may offer jobs to some Flitestar employees.

Comair MD Pieter van Hoven said his airline, which flies between Cape Town and Johannesburg, and Durban and Johannesburg, would increase the number of services as soon as training programmes had been completed.

He said Comair would schedule additional Boeing 737 jet flights to alleviate the shortage of capacity.

Comair will undertake the expansion of its current 30 return jet services per week on the Johannesburg — Cape Town route to at least 40 jet ser-

Comair, SAA step into

vices per week as soon as the required staff training programmes have been completed, to ensure the highest possible standards. Flitestar staff will be considered in this process.

Comair has taken delivery of its third Boeing 737-200, bringing its jet fleet to four aircraft. It will expand this fleet further to satisfy public demand for seats on the Cape Town and Durban routes.

SAA public relations staff said it expected to carry 300 000 extra passengers a year.

Although exact figures were not available it was estimated that Flitestar carried 400 000 passengers a year. SAA expected to take over 75% of this market.

while the rest would be carried by Comair and SA Express, which is due to start services from Cape Town on April 24.

SAA would not earn revenue from Flitestar passengers who have already bought their tickets. But in a full year it expected to make a net gain of between R80m and R100m.

"Where necessary and where possible SAA has rescheduled additional flights and larger aircraft types to cope with the additional demand."

There would be eight additional return flights between Cape Town and Durban between Friday, April 15 and Saturday April 23 and a larger Airbus

CT 13/4/94
Flitestar breach

through a bank in Texas, subject to certain conditions including that there should be no civil war in SA.

Buddy Hawton, chairman of Safren, which holds 37.5% of Flitestar, said the communication from Robertson did not mention a purchase price and he was not taking it seriously.

"His proposal does not have a great deal of appeal. It is not something we feel we would like to progress with."

"We have gone public that we are going to close Flitestar and there are no material assets to dispose of."

Flitestar deputy chairman Derek Lawrance said Robertson's communication had "cruelly raised the hopes" of Flitestar staff. It could not be described as a serious bid.

A300 would be used instead of a Boeing 737. These arrangements would mean an additional 4 250 seats would be available.

Cape Town-based businessman Neil Robertson, who last year announced plans to start a new domestic airline, Lionair, informed the media yesterday that he had made a bid for Flitestar. His statement said he had told Flitestar staff that "if the takeover bid was successful most of those employed by Lionair would be former Flitestar staff."

Robertson said yesterday that he had not yet been granted an airline licence. He claimed he had been promised financial backing by investors in Ireland,

Flitestar faced too many foes

Weekend Argus Correspondent

NO one factor pushed Trek Holdings to shut down its aviation operations — Luxavia and Flitestar. It was a combination of reasons, including the worsening rand-dollar exchange rate, SAA's alleged restrictive business practices and the depressed travel market.

Rentmeester Beleggings managing director Joggie Vermooten this week spoke out about the demise of three-year-old Flitestar, upstart challenger to SAA's monopoly on domestic routes, and on the end of 40-year-old Luxavia. Negotiations are under way for the sale of its other domestic operations, Air Cape, possibly to Air-Link.

Things had come to a point in the past month or two, Mr Vermooten said, where shareholders — of which Rentmeester Beleggings was the biggest at 47,3 percent — had either to sacrifice their R110 million investment to date or invest even more to try to put the operations on a profitable footing.

"Looking ahead, we had to consider the risks, and they were significant. The exchange rate could deteriorate even further after the elections — and there's a limit to which one can increase prices."

SAA's alleged restrictive business practices are the subject of a Competitions Board investigation. Flitestar alleged that SAA operated with government assistance and was thus able to create uneconomic trading conditions for its competition. Among the allegations are:

- It increased its total number of business class seats

- A controlling shareholder sheds some light on why Flitestar and its sister company, Luxavia, folded as SAA's role in the fledgling domestic carrier's downfall is being increasingly questioned. (332)

MANDY JEAN WOODS

against Flitestar's positioning as a "businessman's airline".

- It withheld statistics on the domestic market, available only to it through its check-in system used by all domestic airlines.

- It increased its commissions to travel agents.

- It signed up corporate clients to use its services exclusively.

- It significantly increased its advertising so as to drown out the advertising and marketing efforts made by Flitestar.

- It refused to accept Flitestar tickets without an endorsement.

- It overcharged for ground handling services.

- It allegedly rigged its computer-linked booking system to disadvantage Flitestar.

- It extended its frequent flier programme to its domestic services after Flitestar entered the market.

Negotiations to wind down the two airlines began in earnest three weeks ago after a demand from the aircraft leasing company Guinness Peat Aviation for the immediate cash settlement of outstanding monies owed it.

"The final agreement was only reached on Monday and, for obvious reasons, we could not disclose anything until we had an agreement," he said.

In terms of the agreement, Flitestar and Luxavia executives and shareholders have a

five-year restraint of trade clause and were paid a sum — reported to be R90 million, but denied by all parties — for the forward sale of tickets.

SAA financial director John Hare says the airline expects to make between R150 million and R160 million a year from the deal it did with Flitestar.

The immediate impact of this, commented one industry observer, is that the domestic market is nicely carved up: SAA will get the business traffic and Comair will get the backpackers.

And where SAA can't justify operating a route, it will simply hand it over to SA Express. In fact, the chances that SA Express will succeed in its venture just went up by 100 percent.

The issue of a monopoly has again raised its head: SAA not only owns 20 percent of SA Express, but SA Express also has full use of SAA's services, from its facilities at airports to advertising and marketing to computer hardware and software, use of its purchasing and bulk buying services (including fuel), use of office and hangar space, reservations and ticketing services and all passenger and ground-handling facilities for a nominal fee.

Competitions Board chairman Pierre Brooks said it seemed possible that a monopolistic situation could exist given the economic ties and shareholding between SAA and SA Express.

ARG 16/4/94

ADVERTISEMENT

5% offer to steelmen

THE Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (Seifsa) offered trade unions a 5 percent wage increase at annual negotiations in Johannesburg on Thursday.

Representatives of the 12 trade unions in the metal and engineering industries are seeking increases of between 15 and 23 percent.

The unions will respond to Seifsa's offer on May 2. ~~(18%)~~ ~~(14-15%)~~

Seifsa's 5 percent offer excludes employers in Natal and Border
(23%)

P 'n P defends stand

COSATU national spokesman Neil Coleman says the sponsoring of social responsibility projects by companies should not be used as a reason for not addressing worker's demands. *ARG 16/4/94*

Mr Coleman was responding to a demand by the shop stewards council at Pick 'n Pay that the company stop sponsoring such projects and raise their wages instead.

Pick'n Pay managing director Gareth Ackerman said Pick 'n Pay spent 75 percent of its profits on its workers and 5 percent on social projects. *335*

A WAVE of strike actions and work stoppages affecting thousands of

4
NEWS Drivers forced at gunpoint ●

Call for TEC to address taxi wars

Sowetan 18/4/94

■ MANY FLASHPOINTS Strife is
impinging on free and fair elections:

TAXI DRIVERS, SAYING THEY feared the bloody taxi wars would impinge on free and fair elections, yesterday urged the Transitional Executive Council to step in and ensure transport was equally accessible to all voters.

The call came at the end of a two-day national conference of the South African Taxi Drivers' Union, which also said it would urge the government of national unity to regulate and subsidise the industry.

"There are many flashpoints in our country today where commuters are being intimidated into using taxis as opposed to buses.

"Many drivers are being forced to turn around from their destinations at the barrel of the gun.

"This situation which presently obtains will definitely have a negative impact on free and fair elections in our country and must be addressed by the Transitional Executive Council," the union said.

It called for the deployment of police, army, and National Peacekeeping Force members at "all flashpoints of conflict between taxi and bus operators" to protect

commuters.

"The TEC and its relevant sub-councils must ensure that this situation is effectively policed and monitored to ensure transport is equally accessible to all commuters and voters." (332)

On regulation of the industry, which has burgeoned in the past few years, the union said it would ensure the new government "regulates the industry as a priority once in power".

The union would then press the new government to subsidise the taxi industry as was the case with buses.

In other resolutions, the conference decided to launch a national campaign for the extension of the Labour Relations Act to taxi drivers.

It is also calling for the registration of drivers with the Department of Manpower, contributions by employers to social welfare benefits and the establishment of a minimum wage in the taxi industry.

Taxi drivers would also launch a campaign to highlight the right of taxi drivers to join trade unions and for the recognition of the South African Taxi Drivers' Union. — Sapa.

Taxi union calls to TEC

JOHANNESBURG. — Taxi drivers, saying they feared the taxi wars would impinge on free and fair elections, yesterday urged the Transitional Executive Council to step in and ensure transport was equally accessible to all voters.

The call came at the end of a two-day national conference of the South African Taxi Drivers' Union, which also said it would urge the government of national unity to regulate and subsidise the industry.

The union said: "This situation in which both commuters and drivers are being intimidated, will definitely have a negative impact on free and fair elections in our country and must be addressed by the TEC."

(332)
It called for the deployment of police, army troops and National Peace-Keeping Force members at "all flashpoints of conflict between taxi and bus operators" to protect commuters. — Sapa CT 18/4/94

5% offer to steelmen

THE Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (Seifsa) offered trade unions a 5 per cent wage increase at annual negotiations in Johannesburg on Thursday.

Representatives of the 12 trade unions in the metal and engineering industries are seeking increases of between 15 and 23 per cent.

The unions will respond to Seifsa's offer on May 2. (189) (1754)

Seifsa's 5 per cent offer excludes employers in Natal and Border (235)

Black airline Sax takes to skies

The Argus Correspondent (332)

KIMBERLEY. — South African Express Airlines (Sax), the first black-owned airline in South Africa, took to the skies yesterday for its first flight to the Diamond City. ARG 21/4/94

Sax will officially replace the domestic functions of South African Airways on Sunday on the Johannesburg-Kimberley-Uppington-Cape Town route

and on the Bloemfontein-Durban route.

The new airline is expected to give these towns and cities more frequent flights. This will be to the convenience of passengers, 70 percent of whom are expected to be businessmen.

Fares will be the same as SAA economy class with a meal and beverage geared to demand and the time of day.

► Refuse removal contracts to be probed

High hopes as taximen sign truce

■ JOIN FORCES Soweto cabbies meet
in a bid to end six months of conflict:

By Joshua Raboroko

TWO FEUDING SOWETO taxi associations yesterday agreed to a truce and to merge, putting to an end a conflict that claimed more than 40 lives in the past six months. (332) 21/4/94

Soweto Taxi Services and the Soweto Taxi Association agreed at a meeting at Protea Police Station to join forces.

They will call another meeting where a decision will be taken on whether to adopt one of the two names or have a new one.

There were, however, areas of concern which the associations still have to put right before a final agreement is reached, "hopefully before the end of the month".

STS general secretary Mr Decker Njutshana confirmed the two associations had agreed to merge. He said they, however, still had to look at issues such as stickers and to appoint monitors to "keep a vigilant eye on all routes".

Separate meetings for drivers to explain the truce will soon be called.

STA spokesman Mr Samuel Msimanga appealed to groups outside the taxi business to stop interfering in the industry, saying "we want to run our affairs on our own".

The parties said they would take strong action against those who violated the terms of agreement. The taxi warfare in Soweto has been a matter of concern for the associations, commuters and police.

■ THE fact that taxi drivers do not earn a minimum wage and are not registered with the Manpower Department has contributed to continuing violence in the taxi industry, according to the SA Taxi Drivers Union (Satdu). (332) ARG 23/4/94

Satdu plan to launch a nation-wide campaign to have all taxi drivers registered with the department.

The union said that, at the moment, drivers were paid per trip and this substantially contributed to taxi violence. Drivers fought over passengers or they intimidated them against using other transport.

The campaign would include discussions with the government and employers.

COMPANIES

Dead-end ahead for minibus taxis

5 Times (Buss)

By DON ROBERTSON

THE proposed development programme for the motor industry, Phase VII as it will be called, could herald the end of minibus taxis.

The Motor Industry Task Group (MITG) has made several recommendations for rationalising the motor industry. One is to force manufacturers to drop the production of low-volume models.

Unless a minimum of 4 000 units of a particular model are made each year, manufacturers would forfeit duty-free allowances. The programme is intended to come into effect in July next year. Required volumes would increase each year until 2003 when the minimum would be 11 000 units.

Neither Nissan nor Toyota, the main suppliers of minibuses to the taxi business, would meet the minimum levels this year, nor do they intend to increase production next year.

It is estimated that South Africa has at least 150 000

minibus taxis. Seven or eight years ago, the taxi business was growing and minibus manufacturers competed vigorously for customers.

But demand for minibuses has dwindled in the face of rising unemployment, higher vehicle costs and deposits in instalment deals. Insurance premiums have also jumped.

In 1991, Nissan made 3 600 E20 minibuses, most of which were 16-seaters for the taxi business.

Production of the E20 will stop later this year because completely knocked down (CKD) kits will no longer be available from Japan. This year's production will total about 1 000.

In the boom year of 1988, Toyota made 9 500 Hi-Ace models, more than half of which were 16-seaters. This year's planned production is about 2 800. 244494

Delta, Samcor and Volkswagen were also in the taxi business. Delta stopped pro-

ducing the minibus last month. Samcor introduced a range of the Mazda Madison and the Ford Spectrum in 1992 for taxis and sold 1 100 units that year. Last year it sold 791. 1282

Volkswagen, which holds most of the leisure market for minibuses, produced 7 360 Kombis in 1990, of which 900 were 15-seaters. It stopped production of 15-seaters in 1992. It plans to build 5 000 this year and would be the only manufacturer to qualify in terms of the new regulations. 332

If SA production of minibuses ceases, the vehicles would have to be imported.

The MITG suggests that manufacturers running out a model be allowed to import the equivalent vehicle at a 50% duty. This compares with current duties of 115%. Imports would be restricted to 75% of previous sales volumes.

This concession would have little effect and would increase the cost of vehicles currently priced between R75 000 and R95 000.

Both John Jessup, mar-

keting director of Nissan Marketing, and Brand Pretorius, managing director of Toyota Marketing, say there is no certainty about minibus supplies next year.

Motor manufacturers and others involved in the industry have until May 15 to comment on the MITG proposals. One issue will be minimum volumes.

It is possible that the new government will offer a dispensation for the taxi business for socio-political reasons. It is also possible that one manufacturer could become the sole supplier of minibus taxis to meet the minimum volume requirements.

Reggie Mutsi, secretary for the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta), says taxis carry 2,1-million people a day compared with 750 000 by bus. They travel 440-billion kilometres a year, use 3,5-million litres of oil, 800-million litres of petrol, spend R800-million on spares and provide jobs for thousands.

He believes the taxi business deserves special consideration.

Peace for taxis ahead

25/4/94
By Khathu Mamaila

TWO Lebowa taxi associations whose rivalry has resulted in more than 300 deaths, buried the hatchet at a peace rally in Mahwelereng Stadium near Potgietersrus at the weekend.

Letlhabile Taxi Association and Federated Long and Local Distance Association (Feldta) signed a historic ceasefire agreement which marked the end of more than five years of bitter fighting.

Both parties have committed themselves to helping each other.

Asked if the agreement would lead to lasting peace, LTA secretary general Mr Billy Zitho said he was confident about the prospects of peace since the two associations were clearly tired of the "armed struggle".

"The fact that we were able to hold a peace rally shows that both of us are committed to peace. People are tired of being insecure. They want to be free to do their business," he said.

Feldta general secretary Mr Nhlahla Mahlangu concurred with his LTA counterpart.

"We believe that there will be peace among us. The peace gathering eradicated all fears and trust between us has been built", Mahlangu said.

The conflict between the LTA and Feldta dates back to the late 80's when Big Six which later became known as Feldta was formed. Following a row over routes between Lebowa and Johannesburg hundreds of people mainly taxi drivers and owners were killed in incidents of violence carried out by hired hitmen.

Parties lay on Codeta taxis

By Quentin Wilson

THE ENTIRE Codeta fleet of 2 000 taxis in the Cape will be made available to political parties wanting to transport their supporters to the polls tomorrow and on Thursday, following an a deal with the parties.

The taxi service is also available to the elderly and the sick today — the special voting day for them.

Schedules will not be greatly affected today. But taxis will not cover the regular routes on the next two days, said Mr Japani Roro, co-ordinator of the taxi association's rank and route committee.

"The taxis are to be deployed at the convenience of the political parties," Roro said. "This is a service we are providing to all residents who have supported us over

the years. We have pledged to make ourselves available to anyone who needs transport to the polls - regardless of their political affiliation."

At a meeting between Codeta and various political parties on Friday, including the ANC, NP and PAC, it was agreed that parties would pay R120 per taxi per day.

While the PAC and the ANC are relying heavily on taxis, the NP and the DP are largely counting on their own resources to transport their supporters to the polls.

"There are many polling booths and people will not have to travel far to find one," said Mr Ian Neilson, the DP's regional transport co-ordinator.

"Our approach is that if people need help, then they can phone the office."

Q Wilson, 76 Darling Street, Cape Town.

South

2714-315194

(332)

Emergency brings little relief to Natal



HOPEFUL... SADF troops in Eshowe were in a peaceful mood. Picture: RICHARD SHOREY

ALMOST nothing has changed in tormented KwaZulu Natal since a state of emergency was imposed nearly two weeks ago. *Stillness 10/4/94*

The killings, burnings and intimidation continue, and as the election date nears, fear of widespread distribution is growing. Worried monitors and researchers in the province feel the SADF is taking too long to deploy its troops and the police are not using their new-found powers. But the security forces said it was too early to say whether the emergency powers would succeed, as the effect had not been felt on the ground.

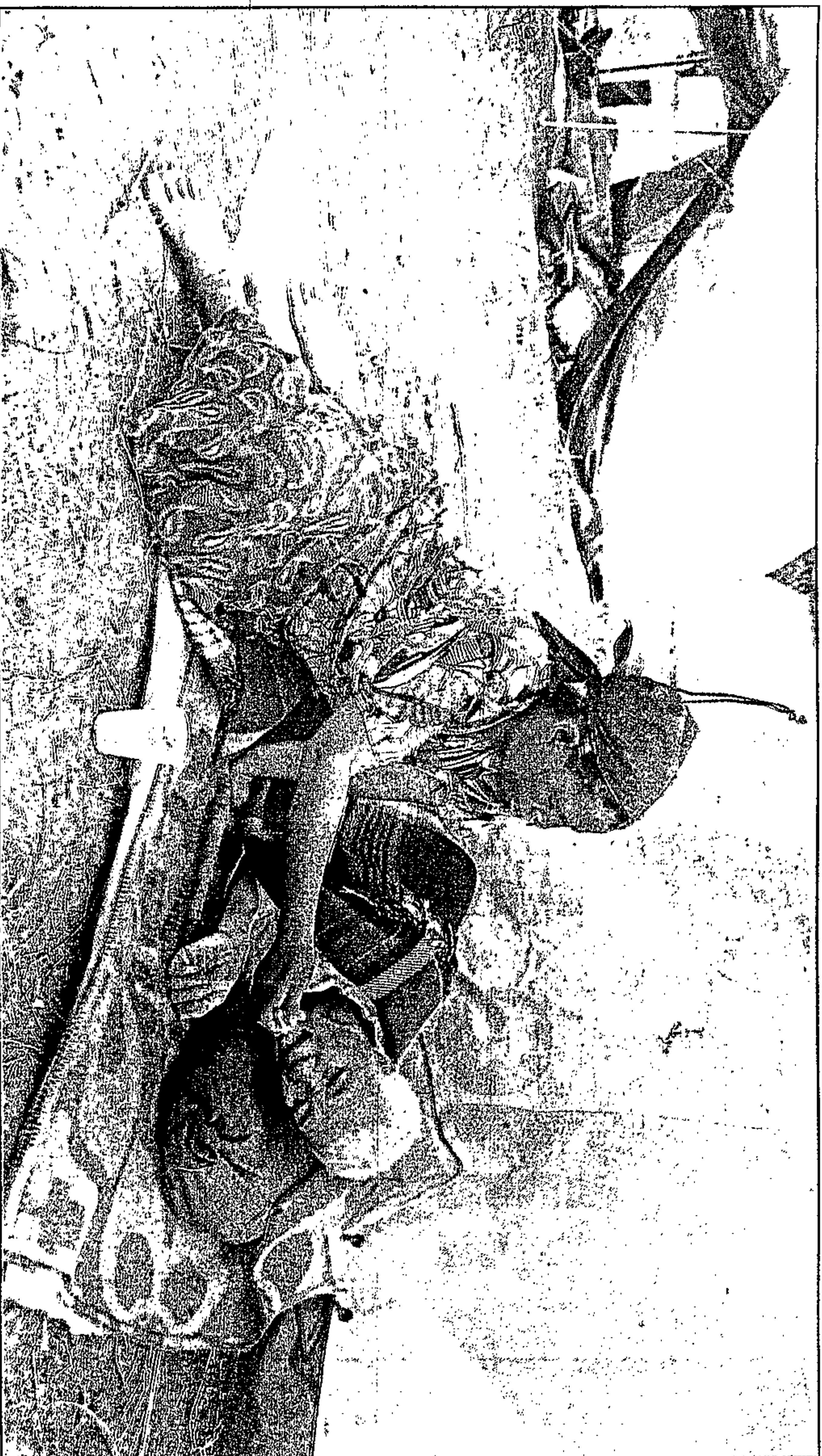
Nearly 700 reservists, mainly from Natal, were employed in the province this week, bringing the total of troops now operating in the region to 3 000. From April 15 to May 15, 18 commando units in Natal will each provide a further platoon for deployment. "I don't think people feel

By RYAN CRESSWELL

director for the DP in the Natal Midlands, said he did not think the emergency had "produced the required results" so far. "A major question is

any safer. Intimidation is still rife and people on the ground are looking ahead at the election with trepidation," he said.

"A major question is



HOMELESS... this 84-year-old woman, being fed some cereal at a refugee camp, was forced to flee her home this week after it was torched because she was thought to be an ANC supporter. Picture: JIHAN KUUS

whether the security forces will be able to stop individuals and small groups from going from house to house and telling people what to do. "I don't think so. The army can't be in every nook and cranny."

Human Rights Commission researcher Linda McLean said it appeared the state of emergency had "still not got off the ground".

Mother's night of terror

IS (NAT) ENJOYING A NIGHT OF TERROR

Laser plans big acquisition

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Laser Transport planned to buy the R200m-a-year long distance road freight company Mainline Carriers and its related property interests, in a move that would more than double its turnover, the company said yesterday.

Laser Transport refused to disclose the price paid because of listing regulations, but the company said the purchase was made at a substantial discount. Finance director Eric Pucini said a detailed announcement was imminent. (332) (232)

Mainline Transport, with its fleet of about 800 vehicles, transports refrigerated goods throughout SA, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Laser said the acquisition would introduce stability to the cyclical nature of its household removal business, which includes Stuttafords,

Pickfords, Frasers International, Rent-a-Rig and Frasers Machine Moving and Rigging. Bidey

Laser said the acquisition was likely to boost turnover to R250m a year.

Pucini said Laser was likely to post strong results for the six months to March when it reported later this month. Laser's international furniture business had increased 300% since January 1993 — albeit from a low base — because of the number of South Africans leaving the country.

Laser's earnings rose to 38,9c a share in the year to last September, compared with a loss of 28,3c a share in 1992, on the back of a relatively small increase in turnover to R119,3m (R116,2m). 45194

LASER *Fm 6/5/94* Rising profitability

Activities: Transportation and storage of household and commercial goods, machine moving and rigging.

Control: Directors 67,4%.

Chairman: P Thomas; MD: A C Cotterell.

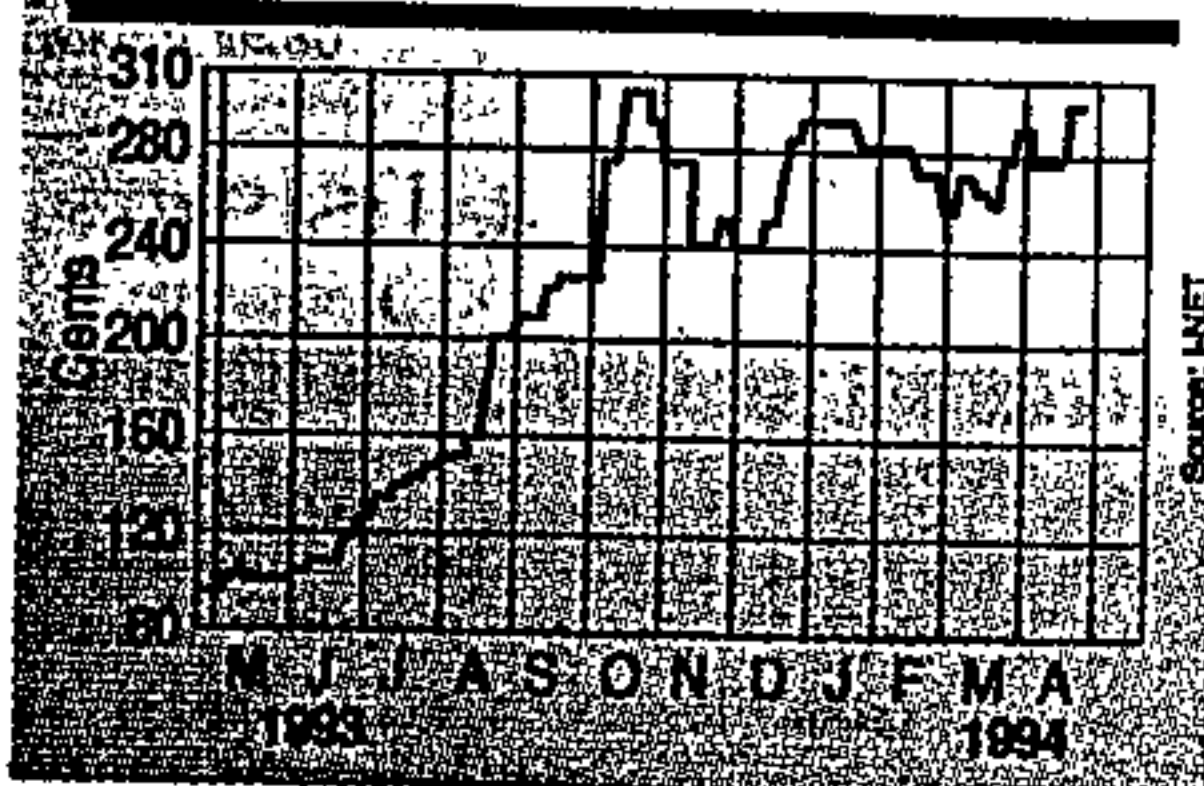
Capital structure: 10m ords. Market capitalisation: R27,5m.

Share market: Price: 275c. Yields: 14,8% on earnings; p:e ratio, 7,0; cover, n/a. 12-month high, 300c; low, 80c. Trading volume last quarter, 123 000 shares.

Year to Sep 30	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	0,8	2,9	10,2	6,5
LT debt (Rm)	13,5	19,4	9,5	15,4
Debt:equity ratio	0,59	0,82	0,99	0,86
Shareholders' interest	0,39	0,35	0,31	0,31
Int & leasing cover	3,4	2,6	nil	2,2
Return on cap (%)	15,2	10,4	1,2	8,9
Turnover (Rm)	106,5	87,3	116,2	119,3
Pre-int profit (Rm)	9,3	6,0	0,7	6,7
Pre-int margin (%)	8,7	6,9	0,01	5,6
Earnings (c)	33,9	25,1	(28)	39
Dividends (c)	13	6,7	—	—
Tangible NAV (c)	237	267	192	234

(332)
The balance sheet structure has not changed much over the year but the rising returns on shareholders' funds and capital employed highlight a significant turnaround in Laser's

Laser Transport



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COMPANIES

Fm 6/5/94
fortunes.

Turnover increased only marginally. The steady rise in demand for international removal services propped up a disappointing performance on the household removal side. With the local recession continuing, growth in the number of consumer household relocations, synonymous with better times, has not materialised. But Lasertrans, the commercial transport division, showed good growth. It operated at full capacity and contributed significantly to group sales.

There had been much rationalisation before MD Tony Cotterell acquired control of Laser in November 1992. He has returned the focus of activities to the core business by disposing of nontransport-related activities, retrenching and eliminating debt. At mid-year, short-term debt had declined to R2m, from the year-ago R12m, but it is now back to R6,5m. *(332)*

This was because of a replacement programme to update the vehicle delivery fleet, which absorbed R8m for additional truck tractors and trailers. The expanded sales office network has been linked to head office through a comprehensive computer network, providing more efficient national coverage.

Recovery is emphasised by the turnaround in operating income, which reached R6,7m (R767 000). Pre-tax income was boosted by lower interest costs after the reduction in aggregate debt over the year, while earnings were also helped by a tax credit following the settlement with the Receiver of Revenue of a film scheme dispute. Another R1,5m from this settlement should be credited to the tax account in financial 1994.

Since year-end, the group has bought from an institution, with which it had a lease-back agreement, properties for R25,4m from which it trades and will continue to trade. These purchases, it is reasoned, won't affect cash flow because rent is being replaced by interest. On the other hand, Cotterell contends the properties should add substantially to capital.

Earnings growth has depended largely on domestic removals in the past. If the economy improves, so will this division. But much will also depend on how successful Lasertrans is in capturing market share in commercial transport. Potential to grow in this sector appears encouraging.

The price has recovered strongly from its low last year. The p:e of 7 is not unduly demanding. Though dividends won't be resumed until 1995, as earnings are to be retained in full to strengthen the balance sheet, the share appears attractive at this price.

Gerald Hirshon

Taxi industry must have rules — forum

THEO RAWANA

THE National Transport Policy Forum was backing tighter regulation of the taxi industry, forum secretary Ntise Matlhoko said at the weekend.

Reacting to criticism that the forum was calling for the introduction of regulation into a sector that had always been against any form of regulation, Matlhoko said no industry could be run without rules.

He said regulation of the industry had always been in the statute books, but was not implemented. "So there is nothing new. The forum says 'let us revisit what has already been done,' and these should not be looked at as barriers, but as guidelines," he said.

"The taxi industry was never really deregulated — and the market was never flooded because of deregulation, but because of pirates who invaded it." The market was flooded because authorities never implemented deregulation. "That and the fact that facilities have always been inadequate; authorities should provide adequate facilities," he said.

"The local Road Transportation Board must also liaise with the local authorities to make sure there are facilities before granting taxi permits. It must also liaise with the taxi industry to find out the state of the market. In that way we will be able to avoid unnecessary conflict," Matlhoko said.

Taxi body wants more control

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — Taxi industry organisation Sabta has written to the central and regional governments asking for urgent discussions to solve the crisis in the industry.

Sabta national treasurer Mr Joseph Mabaso yesterday said one of the main issues raised in the letters was the creation of a taxi control board. "We have no power now to act against trouble-makers and the law takes too long. We need to be able to take permits away immediately."

Transport subsidies that could apply to minibus travel were needed and finance was necessary for driver training. "We begged the previous government to help us train our drivers, but to no avail," Mr Mabaso said.

Tackling taxi industry crisis among first tasks of new government

1715194

GRETA STEYN

TAXI industry organisation Sabta has written to the new central and regional governments asking for urgent discussions to solve the crisis in the industry.

Sabta national treasurer Joseph Mabaso yesterday said one of the main issues raised in the letters was the creation of a taxi control board to give the industry teeth to regulate itself. "We have no power now to act against troublemakers and the law takes too long. We need to be able to take permits away immediately."

Other issues raised in correspondence included transport subsidies, the proper regulation of permits and dealing with feuds in the industry. "The permit situation is a mess. The Transport Department has not kept a proper record of permits issued." A system had to be put into place that would track the number of permits per region to avoid an oversupply of taxis, as was the case in some areas.

Transport subsidies that could apply to minibus travel were needed. Finance was also needed for driver training, especially in view of the huge numbers of people using minibus transport. "We begged the previous government to help us train drivers,

but to no avail," Mabaso said.

PWV reconstruction and development (RDP) convenor Ben Turok said taxi regulation and transport subsidies were on the agenda. He said some form of subsidy would be considered, and a proper mix between public and private transport was needed. There were "monopolies" in the taxi industry whose "stranglehold" over transport had to be broken.

The PWV reconstruction and development programme blueprint describes the

taxi industry as "excessively competitive and unregulated". It says fares are the decision of the taxi fleet owners, and no subsidy is available to passengers.

"Ownership is often difficult to identify. Violence is common. The traffic safety record of taxis is deplorable, and drivers are often badly treated and are not unionised," the RDP draft says. It adds the industry unduly exerts a "stranglehold" over people's movements, and this is at times politically motivated.

A public transport system had to be developed to meet basic commuter needs and

create job opportunities. Rail commuters had to be able to transfer to bus and taxi, and vice versa, without additional costs. The rail corridor had to be expanded to areas beyond the metropolitan PWV, and rural residents had to have subsidies and additional transport infrastructure.

The national RDP says commuters should be encouraged to use public transport, and should be discouraged from using cars via, among other methods, fuel levies. As a priority, rail transport had to be extended, and taxis had to act as feeders to bus or rail services.

Nampak achieves rise in attributable profit of 15%

MARCIA KLEIN

LOWER interest, tax and an abnormal profit on a disposal helped paper and packaging group Nampak produce a 15% rise in attributable profit to R174,3m (R151,2m) in the half-year to March.

Pressure on selling prices and a 2% decline in volumes saw turnover rise just 3% to R2,38bn (R2,32bn).

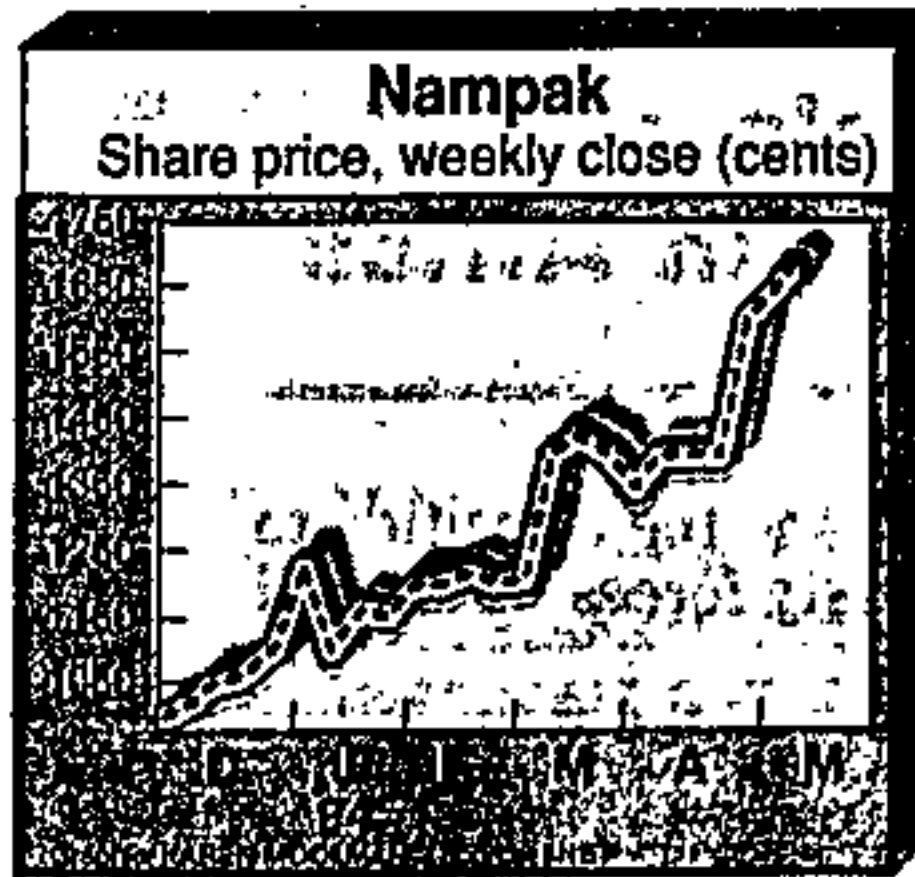
Margins were held through efficiencies and cost control, and operating profit rose similarly to R274,8m from R266,8m previously.

But a significant drop in interest to R5m (R18m) and a lower tax rate enabled the company to lift taxed profit 10% to R169,2m from R154,1m.

Attention to asset management enabled Nampak to spend R106,4m in capex and still increase its interest cover to a high 56 (15,2) times, and drop its gearing to 19% (28%).

The bottom line increase of 15% was helped by an abnormal profit of R10,3m on the sale of the Kliprivier brown paper machines.

This item was reported at an after-tax level to separate it from actual



trading results and "to highlight the full effect of the transaction".

A small increase in shares in issue saw earnings rise 14% to 35,8c (31,3c) a share, and a 9% higher interim dividend of 9,5c (8,7c) was declared.

Chairman Brian Connellan said he was pleased with the results as trading conditions had been difficult, and selling prices and volumes under pressure.

There was no growth in demand for non-durable consumer products.

But the group had outperformed the industry through a focus on financial and management controls.

The packaging division increased turnover 2% to R1,94bn, and its oper-

ating profit 12% to R259,6m.

Connellan said can manufacturer Bevcan had maintained its profits in a market which had become highly competitive with the entry of aluminium cans.

The plastics, glass, Divpac, cartons, corrugated and polyfoil divisions all increased their earnings.

But liquid packaging profits were lower, following the phasing-out of decentralised benefits.

The Foodcan and sacks divisions also produced lower earnings due to a drop in demand in the second quarter. Flexible packaging increased volumes, but earnings were affected by pricing pressures.

The disposal of the Kliprivier brown paper machines saw the paper and printing division report a 3% drop in turnover to R542,4m.

Higher volumes in the paper distribution, tissue and printing divisions were offset by price wars in all these markets, and operating profit slumped 56% to R15,2m.

At current levels of demand, Nampak would increase full-year earnings, but at a lower level than the first half because of the benefit at this stage of the abnormal profit.

R16m single bad debt dents Boland Bank performance

CAPE TOWN — A single bad debt marred otherwise sound results by Boland Bank for the year to March, leaving attributable income marginally higher at R24,2m (R24,1m), despite a 52% increase in operating profit.

MD Gert Liebenberg said growth was attained through a strong increase in net interest income, supplemented by steady income improvement income from other services and containment of the rate of increase in expenses.

Liebenberg said liquidation of a single client necessitated a specific bad debt provision of R16m.

The bank refused to name the company liquidated.

The bad debt was the principle reason attributable income showed only a slight increase, Liebenberg said.

Interest income was 22% higher at

EDWARD WEST

R163,1m (R133,2m).

Provision for bad debts was 21% higher at R62,7m (R52m).

Total income was higher by a fifth to R197,1m (R164,8m).

Expenses were 14% higher at R168,1m (R139m) and operating income was 52% higher at R39m (R25,7m). Earnings a share came to 180,4c (179,2c).

In view of the fact the interim dividend had been lifted 2c, it was decided to retain the final dividend at its previous level 33c, bringing the total for the year to 58c (56c).

The board was confident the affects of the recession would be overcome this year.

Gradual recovery of the growth in financing and stabilisation of bad debt provisions would benefit profitability, it said.

ATC earnings plunge 33%

MUNGO SOGGOT

ANGLO-Transvaal Collieries' attributable earnings fell 33% to R2,6m for the year to March (R3,9m) on a 33% drop in turnover to R2,7m (R4m).

Dividend income from Randcoal — its sole investment — fell to R2,7m (R3,9m).

Earnings a share were cut to 154c (231,5c), and an ordinary dividend of 155c was declared.

Interest received was R11 000 (R12 000) and expenditure was unchanged.

The market value of the company's 8,36% stake in Randcoal rose to R151m (R70m). Book value was unchanged at R90 000. The net asset value of shares was 9 441c (4 388c) a share.

Longrail turnover moves into the fast lane

ROAD freight group Longrail clocked up an 18% rise in earnings to 9c (7,6c) a share for the year to February, despite the high cost of increasing its fleet in the previous year.

On Monday, the share was untraded at its May 6 annual high of 105c, off an annual low of 40c in July last year. The dividend increased 20% and a scrip alternative was declared.

The company — which is jointly owned by management and Imperial Holdings — saw turnover jump 31% to R92,3m from R70,6m the previous year. Income before interest and tax

MUNGO SOGGOT

climbed to R4,9m (R4,3m).

Longrail's interest bill rose to R3,6m (R3,2), and its tax bill increased to R2,09m (R2,01m).

MD Marius Els predicted further strong growth in the coming year.

The company's gearing dipped to 89% from 201% the previous year.

Gearing had been reduced further by share issues of R5,3m underwritten by Imperial to fund two recent acquisitions, the company said.

Political uncertainty, surplus ca-

pacity in transport and a high level of vehicle-related crime had led to turbulent business conditions. But the company looked forward to a "much improved business environment".

Longrail and Imperial chairman Bill Lynch said "the group had sufficient resources to grow with the new SA".

The board announced that shareholders could opt for capitalisation shares in the ratio of 3,33 new ordinary shares for every 100 shares held, or could take the dividend in cash at 3c a share.

Laser takes over Mainline

EDWARD WEST *Biday*

CAPE TOWN — Transport services group Laser Transport Holdings had concluded the R11m acquisition of the R110m-a-year refrigeration transport company Mainline Carriers, MD Tony Cotterell said yesterday. 18/5/94

Laser's launch in the traditionally high-entry barrier contract transport business came at a substantial discount to net asset value, he said. (332) (332)

Management said it was confident the 800-truck long-distance road-freight company would have a positive effect on Laser's earnings for the year to September 1994.

Sabta 'reconciliation bid'

THEO RAWANA

THE SA Black Taxis Association (Sabta) and its former national adviser, James Chapman, were trying to reconcile their differences after falling out about two years ago, sources close to the organisation said yesterday.

Reports that Sabta, the money-spinner in the 11-member umbrella body Fabcos, was set to leave the federation seemed to back up the speculation.

Chapman, who many credit with building the taxi organisation into an economic miracle, resigned in March 1992. He did so amid allegations that Fabcos's marketing arm was diverting funds, meant for the industry's development, to boost other loss-making organisations under its wing. (332)

Chapman went on to head a consultancy that sought to bring profitability to the taxi industry. He took up with disenchanted regions headed by the Pretoria United Taxi Association and this led to the Sabta executive asking the Transport Department not to recognise consultants without its blessing.

Chapman refused yesterday to comment on reports of a reconciliation. "I can only tell you that the taxi industry is in for a wonderful future. . . . It is headed for 100% growth over the next five years."

Sabta public affairs manager Cyprian Lebesse said contacts with Chapman were nothing new. "We have been in contact since the time of (former Fabcos marketing CE) Jabu Mabuza."

Lebesse denied that Sabta was about to pull out of Fabcos. No comment could be obtained from Fabcos at the time of going to press.

GRINDROD UNICORN

Preparing to catch the tide

332

Activities: Storage, handling and transport of goods by sea, air and on land, nationally and internationally.

Control: Grindrod Holdings 53%. Ultimate control is the Grindrod family.

Chairman: W M Grindrod; **MD:** I M Groves.

Capital structure: 35.9m ords. Market capitalisation: R269m.

Share market: Price: 750c. Yields: 4.4% on dividend; 12.9% on earnings; p/e ratio, 7.8; cover, 2.9. 12-month high, 750c; low, 425c. Trading volume last quarter, 417 000 shares.

Year to Dec 31	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	12.4	22.6	2.3	17.6
LT debt (Rm)	88.5	159.2	188.1	257.6
Debt:equity ratio	0.90	0.98	0.51	0.79
Shareholders' interest	0.28	0.24	0.34	0.36
Int & leasing cover ..	5.1	3.4	6.8	3.4
Return on cap (%) ..	12.1	11.2	8.4	7.1
Turnover (Rm)	497	564	655	705
Pre-int profit (Rm) ...	43.8	57.2	50.4	50.5
Pre-int margin (%) ..	8.4	10.2	7.7	7.2
Earnings (c)	73.2	78.9	75.3	96.5
Dividends (c)	28	30	30	33
Tangible NAV (c)	270	262	360	457

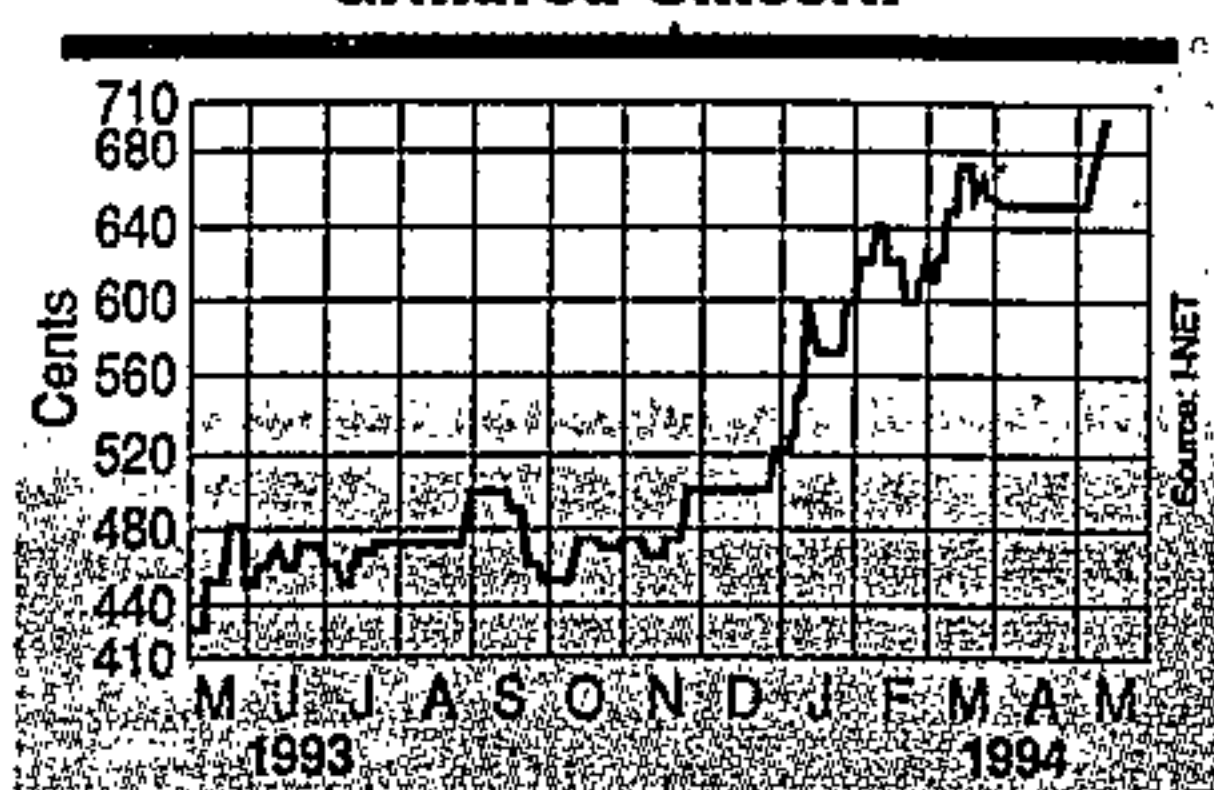
There has been strong market support for transport group Grincor's share in recent weeks, pushing it to a new high of 750c. That's no reflection on Grincor's operating performance — it remained stagnant in the 1993 financial year, so clearly investors believe the stock has recovery potential.

The 28% increase in EPS is misleading. It comes largely from a deferred tax adjustment flowing from the lower corporate tax rate, and from profits on the sale of three vessels, something chairman Murray Grindrod notes has become a "regular feature" in the group's affairs.

The disposal of the ships — the RoRo (roll-on roll-off) vessels *Border* and *Barrier* and supply tug *Voorspeler* — together with the sale of other assets brought in R123m. Capital spending of R207m, on the other hand, went mainly on expanding capacity in the form of three new multipurpose ships for the international fleet, as well as payments on a new container vessel delivered in Poland in October, and progress payments on a second new container ship.

These dealings in vessels have a significant

Grindrod Unicorn



Grindrod ... taking care of currencies

influence on results and tend to lead to wide fluctuations in the income statement from year to year. These, in turn, make it difficult to analyse consistent trends in Grincor's results.

The matter is compounded by profits on the sale of ships being influenced by Grincor's conservative depreciation policy, changes in the US dollar value of ships, and the continuing depreciation of the rand against the dollar.

Grindrod notes investor concerns that profits on ships should be discounted in assessing results because these are required for replacement. He is also conscious of the perception that these profits are fortuitous. Grindrod's response is, first, that the board believes it prudent to follow a conservative depreciation policy; second, he says ships are a commodity and values fluctuate in line with supply and demand — that takes care, he believes, of concerns about pricing in fluctuating international currencies.

"The group has over the years been successful in acquiring ships at good prices as evidenced by the fact that the fleet is today worth, at estimated market value, US\$30m more than the book value."

Depreciation of the rand, says Grindrod, leads to a rand profit between the depreciated rand value and a notional depreciated US dollar value. "This represents a rand hedge element within the dollar asset value apart from the rand hedge element from the dollar income stream," he claims.

The upshot of all of this is that Grincor's board is considering adjusting its accounting policy to reflect these elements of profit in

the income statement. Continued depreciation will lower the profit on the sale of ships and help to smooth earnings.

The outlook for the year ahead is difficult with trade to and from SA opening up in the wake of the lifting of sanctions. There are new opportunities, which Grincor is preparing to exploit by expanding its fleet, but at the same time international competition will increase.

Grincor, within its liner shipping activities, will continue to focus on niche markets and look for strategic alliances. But Grindrod says the group will also try to place less reliance on liner shipping as a source of income.

The balance sheet is certainly strong enough to support expansion and an increase in trade. Debt has increased by a net R49m, but MD Mike Groves points out that about 75% of this is funded offshore, most at interest rates below 6%. While the interest rates are certainly attractive, borrowings of this kind expose the company to exchange rate considerations and require careful forward cover management.

It remains hard, however, to anticipate when benefits will start coming through. Compared with competitor Safren, Grincor's share is cheap — perhaps that's why it is finding favour with investors. *Shaun Harris*

UNI HOLD Fm 20/5/94 Wait for recovery

Activities: Manufactures and supplies a variety of industrial products for specialist markets in mining, lighting, automotive and general engineering.

Control: U-Control 53.7%.

Exec Chairman: J C Haslam.

Capital structure: 59.4m ords. Market capitalisation: R59m.

Share market: Price: 100c. Yields: nil % on dividend; 5.5% on earnings; p/e ratio, 18; cover, N/A. 12-month high, 100c; low, 50c.

Trading volume last quarter, 1.5m shares.

Year to Dec 31	'90	'91	'92	'93
ST debt (Rm)	14.6	33.9	64.3	34.6
LT debt (Rm)	15.3	17.4	27.0	8.2
Debt:equity ratio	0.55	0.68	1.07	0.83
Shareholders' interest	0.48	0.49	0.40	0.44
Int & leasing cover ..	3.0	2.6	1.1	1.3
Return on cap (%) ..	20.3	12.5	5.4	8.0
Turnover (Rm)	197	216	287	222
Pre-int profit (Rm) ...	23.0	19.4	11.6	9.4
Pre-int margin (%) ..	11.7	9.0	4.1	4.2
Earnings (c)	22.5	22.4	3.3	5.5
Dividends (c)	13.5	13.5	—	—
Tangible NAV (c)	131.8	163.0	121.4	86

Do the shares of this company, which has been dogged by much misfortune, deserve to be at a 12-month high of 100c?

Force taxis to insure passengers - Codeta

PIETER MALAN AND PAT CANDIDO
Staff Reporters

ALL taxi operators should be forced by law to take out insurance on their passengers says Kidwell Magwayi, president of the Congress of Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

His announcement follows two recent taxi accidents in which 28 people were killed.

Mr Magwayi said he knew such a step would be very unpopular with many taxi operators, but it was the only way in which the carnage could be stopped.

"No insurance company would insure a taxi which was unroadworthy and in that way such vehicles would be kept off our roads," he said.

The law should force taxi operators to display an insurance disc on their windcreens so that commuters could distinguish "uninsured" vehicles.

He also called on the traffic police and the industry to start a campaign to educate drivers and commuters.

"It is ironic that you can drive in a train without any contact with the driver, and still be safer than in a taxi where the driver is sitting right in front of you.

"Commuters should talk to their drivers and stop them when they feel unsafe or if they think the taxi is unroadworthy.

"If drivers don't respond, they must

be reported to the traffic police."

The South African National Civic Organisation has also called for stringent measures to be taken by traffic authorities and taxi associations to curb the taxi accident rate.

Sanco chairman Thomazile Magqabi blamed tragedies on overcrowding, poor roadworthy standards and inadequate driver education.

After the horrific smash in Port Elizabeth on Sunday, in which seven people died, the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage Taxi forum chairman, Government Zini, asked for a "taxi ghost squad" to be implemented.

The "ghost squad" — consisting of unmarked minibus taxis patrolling the highways — would assist traffic authorities with inspections and the removal of unroadworthy vehicles from the country's roads, Mr Zini said.

Mr Magwayi described this as an "excellent idea" and said Codeta would give its support if such a programme was to be implemented in Cape Town.

Codeta, the biggest local taxi association, has a membership of over 4 500 taxi owners.

"It is high time we did something about the carnage on our roads. It doesn't help to curb political violence, while taxis are still killing our people," Mr Magwayi said.

WETAN Thursday, May 26, 1994

strict taxi controls

How to stop road carnage

Sowetan

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Sanco chairman Mr Thomazile Magqabi blamed tragedies on overcrowding, poor roadworthy standards and inadequate driver education. —
Sowetan Correspondent.

Taxi industry casting wider net

■ BY THABO LESHILO

As the once lucrative black minibus taxi industry declines in profitability because of saturation, groups are under pressure to think big and find suitable alternatives for members.

So the industry is now turning its attention to haulage and there is even talk of the sea and air freight.

The National Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto), one of SA's two powerful taxi bodies, is already running a successful haulage service.

"At first I thought it was too big a venture. But we reached a stage where we decided it



Peter Rabali ... not a big thing. PICTURE: ANTON HAMMERL

(332)
was not really such a big thing and anyone can do it," says Nafto President Peter Rabali.

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To start its haulage operation, it bought 11 heavy trucks two years ago, thanks to a favourable package from a leading bank.

Soon after, it secured a deal with a major oil company to run its depot in Isando, delivering oil to filling stations as far afield as Louis Trichardt and Mmabatho.

Nafto was also contracted by the IEC to deliver materials to a number of polling stations during the election.

Rabali expects to clinch a deal worth thousands of rands with a major clothing chain.

However, contracts are still hard to come by.

"There are not enough jobs. Maybe companies still don't

trust us and doubt what we can do," he says.

At least two sea freight companies have agreed to train Nafto members and an American airfreight company is keen on a joint venture.

However, Rabali's optimism is not shared by the rival Southern African Black Taxi Association (Sabta).

"We are now in disarray. We need still need to improve on the service we are supposed to be providing," says Sabta marketing manager Cyprian Lebeso.

He says the black taxi industry still needs to tackle problems of commuter safety, courtesy, professionalism and training.

Court may solve taxi routes issue

28/5/94

Staff Reporter

A SUPREME Court trial on August 18 could resolve an "overly explosive" dispute between opposing taxi owners about routes from a major Mitchells Plain taxi rank.

The Mitchells Plain Bus and Taxi Association (MPBTA) and taxi driver (and member) Mr Yusuf Daniels, were granted an order in April preventing opposition taxi drivers Mr Tuhuran Adams, Mr Freddy Ramages and Mr Ismail Rossie (all members of Route 7 Taxi Association) from unlawfully operating taxis at the Calypso Square, Town Centre rank or interfering with the MPBTA administration or its members there.

Yesterday the three drivers obtained an order restraining the

MPBTA from issuing "fake" authorisation to any driver or operator, unlawfully demanding money for operating taxis from drivers and Mr Adams, or interfering with Route 7 Taxi Association administration at the square.

Mr Justice WJ Thring granted an order that the matter go to trial on August 18.

He then said he noticed several taxi businessmen in the courtroom and appealed to all parties to resolve their differences non-violently.

The judge said emotions ran high in disputes of this kind and asked the relevant parties to "renew their efforts to build bridges" and compete in a non-violent manner which was in the interests of public safety.



CHARRED ... a body is taken from a burnt-out taxi Picture: JON HRUSA

By TENDAI
DUMBUTSHENA
and CHIARA CARTER

FOUR Zimbabweans, who had travelled for more than 15 hours to Johannesburg to go shopping, were shot and then burnt to death in a resurgence of what police believe to be taxi warfare.

Two other people, believed to have been the drivers, were killed as they fled the scene yesterday.

Another four Zimbabweans were taken to Hill-brow Hospital where two were operated on. All four had been shot.

And in what appears to be another taxi dispute, four men were shot dead at a Soshanguve taxi rank outside Pretoria yesterday.

Police spokesman Cap-

Eight die as PWV taxi wars flare up

tain Evan Johnson said Mr

Shadrack Strole, a member of the South African Long-Distance Taxi Association, was shot dead at the Mabopane taxi rank at 8.30am.

In what police suspect was a revenge attack, three members of a rival taxi association, Letlapela, were shot dead in the same area after 1pm.

Mr Agrippa Dube, who survived the Johannesburg shooting, said the Zimbabweans had boarded two taxis on Friday night at

Belt Bridge.

He said that as soon as they reached their destination at the corner of Koch and King George streets in Johannesburg, shots were fired at the two vehicles.

"We ran for our lives ... there was an explosion which set one of the taxis on fire. The other taxi also caught fire."

"There were 15 of us in the taxi and we don't know where some of the survivors went to."

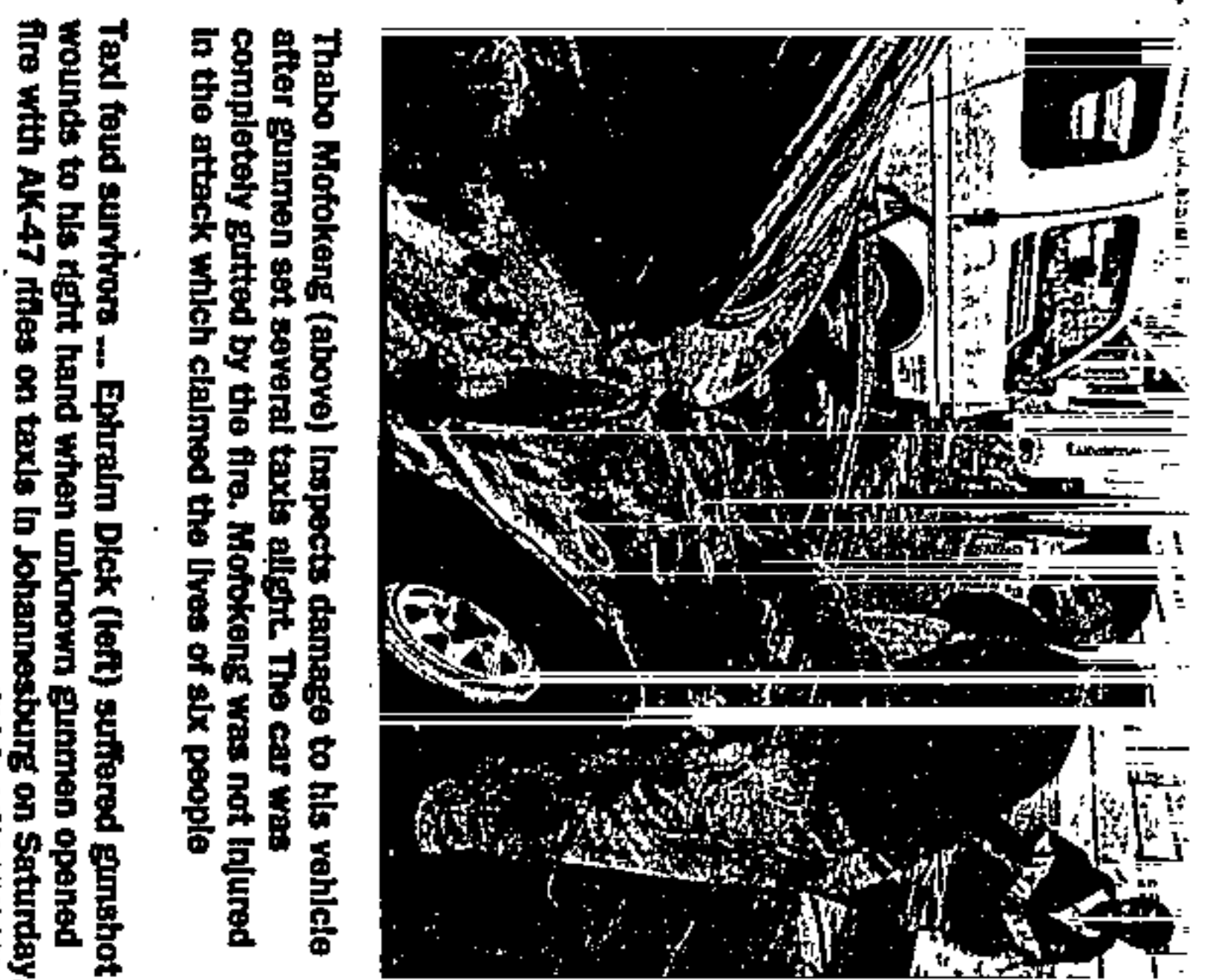
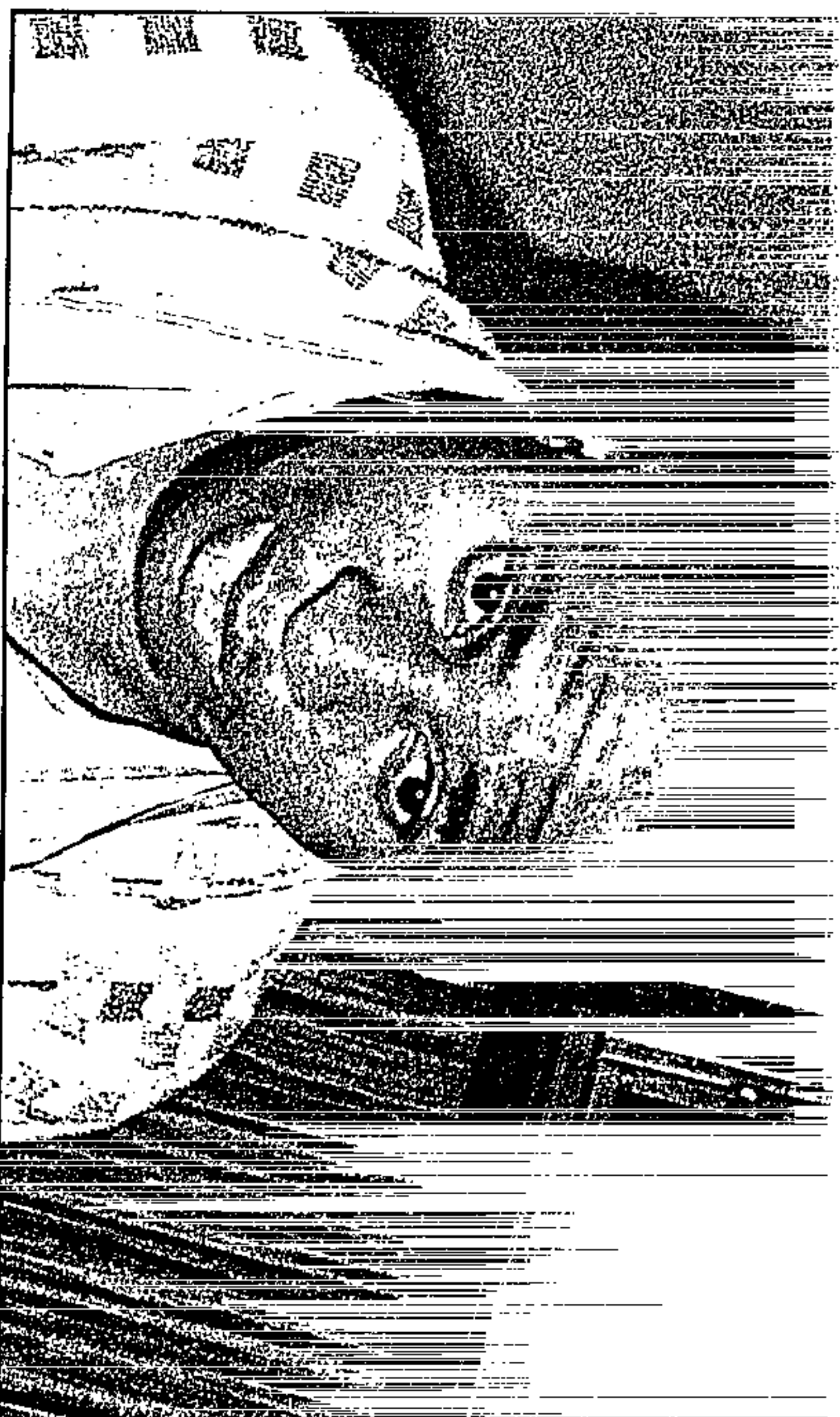
Police spokesman Cap-

tain Wilkus Weber said the two taxis — which were destroyed in the blaze — belonged to members of the Appenda Long Distance Taxi Association.

Police are looking for a white Cressida, which has a registration number beginning with MVV, from which the assailants alighted.

A local resident, who witnessed the killing, said a man with an assault rifle got out of a vehicle and opened fire. He then pursued the fleeing passengers to Wanderers Street, firing as he ran.

PWV Minister of Safety and Security, Mrs Jessie Duarte, said every effort would be made to bring the gunmen to justice.



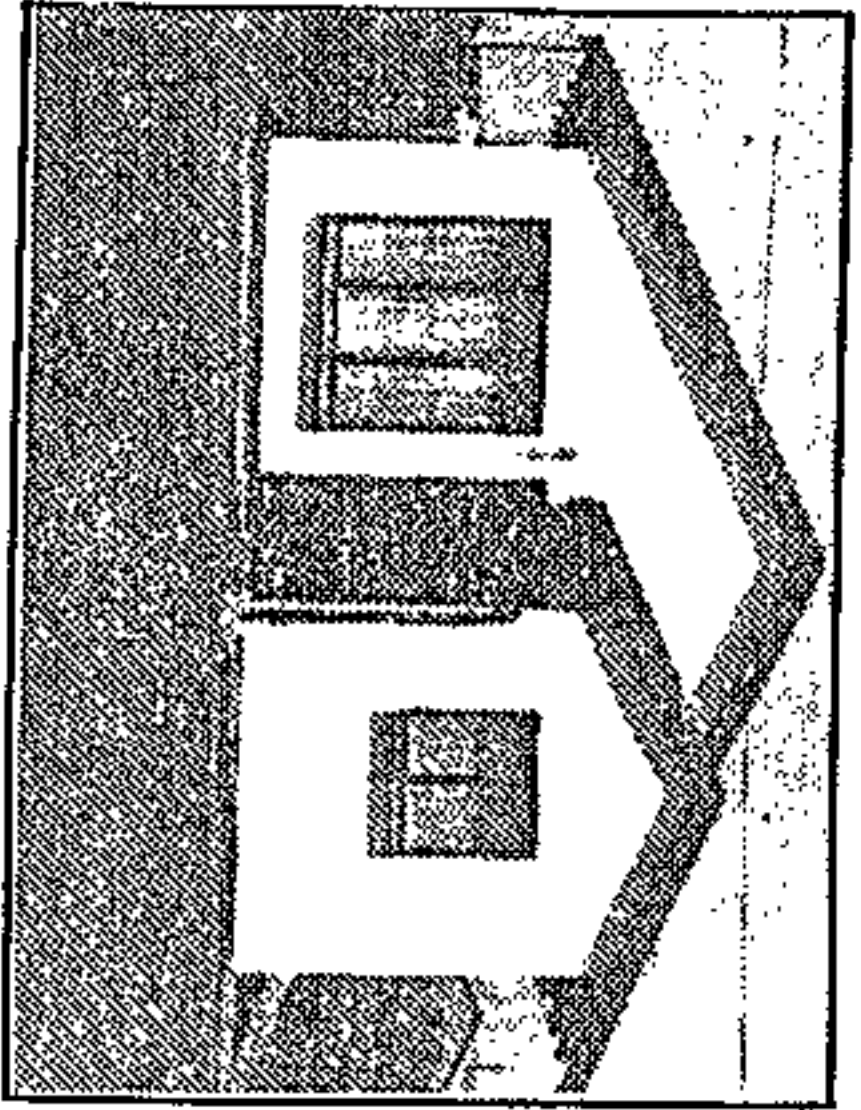
Thabo Motokeng (above) inspects damage to his vehicle after gunmen set several taxis alight. The car was completely gutted by the fire. Motokeng was not injured in the attack which claimed the lives of six people

Taxi feud survivors ... Ephraim Dick (left) suffered gunshot wounds to his right hand when unknown gunmen opened fire with AK-47 rifles on taxis in Johannesburg on Saturday. PICS: LEN KUMALO

Slaughter in taxi war

Sowetan 30/5/94

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By Mckeed Kotholo, Khathu Mamalia and Joshua Raboroko

FOUR TAXIMEN WERE KILLED in the Mabopane and Soshanguve areas on Saturday in another bloody feud over routes.

The killings followed the horror shootings the same day in the Johannesburg city centre, where six people were gunned down in a drive-by taxi shooting blamed on the rivalry between two Northern Transvaal-based taxi associations.

Northern Transvaal SAP spokesman Captain Evan Johnson said the trouble started in Mabopane and Soshanguve on Saturday at about 8am when taximan Mr Shadrack Sibhole was shot dead at the Mabopane taxi rank.

Five bullets in the body

He was hit by five bullets in the body and head from an AK-47 rifle and a 9mm pistol. He was a member of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association.

Police arrested two suspects and confiscated two 9mm pistols.

In an apparent revenge attack, Letlhabile Taxi Association member Mr William Mokgohlana was shot dead at the Mabopane taxi rank.

Johnson said suspects travelling in a white Nissan light delivery van then drove to the Mashamite garage in Soshanguve where they shot and killed SADTA member Mr Joshua Lekgohane.

The gunmen later shot Mr Lucas Zulu Mabutha, another SALTDA member, in the area. *Sepa* reports that Mabopane police on Friday

called a meeting of various taxi associations in a bid to avert potential conflict.

Police spokesman Colonel David George said it appeared the shootings were linked to an ongoing dispute over taxi routes between Mabopane and Pretoria.

Meanwhile, the shooting incident in Johannesburg on Saturday has been blamed on a bloody feud between two Northern Transvaal taxi factions which started about four months ago.

Burnt to death (332)

This was triggered off by a split in the association which operated between Johannesburg and Messina in the Northern Transvaal, sources said yesterday.

Six Zimbabwe nationals were killed when AK-47-wielding gunmen travelling in a white Cressida sprayed them with a hail of bullets.

Four of the victims of the Saturday shooting were burnt to death while trapped inside a kombi. The other two commuters died of gunshot wounds. Police believe tracer bullets were used in the attack.

The assailants also torched several taxis.

A police spokesman said investigators believed some taxis caught alight because of tracer bullets. Police said earlier a taxi in which four people died burst into flames after a bullet hit the petrol tank.

Sowetan yesterday established that the taxi, which was headed for Beit Bridge, belonged to Mr SW Rankhododo of Ntshalele in Venda.

The incident followed the killing of well-known Dzanani taxi boss Mr Freddy Ravele about two weeks ago.

Goldstone to probe Queenstown violence

CT 31/5/94
JOHANNESBURG. — The Goldstone Commission will hold a public inquiry into taxi-related violence in Queenstown from July 5, it said yesterday. (332)

A committee will investigate the nature and causes of the conflict in the area and make rec-

ommendations on steps necessary to prevent further violence.

Interested parties are asked to make written representations to reach the commission secretary at Private Bag X785562, Sandton, 2146 on or before June 29, 1994. — Sapa

Plea for help in 'taxi war'

PRETORIA — The United Taxi Association here called on the Goldstone Commission yesterday to investigate as a matter of urgency the "taxi war" which has claimed a number of lives recently.

A senior official of the association, who asked not to be named for fear of victimisation, said people armed with AK-47 rifles were killing taxi operators and drivers in the Pretoria area.

In the latest attacks three people were shot and wounded in the Johannesburg city centre yesterday morning in what is believed to be an ongoing feud between three rival taxi associations.

The incident has been linked to Saturday's shooting at a taxi rank in the city which claimed the lives of six people.

Police yesterday offered a reward of up to R100 000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killers.

In the past two months a number of taxi operators have been killed in drive-by shootings in Mabopane, Soshanguve, Mamelodi, and other townships near Pretoria in what is believed to be a feud over routes and control over taxi ranks. — Sapa

(332) CT 31/5/94

Bid to end war in taxi industry 332

APR 21/6/94
JOHANNESBURG. In

a bid to end violence in the taxi industry, the National African Federated Transport Organisation today called on transport minister Mac Maharaj and National Transport Policy Forum chairman George Ntshongola to convene a meeting of warring taxi factions.

Nafto chairman Peter Rabali said rival factions should immediately refrain from violence and not allow "petty differences" to ruin the entire industry.

The meeting of warring factions should be followed by another meeting of all taxi associations to plan the reorganisation of the industry in general.

He also urged Mr Maharaj and justice minister Dullah Omar not to involve the Goldstone Commission because Nafto believed the commission "has failed to be of relevance to this kind of violence."

"The new government is well placed to bring order in this industry now," Mr Rabali added.

— Sapa.

Talks to end taxi wars 'positive'

■ BY MONTSHIWA
MOROKE

The police and the National Peace Secretariat agreed last night on a bid to halt the spate of bloody taxi fighting that has claimed at least six lives in the past five days.

Members of the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta), Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (Felldta) and Letlhabile Taxi Association (LTA), accompanied by their legal representatives, met a high-ranking police officer under the aus-

pices of the Peace Secretariat in Johannesburg.

The meeting was closed to the press, but the chairman, NPS national facilitator J van Breda, released a guarded statement describing the meeting as "positive".

"The parties agreed to hold another meeting today, whose purpose will be to reach the possibility of a peace agreement between Saldta and Felldta/LTA."

There was tension before and after the meeting as some delegates expressed concern about the presence of the men

outside. Their safety was assured by the commanding officer of unrest and violent crime at John Vorster Square, Lieutenant-Colonel J Marx, who attended the meeting. He said the Internal Stability Unit would monitor the situation. (332)

Yesterday's talks followed the killing of six people in Johannesburg on Saturday. Six others were wounded in the attack. On Monday three drivers were wounded when gunmen opened fire on taxis. Yesterday, three people were injured in a shooting in Noord

Street.

■ Mediators will be called in to try to resolve the taxi feud in Mabopane near Pretoria.

Five people have been killed in the feuding over the Mabopane-Hammanaskraal route and three people, arrested in connection with the killings, have been released on bail.

■ A meeting of Baragwanath Meadowlands Taxi Association drivers, who are in dispute with minibus owners over working conditions, has been postponed to June 15.

Mediators for taxi feud

PRETORIA, 2/6/94 Mediators will be called in to resolve the taxi feud in Mabopane near here after one faction refused to attend a meeting yesterday. (322)

Police said the group refused because it said people had been killed after being identified at such meetings. — Sapa

Smiles, handshakes as rivals pledge peace

Taxi war ceasefire agreed

Star 31/6/94

Taxi war ceasefire pact

From Page 1

He said the violence relegated to the background processes which would address the causes of the crisis. The new Government had been working to put together an inclusive process.

The National African Transport Organisation (Nafto) has condemned the violence in the taxi industry and has called on Maharaj to convene a meeting between the warring factions and also plan the reorganisation of the industry.

Nafto chairman Peter Rabali called on the warring factions to refrain from violence immediately and not to allow their petty differences to cause the collapse of the industry.

"We believe that the Goldstone Commission has failed to be of relevance to this kind of violence, and (we) would advise both Maharaj and Justice Minister Dullah Omar not to fall into the temptation of involving the Goldstone Commission," he said.

Meanwhile, in Soweto, a meeting between Nancefield, Dube, West Street Taxi Association and their rivals in the Witwatersrand African Owners' Taxi Association bore no fruit. Further meetings will be held on Monday.

BY MONTSHIWA MOROKE
ZINGISA MKHUMA
and ABBEY MAKOE

Peace within the violence-racked taxi industry came a step closer last night when rival associations signed a peace agreement at a meeting brokered by the police and the National Peace Secretariat in Johannesburg.

The agreement was the culmination of a bloody week, in which shootings at taxi ranks have been almost a daily occurrence since Saturday, claiming at least 11 lives in Johannesburg and Mabopane, outside Pretoria.

The ceasefire agreement was signed by the Letlhabile Taxi Association (LTA), the Federated Local and Long Distance Association (Fellda) and the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) after a four-hour meeting at the Witwatersrand police headquarters in Braamfontein.

Taxi representatives emerged from the meeting in a far lighter mood than when they met at John Vorster Square on Wednesday night. There were smiles, handshakes and friendly words.

David Mofokeng of Saldta, Watson Moloisane of LTA and Fellda's Sam Manganye all

CEASEFIRE
brokered by police
and the National
Peace Secretariat
after a week of
violence claims 11
lives

said they had agreed to "lay down arms" to bring to an end the killings.

They wished this would be "a long, lasting peace. We are saying to those who have not been sleeping at their homes for fear of their lives to go back home. Others should also stop looking over their shoulders because nobody is going to shoot at them," Manganye said.

A tired-looking NPS national facilitator and meeting chairman, John van Breda, said the meeting had been "tough and tense" at certain times but that the outcome was positive.

Also happy with the outcome was Witwatersrand Regional Co-ordinator of unrest and violent crime Lieutenant Martin Marx, in charge of security during this week's meetings.

Today NPS members and taxi representatives are expected to visit the Noord Street taxi rank where they will speak to taxi operators.

Breda said a technical committee would get together on Monday to "iron-out" any outstanding issues.

The signing of the agreement comes as welcome news to hundreds of thousands of commuters on the Reef, many of whom had been afraid to travel by taxi since trouble flared last month.

Yesterday morning police had to take swift action to prevent what could have been yet another bloodbath between two heavily armed rival groups in White City, Soweto.

Police moved in to protect passengers when heavily armed drivers from Nancefield, Dube, West Taxi Association (Nanduwe) forced some full mini-buses off the road.

Last night new Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said taxi violence threatened Government efforts to resolve conflicts in the industry.

"Far from resolving problems, this type of conduct disrupts putting together a systematic consultative process to resolve the issues of the industry," Maharaj said.

► To Page 3

Call for taxi feud talks

JOHANNESBURG. — In a bid to end violence in the taxi industry, the National African Federated Transport Organisation yesterday called on Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj and National Transport Policy Forum chairman Mr Geroge Negota to convene a meeting of warring taxi factions.

Nafto chairman Mr Peter Rabali said in a statement rival factions should immediately refrain

from violence and not allow "petty differences" to destroy the industry. (332) CT 3/6/94

The meeting of warring factions should be followed by another meeting of all taxi associations to plan the re-organisation of the whole industry, he said.

He also urged Mr Maharaj and Justice minister Mr Dullah Omar not to involve the Goldstone Commission because the commission

"has failed to be of relevance to this kind of violence".

Last night Mr Maharaj said violence in the taxi industry, which has claimed several lives in the past few days, threatened government efforts to resolve conflicts in the industry.

The violence relegated to the background the processes which would address the causes of the crisis, he said. — Sapa

Nafto appeal for end to taxi wars

Sowetan 31/6/94

By Joshua Raboroko and Sapa

THE Minister of Transport, Mr Mac Maharaj, yesterday expressed concern at the escalating violence affecting the taxi industry and appealed to the warring factions to make peace.

Maharaj was reacting to the killing of 10 people and wounding of six others at taxi ranks in Pretoria and Johannesburg last Saturday.

Negotiation and dialogue

"It is unacceptable that, at a time when the country has crossed over to a democratic order, with the Government of National Unity committed to resolving conflicts and problems through negotiation and dialogue, certain elements

■ PETTY DIFFERENCES Strong calls for re-organisation of industry:

should resort to killing," he said.

Attempts are currently being made to bring taxi owners, drivers and commuters together to discuss the issue.

Meanwhile, the National African Federated Transport Organisation yesterday called on Maharaj and National Transport Policy Forum chairman Mr George Negota to convene a meeting of warring factions.

Nafto chairman Mr Peter Rabali said the rivals should stop the violence and not allow "petty differences" to ruin the industry.

The meeting should be followed by another of all taxi associations to plan the re-organisation of the industry in general, Rabali said (332)

Goldstone commission

Rabali urged Maharaj and Justice Minister Dullah Omar not to involve the Goldstone Commission because Nafto believed the commission "has failed to be of relevance to this kind of violence".

"It is not far-fetched to state that the new Government is well placed to bring order to this industry now and we should not waste time to face this challenge with the might it deserves," Rabali added.

He said Nafto believed the regional premiers of the affected areas such as the PWV, Northern Transvaal and North-West should be fully involved formulating plans to bring peace to the taxi industry.

New taxi peace pact now in jeopardy

Sowetan 7/6/94

By Russel Molefe

THE Southern African Long Distance Transport Association yesterday threatened to pull out of the peace pact signed with rival associations last week.

This followed claims that Saldta members were being harassed and their vehicles hijacked at taxi ranks that have been the scene of fighting during the past few weeks. (332)

Saldta general secretary Mr TP Kubheka said the organisation had cancelled a meeting with rival taxi associations because of harassment and the hijacking of their vehicles.

He said the Lethlabile Taxi Association and Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association were violating the peace pact and this could force Saldta

to pull out.

Kubheka claimed the harassment started again after the peace pact was signed.

Kubheka appealed to Minister of Safety and Security Mr Sydney Mufamadi and Johannesburg traffic chief Mr Titus Malaza to intervene "before the situation becomes pretty bad".

"We appeal to the minister to intervene as we fear that our organisation might not have powers to hold its members from taking the law into their own hands in retaliation for what is happening," he said.

The three associations, which operate on the Johannesburg-Beit Bridge route, have been in dispute over which association is entitled to use the Johannesburg taxi rank.

One dead, two injured as taxi violence erupts

332
APR 9/6/94

JOHANNESBURG. — The taxi war erupted again when gunmen killed at least one person and wounded two at the troubled Noord Street rank here.

A tentative week-old peace pact appeared on the verge of collapse as rival taxi groups yesterday blamed each other for the attack.

The Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (FELDTA) and its ally, the Letlhabile Taxi Association (LTA) said two members had been killed yesterday in the 9.20am attack by gunmen with AK 47 rifles.

But police spokesman Eugene Opperman said late yesterday he could confirm only one death.

FELDTA chairman Sam Manganye blamed the attack on the rival Southern African Long Distance Transport Association (SALDTA), with which it has been fighting over access to the Noord Street rank.

Mr Manganye identified the dead men as Sipho Mkhize and Shimmy Komane and said at least 13 people had been killed in two weeks of taxi violence in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

SALDTA official David Mofokeng blamed his rivals and the police for the latest incident.

"Some policemen own taxis and they're benefiting. It was a member of the police who was leading the opposition into our rank. I don't think we'll find peace until the minister of police intervenes," Mr Mofokeng said.

He claimed the rank was "authorised to SALDTA. It's not for anybody ..."

"We're going nowhere with the peace agreement unless these people (FELDTA and LTA) are removed."

Lieutenant-Colonel Opperman said in a statement the South African Police Service was disappointed at SALDTA's attempts to draw the police into the taxi conflict.

He said SALDTA knew where to lodge any complaints but police had not received any sworn statements with the allegations.

"The SAPS cannot solve problems among the rival taxi groups. They have to sit down and communicate with each other," Colonel Opperman added.

National Peace Secretariat official John van Breda, who brokered last week's peace meeting, said the Johannesburg taxi war emanated from access to the Noord Street rank which feeds the busy route to Pietersburg.

He said agreement had been reached last week for groups to lay down arms and share the rank while talks continued.

But Mr Mofokeng was adamant: "The rank belongs to SALDTA. As long as people occupy SALDTA's rank we will fight tooth and nail."

Mr Manganye countered: "SALDTA claims this town belongs to them. We are committed to peace but we're afraid to go back to the rank."

Mr Van Breda said he was arranging another meeting between the rivals for today. — Reuter.

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Now for the not-so-mellow yellows

Painting minibus taxis bright yellow is one of the safety regulations being considered by the authorities, reports
Stephen Laufer

AMID a spate of horrific accidents and bloody gun battles, the owners and drivers of South Africa's 80 000 minibus taxis face a series of stark choices.

In a bid to get this historically anarchic industry to put its house in order, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and his provincial counterparts are planning a "taxi summit" to discuss the future of the country's public transport backbone.

And in a parallel development, the Johannesburg ambulance service has completed an exhaustive survey of 960 minibus taxi accidents in its region during 1993, and is preparing to make far-reaching safety recommendations.

These could include a requirement that all taxis be painted bright yellow, a move which would transform South Africa's cityscapes to resemble those of New York. The study showed that yellow cabs, brightly coloured like those in the Big Apple, are by far the safest.

Maharaj is due to meet the nine provincial transport ministers next Monday to discuss the devolution of transport responsibilities, and preparation of the taxi summit is likely to be high on the agenda. Used by up to 50 percent of commuters daily, minibus taxis are central to South Africa's mobility.

But the summit will not focus on ending the current spate of violence between rival taxi associations vying for the most lucrative routes. A ceasefire is the precondition for talks in which the industry's substantive issues can be dealt with, says Maharaj.

Solutions to the industry's two largest problems — road safety and the commercial rivalry which has stoked bloody gun battles at taxi ranks in the far north, on the Reef, and in the Western Cape — will not be easily found, agree officials and observers. Born out of defiance of government regulation of public transport, the taxi industry is unlikely to tolerate anything which smacks of heavy-handed state intervention.

Rather than seeking to fight them, Maharaj has clearly decided to mobilise the owners and operators and their fiercely defended independence. They must overcome their current organisational fragmentation, he says, and learn to speak with one voice. "At last count there were 481 taxi associations of which my department is aware."

Only a unified industry will have sufficient clout when it comes to planning an integrated transport system in which taxis, trains and buses complement each other. But Maharaj says drivers and owners should create separate institutions, as their interests do not always coincide: "There is no single self-regulating body, as there is in the haulage industry, no single bargaining institution between employers and employees."

The weakest element in the public transport equation are the passengers, who have to accept low levels of safety and service. With taxi drivers competing all out with each other on routes with high passenger frequencies in an attempt to cover vehicle repayments, fuel and maintenance costs, there is no system for ensuring the continuous availability of



Hell ride ... Four people were killed and 11 were seriously injured when this taxi was involved in an accident on a highway near Johannesburg recently
PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE HILTON-BARBER

Two lives for one parking space

Weekly Mail Reporter

THE bullet holes still riddling the walls of Andries Kwenaitse's house serve as a constant reminder of the day three years ago when AK47-toting gunmen mowed down his wife and son.

Incredibly, the spark for the savage attack — mounted by about 40 men who arrived in five kombis — was a squabble over parking space.

Outsiders only become aware of the intractable problems in the taxi industry when violence flares. But for people like Kwenaitse, acting chairman of the Soweto Transport Services (STS), they are ever present. "I'm applying for an Uzi licence — my shotgun can't protect me from AK47 fire," he says.

The STS, one of 18 associations in Soweto, split asunder in 1991, leading to bloody rivalry over the control of and access to taxi routes, membership and the issuing of licences.

The conflict came to a head over the running of the organisation's central office. The office, responsible for running ranks, admitting new members, employing rank marshalls, patrolling ranks and routes and providing services for their owner members, drivers and commuters, was accused of misappropriation of funds.

Kwenaitse says his calls for an audit were ignored and bitter infighting erupted. Committee members resorted to arms, and some were shot and killed. The conflict spread to other owners and drivers, who began to take sides and

fight with each other.

The feud was compounded by competing interests among the owners. "The association owned a garage and it was trying to force all its taxis to use it," says a member who refused to be named.

He says one official, Fanyana Masoko, owned a garage himself and refused to send his taxis there. STS members blocked Masoko's garage and forced drivers to use theirs. Masoko threatened to shoot them and he was called to a disciplinary hearing.

At the meeting, Masoko fatally shot and killed another official, Amos Mazibuko. Masoko has since been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and is currently out on appeal.

Attempts to resolve the issue by electing new officials were foiled when some members boycotted the election. "They set up their own office. That's why we have two offices now," the member says.

The power struggles that followed claimed the lives of more than 40 taxi owners in 1991. One driver, called "Sipho", says in the years that followed "many drivers died — I can't tell you how many. We buried one just last week." Court cases and meetings ensued, but the truces failed to resolve the conflict.

Kwenaitse and the chairman of the rival organisation, STA, seem to have found a way out of the conflict. "We agreed that there should be one sticker and one association," says Kwenaitse, "and he said that he would step down if I was elected chairman of the united association."

But the drivers and Masoko have put a spanner in the works. Masoko wants to be the chairman and the drivers will not work together. "Though we went to the drivers and told them that they needed to work with each other, STA drivers will not let our drivers work at ranks which they control," Kwenaitse says.

As a result, STS members have called on Kwenaitse to halt talks with their rivals. "They say we cannot talk to them if there is no change (in conflict between the drivers)," Kwenaitse says.

The feud also poses problems for commuters. Besides the danger of being caught in the crossfire, many are left stranded for hours in town. STS taxis will not go to Merafe Hostel, the end point of the taxi route and the home of the STA office, in the evening.

"Our cars are hijacked and stripped in the hostel," Sipho explains. "And now the passengers want to toyi-toyi against the drivers, but it is not our fault."

Kwenaitse believes the wounds of the lengthy rivalry will heal in time. Sipho believes the issue is more complex, claiming that the STA has enlisted uncertified taxis which fled from the violence in Thokoza. "If we join together they will have to be kicked out and the drivers will not allow that to happen," he adds.

Another STS executive member agrees: "The owners are now ruled by the drivers. The only way to solve this is to call in the government to enforce the law. They need to come in in a big way and restructure the entire industry."

transport on less frequented — and therefore less lucrative — routes.

Maharaj says mechanisms to spread the availability of services more evenly must come from the industry: "They must participate in developing an integrated transport system, otherwise we will have cries of 'unfair'."

"Subsidies will only be effective in encouraging taxis to serve a wider network of routes if there is adequate planning and if all transport industry sectors are on board sharing responsibility."

The Department of Transport is nevertheless looking at tightening

regulation in certain areas, particularly those related to safety. Under the new Road Transport Quality System currently being developed, drivers will be required to have a Professional Driving Permit (PDP) which allows the authorities to monitor and control standards.

Drivers presently need no more than a Code 8 licence to carry up to 16 passengers, the same required by private motorists. PDPs must also be carried — but there is no test for obtaining them, they are simply a registration of drivers transporting passengers for gain.

"Heavy-goods vehicles drivers

must pass a realistic test with at least a 75 percent load," says Eric Hill, spokesman for the Johannesburg Traffic Department. "Taxi drivers should have to prove their proficiency under similar conditions. At the moment it doesn't matter how friendly they are, they get behind the wheel of an unguided missile."

Despite the perception created by the deaths of up to 17 people in a single taxi accident, statistics show that minibus travel is relatively safer than other modes of transport in South Africa.

Minibus accidents, including vehicles in use privately and not as

taxis, claimed 886 lives in South Africa last year. A total of 5 494 passengers and drivers were severely injured, 9 476 suffered minor injuries. Minibuses, including those used privately, contributed to about 10 percent of accidents — way below the 44 percent involving pedestrians and the 39 percent involving cars.

"Fatalities per vehicle/kilometre are still lower than for private cars," said a Transport Ministry expert. But they could be lower if regulations were tighter, believes the Johannesburg Traffic Department's Hill.

Tyres are the biggest problem: "There is nothing to state what tyres must replace the manufacturers' initial fitting. Whitewalls are popular, and retreads are fitted because they are cheap. But they are often not capable of carrying the load."

Add the common driver's practice of following too closely and changing lanes without warning, and you have a recipe for more accidents. Some 40 percent of taxi crashes in the Johannesburg ambulance district, which stretches as far as Soweto, Lenasia and Eldorado Park, occur during morning rush hour.

Drivers believe speed is of the essence in the early hours, because the faster they go, the more fares they can carry. Yet only 12 percent of accidents involved overloaded vehicles.

Taxi accidents produce horrendous leg, head and chest injuries, says Johannesburg assistant chief ambulance officer Lawrence Katz, because the driver and front-seat passengers rarely wear safety belts and are protected by nothing more than a thin sheet of metal. Katz would like to see a requirement that bull bars be fitted as standard on taxis.

"Roll-over bars are also crucial, because poor tyre condition and excessive speeds mean minibus taxis often overturn. The vehicles collapse, and in 64 percent of cases last year we had to cut people free."

Special taxidways, currently under discussion as part of an integrated PWV transport concept and already in operation on the Soweto highway, could be more of a curse than a blessing, says Katz.

"They tend to invite high speeds, and as currently constructed are very difficult to access in case of an accident."

Katz favours bright yellow for minibuses: "Eight percent of taxis in our area are yellow, but only one of 960 accidents last year involved a yellow vehicle. They are by far the safest."

Changing colours will not be sufficient, suggests Automobile Association spokesman Quinton van Eeden. He opposes greater state regulation, favouring a more businesslike approach by owners and operators.

The AA would like to see separate driving tests for anyone transporting passengers, accompanied by intensive training. "Many taxi drivers are the first generation to sit behind the wheel, they haven't had the advantage of watching their fathers and mothers driving as they grew up."

Improved business skills would contribute to safety and better service, says Van Eeden. "We conduct entrepreneurship training, teaching taxi owners to analyse markets, find lucrative niches and plan their businesses. To compete, taxis have to adapt."

Planning can help avoid vehicle repayment pressure, often the precursor to excessive speed, or the reason for buying inferior tyres and other equipment.

Taxi body 'reneged on peace accord'

B/Nay 10/6/94

THE Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (Felldata) and the Letlhabile Taxi Association (LTA) yesterday accused the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) of reneging on the peace accord they signed last week.

The accusation followed the killing on Wednesday of two Felldata members at the taxi rank situated on Noord and King George Streets in Johannesburg. (332)

Addressing a joint news briefing in Pretoria, Felldata and LTA accused Saldta of taking total control of operational routes in Johannesburg. This had led to continuous harassment of taxi operators belonging to rival associations.

The associations also criticised the Johannesburg City Council for failing to take action when irregularities against Saldta were reported. They said the council was giving Saldta kidglove treatment.

Felldata and LTA said a single national taxi association had to be formed to end the continuing taxi violence in the country.

Meanwhile, Johannesburg hair salon and taxi owner Enoch Mchunu, 42, was shot dead and his partner wounded by unknown gunmen who entered the salon and fired seven shots yesterday morning.

Police spokesman Capt Govind-samy Mariemuthoo said the motive for the killing was unknown, but police could not exclude the possibility that it was linked to the continuing taxi feud.

Workers at the Enoflos Unisex Hair Salon, on the corner of Fox and Von Brandis Streets, were mopping blood from the floor when Sapa visited the salon, but they were too distraught to speak.

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj has condemned violence in the taxi industry in Mabopane, near Pretoria, and Johannesburg.

Speaking in Pretoria, Maharaj said it was unacceptable that at a time when the country had crossed to a democratic order, certain elements in the taxi industry should resort to killing.

He conceded that problems in the industry were real, and said government was working to put together an inclusive process to address these problems.

Maharaj indicated that the violence could require that the SA Police Services be brought in to quell the fighting.

He said meetings were being held in Johannesburg and Pretoria between the SAPS and feuding parties. — Sapa.

Three sign peace pact in taxi feud

(332)

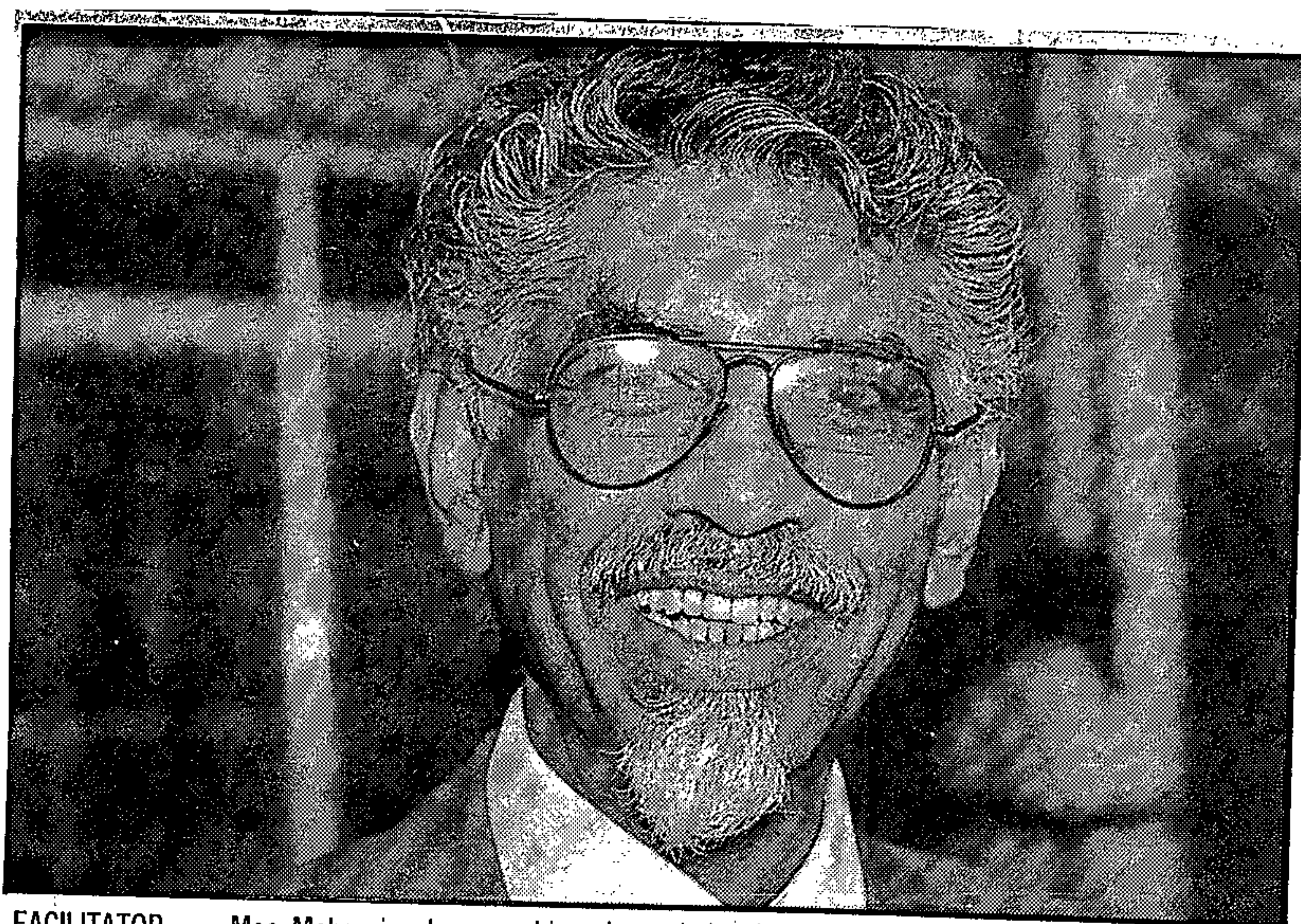
PRETORIA. — Taxi operators moved a step closer to ending their feud when three warring factions signed a peace pact here. *ARC 11/6/94*

The agreement was signed yesterday by the Letlhabile Taxi Association, the SA Long Distance Taxi Association and the Federated Long Distance and Local Taxi Association.

The associations committed themselves to peace and co-operation.

■ The peace pact was "broken" yesterday by a shooting at the Pretoria B station taxi rank. No one was injured in the shooting.

People at the rank were "very tense" and policemen were deployed to monitor developments. — Sapa.



FACILITATOR ... Mac Maharaj, who sees his role as balancing out interests in the transport industry

2 | SUNDAY TIMES, Business Times, June 12, 1994

Maharaj backs taxi subsidy call

TRANSPORT Minister Mac Maharaj supports "in principle" calls by the taxi industry for subsidisation.

In an interview this week Mr Maharaj told Business Times that the industry's demand for subsidies was justified since its competitors were being subsidised to the tune of R2-billion a year.

"It is not possible to develop commuter transport without subsidisation," he comments.

He adds, however, that subsidies for the taxi industry will not be examined in isolation but viewed as part of "an integrated commuter transportation policy".

He warns that there is a need to move away from "a culture of government handouts".

Mr Maharaj also stresses that the taxi industry needs to develop a structure within which it can regulate it-

By SVEN LUNSCHÉ

self to address issues, such as subsidies, road safety and, most importantly, taxi wars.

"There are over 480 different taxi organisations in the country and they need to find a common voice."

Responding to a recent call by the SA Black Taxi Association for the government to intervene and regulate the industry, Mr Maharaj says he has resisted becoming directly involved.

"I am looking at what is happening in the industry and am deeply disturbed by the violence, but for the time being the process of consultation is more important than taking steps which could further divide the main players," he says.

He says, however, that he will be meeting his provincial counterparts tomorrow to discuss the recent wave of violence.

Mr Maharaj says that the government has not yet decided whether his department or the Ministry of Public Enterprises will have jurisdiction over Transnet.

But he indicates that Transnet, with its wide interests in all sectors of the transport industry, will be an essential player in an integrated transport policy.

He has met Transnet MD Anton Moolman but did not give details of the discussions.

Responding to recent calls by the ANC-led National Transport Policy Forum (NTPF) for Transnet to reverse its recent commercialisation drive and again be controlled directly by Parliament, he says the NTPC is just one of the parties in the industry.

He is critical of privatisation, saying: "What do you achieve by exposing, for example, airports to market forces? You can't have the

various airports competing with each other."

But Mr Maharaj stresses the need for efficiency and the fact that Transnet units will have to be self-supporting. (332)

Asked whether he will reverse the deregulation of the air transport industry introduced by his predecessor, he says that he would not like to be labelled either a regulator or deregulator.

"I will ask the key players to address the issue."

He sees his role as that of a facilitator for the different players in the industry. "Many key players are already flexing their muscles and it will be my job to balance out the various interests."

Mr Maharaj sets only two preconditions for an overall strategy — it has to be efficient and fit in with the guidelines of the reconstruction and development programme (RDP).

Laser profits from emigrants' rush

SI Times (Buss)

By JULIE WALKER

LASER Transport, holding company of Stuttafords Van Lines, Pickfords and Frasers International among others, benefited from an increase in emigration to post higher interim turnover and earnings.

In the six months to March 1994, turnover of R81-million was 40% higher than in the previous comparable period. Operating income of R6-million was a fifth more than before, and financing costs were little changed at R2-million. 12/6/94

A tax loss plus the over-provision

for tax in previous years reduced the obligation to zero — enough to push net income 123% higher to R4-million.

A dividend has not been declared because Laser still carries net current liabilities of R7,7-million — up R1,5-million on last year. It bought refrigerated goods transporter Mainline Carriers for about R11-million and expects to announce another acquisition in the next few weeks. (332)

Laser shares are at a high of 370c, a third above net asset value of 274c.

Laser chief executive Denis Kaye says the fleet has been upgraded because larger capacity trailers are now permitted. This permits the carriage of an extra household each way at no extra cost but at additional revenue.

Mr Kaye sold 32% of Laser to eastern Cape businessman Tony Cotterel's Pocot Trust at 68c a share late in 1992 after resigning as chairman. Mr Kaye was later reinstated as an employee of the group. Mr Cotterel is the managing director.

Laser moves into overdrive

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Laser Transport Holdings, the Epping-based transport services group, has carried its 1992/93 turnaround into the first half of 1994, posting a 122% increase in earnings to 40,2c (18c) a share.

Turnover for the six months to March increased two fifths to R81,8m (R58,5m) on the back of steadily improving trading conditions, including an increase in emigration and increased market share in the commercial transport and machine moving divisions. (332)

Net income, which increased 123% to R4,02m (R1,8m), exceeded net income for the entire previous financial year (R3,9m).

MD Tony Cotterell said net income was boosted by cost controls and the effective zero-rating of tax due to an overprovision in previous years and an unused tax loss.

Operating income rose to R6,02m (R5m) and interest paid was static at R2m (R1,99m). The interim dividend was passed to strengthen the balance sheet.

In the six months Laser bought refrigerated goods transporter Mainline Carriers, continuing the spate of acquisitions of the previous year. "Laser's launch into the traditionally high entry barrier contract transport business comes at a substantial discount to net asset value," Cotterell said.

He said Laser was fast becoming a full transport service group with interests in

furniture removals, freight transport, tankers, heavy haulage, refrigerated goods, logistics and distribution. A further acquisition was expected to be announced in the next few weeks.

CE Denis Kaye said he expected the group's full-house services to smooth out the cyclical nature of some divisions like the furniture removal business. "Long-term distribution contracts with Laser-trans and Mainline's blue chip clients keep our vehicles operating seven days a week."

The vehicle fleet had been upgraded in line with the new road ordinance allowing larger capacity trailers to carry more cargo at the same cost.

He said that with SA being welcomed back into the international community, the group had seen a marked increase in the number of inquiries from overseas agents and Laser had been able to consolidate its position in neighbouring countries.

Laser's shares have moved in tandem with the much improved results but were untraded at 370c on Friday, slightly lower than its 12-month high of 375c on May 13 and more than three times the value of its low of 105c a share at the same time last year. Net asset value at the end of the six month period was 274c.

CCB agents blamed for Lubowski death

WINDHOEK — The inquest into the 1989 assassination of Swapo advocate Anton Lubowski ended in Windhoek, Namibia, last week with his lawyers blaming 10 Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB) agents for the murder.

They were named as Ferdie Barnard, Calla Botha, Slang van Zyl, Irish mercenary Donald Acheson, Chappie Maree, Staal Burger, Wouter Basson, CCB MD Joe Verster, Charles Neelse and Johan Niemoller.

In closing arguments before Judge Harold Levy, lawyers said the aim of CCB units in SA and Namibia in 1989 was the disruption of their enemy by means including assassination. They argued that the 10 CCB members were implicated in the killing on the basis of common purpose. Documents showed the CCB had legitimised murder, they said. A finding should be made against individuals instead of against organisations which could not be tried.

Lubowski was shot dead outside his home on September 12 1989. He had recently been appointed deputy director of finance and administration for Swapo's election campaign, and his selection as a target was to further the CCB's objective of disrupting the elections, the court was told. In early 1989 Burger, Basson, Van Zyl, Maree, Botha and a Nick Nienaber had worked for the CCB's Region 6, focusing on Namibia.

The lawyers said highly placed people connected to the CCB afterwards admitted the murder was a CCB project but were not willing to confirm it under oath.

Murder charges were laid against Acheson in 1989 but were withdrawn in 1990 due to a lack of evidence, caused partly by the police's inability to extradite witnesses from SA.

Four years of investigation by lawyers and police preceded the inquest, which began on April 18. Levy must now consider almost 4 000 pages of evidence before making a finding, expected later this month.

Very little evidence was led on allegations in Parliament in 1990 by then Defence Minister-Magnus Malan that Lubowski had been a Military Intelligence spy. Most of the evidence had exonerated the slain activist, lawyers said. — Sapa.

Maharaj, provinces to meet on 'taxi war'

TRANSPORT Minister Mac Maharaj said at the weekend he would meet provincial transport officials today to discuss taxi violence.

He said the industry needed a structure within which it could regulate itself to address issues such as taxi wars, subsidies and road safety, the Sunday Times reported yesterday.

"There are more than 480 different taxi organisations in the country and they need to find a common voice," he said.

Maharaj said he had resisted becoming directly involved in the issue of regulating the industry despite calls to do so by the SA Black Taxi Association.

He said the process of consultation was more important than taking steps which could further divide the main players.

MARK ASHURST reports that industry sources said violence at taxi ranks was "mercifully low" given the lack of regulation and the vast sums of money involved.

Violence was minimised by the "benevolent monopoly" encouraged by the Johannesburg city council, council transport spokesmen said.

Transport policy in Johannesburg reflected the dangers posed by rogue elements within taxi associations and the threat of private hit squads employed to defend lucrative routes, the sources said.

Johannesburg municipality spokesman Greg Meyer said ranks were allocated to taxi associations on a principle of damage limitation.

This was the only viable option for the municipality. "Order can only be maintained by allowing taxi associations to manage ranks independently. Taxi associations with a viable constitution and licensed operators get a monopoly on their ranks."

A new rank would be allocated for use by the Lethabile Taxi Association (LTA) if it could prove possession of permits allowing it to use Johannesburg routes, said Meyer.

Business Day Reporter

A new spate of shootings began when the LTA occupied Johannesburg ranks allocated to the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) on May 27.

The LTA, previously aligned to Saldta, abandoned the ranks in November after a factional dispute within the organisation.

The municipality, which owns the ranks, had no authority to investigate allegations made by the rival Federation of Local and Long Distance Taxi Associations that Saldta officials had demanded thousands of rands from members for use of its ranks. There was no regulatory structure to prevent this, said Meyer.

Meyer denied claims that applications from the LTA for a new rank in Johannesburg had been ignored by the municipality. No applications from the LTA had been received, he said.

Saldta, the only major taxi association operating as a private company, controlled 10% to 20% of Johannesburg ranks. There was no evidence to support allegations that the municipality treated it "with kid gloves".

A National Transport Policy Forum workshop held in Johannesburg at the weekend called for one centralised Road Traffic Act to ensure standardisation and consensus regarding the successful implementation of traffic safety policies in the nine provinces.

Clear policies which were rigidly adhered to, and close co-operation and consultation could prevent problems such as those being experienced in the taxi industry, delegates said.

They also called for greater funding for traffic law enforcement.

The workshop was attended by representatives from the forum's transport safety committee, taxi organisations, freight and bus operators, the SA Consumer Council, local and provincial traffic authorities and government bodies including the Transport Department.

Delay in taxi forum

JOHANNESBURG. — A public forum to restructure the taxi industry has not been set up because both the government and feuding taxi associations claim the initiative must come from the other side. CT 14/6/94

Mr Peter Rabali, chairman of both the National Federation of Taxi Organisations and the SA Long Distance Taxi Association, said yesterday Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj should provide subsidies for taxi operators to ensure the industry's viability.

But Mr Maharaj is said to be waiting for taxi groups to form a representative body before negotiations can begin in earnest. (332)

Mr Maharaj could not intervene before taxi operators had "put their own house in order", said Transport Department spokesman Ms Elsa Kruger.

● A taxi driver who shot dead a colleague in an argument was stoned to death by bystanders in Germiston at the weekend, police said yesterday. — Own Correspondent, Sapa

Star 14/16/94

Laser Transport doubles net income

■ BY DEREK TOMMEY

Helped by interest payments rising only 1 percent and a nil tax situation, Laser Transport doubled its net income in the six months to March to R4 million (R1,8 million previously).

Turnover rose 40 percent from R58,5 million to R81,8 million, while operating income grew 20 percent from R5 million

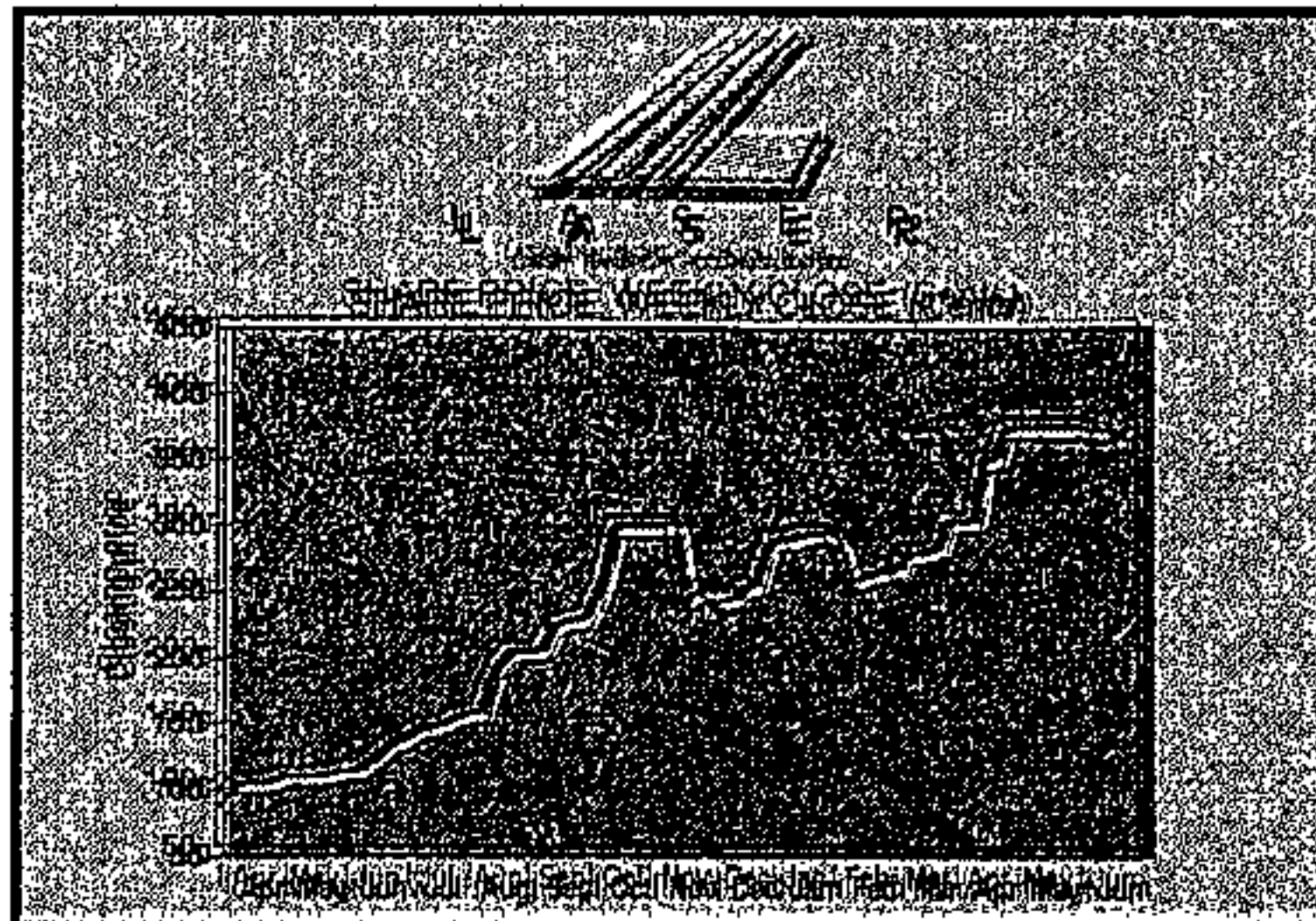
to R6 million.

Earnings rose from 18c a share to 40,2c, but no dividend is being paid.

Capital employed rose R21,6 million to R56 million.

This reflects a R6,5 million increase in shareholders' funds, and a more than doubling in long-term liabilities from R12,5 million to R26,7 million.

(332)



LASER TRANSPORT

On the move again

Laser is again on the takeover trail. Having recently acquired Mainline Carriers for R11m, it has finalised another takeover, that of Dolphin Transport for about R3,5m. Neither of these purchases affects the results released this week. (332)

The encouraging half-year figures from this transportation group were achieved on the back of instability in SA. Shortly after Chris Hani was assassinated, emigration escalated. The movement spilled over into Laser's first half and buoyed results, with EPS jumping from the year-ago 18c to 40,7c.

That was not the only reason for the improvement. Lasertrans, the commercial transport division, maintained the turnover growth seen in 1993 and domestic removals began to pick up towards the end of the year.

Laser has long been seen as a leading indicator of the state of the economy, so these results show SA business is again on the move and advancing. MD Denis Kaye reports that recruitment is rising as many more relocations of business people are occurring throughout the country.

The new management style and philosophies that have been brought in by MD Tony Cotterell when he bought control two years ago, are now evident in the balance sheet. Fixed assets have risen by 67% from a year ago and by half that in the past six months. After certain group properties were sold on lease back when Laser had liquidity problems some years ago, Cotterell has bought them back, believing that it will be cheaper in the long run.

These properties, with purchases of new

operations' cash flow. Kaye says Dolphin is a profitable organisation, which has 50 truck and 50 trailer units that will enhance both the Laser fleet and its balance sheet. Apparently Dolphin was bought at a discount to NAV. 332

The share price has climbed to 450c, on a historical p/e of 11,6. After these interims, though, the prospective p/e is much lower.

Even after the rapid price rise of the past year, the counter appears to have considerable steam in it.

Kaye says April and May have been "excellent" months, order books are full and international trade movements continue to improve.

Gerald Hirshon

PICKING UP SPEED

Six months to	Mar 31 '93	Sep 30 '93	Mar 31 '94
Turnover (Rm)	58,5	60,8	81,8
Pre-int profit (Rm)	5,0	1,8	6,0
Pre-tax profit (Rm)	3,0	0,7	4,0
Attributable (Rm)	1,8	2,1	4,0
Earnings (c)	18,0	20,9	40,2
Dividends (c)	—	—	—

fleet, account for the 67% increase in fixed assets and the correspondingly large rise, to R26,7m from R12,5m a year ago, in long-term liabilities. Yet, because of the stronger cash flow now being enjoyed, interest bearing short-term debt is marginally lower than a year ago and interest costs were held to much the same level.

Kaye says the Dolphin Transport buy-out, effective from June 1, was motivated by the operation's similarity to the Lasertrans division. Synergies can be expected to flow from the purchase. What is important is that the terms of payment for the organisation have been structured so that Laser will not be further geared, nor will it affect existing

BUSINESS — Making it work for you

STEERING INTO TAXI INDUSTRY

BY SABATA NGCAI

WOMEN are starting to make their presence felt in the male-dominated world of the taxi industry.

While some are employed as taxi drivers others are taxi owners — like businesswoman Mrs Pat Gorvalla of Durbanville.

"Hard work and dedication" are the keys to her success.

In 1955 when she was still a teacher, Mrs Gorvalla bought a car which she operated as a taxi after work and at weekends.

"I was approached by people in Bellville to buy a taxi," says Mrs Gorvalla.

"The problem was that there were only white taxi owners operating in the Bellville area."

She became the first black woman to own and a taxi in Bellville, making more money than she earned as a teacher.

As a taxi driver, Mrs Gorvalla has not encountered any major problems in the taxi industry, which is fraught with problems.

Mrs Gorvalla enjoys much support from the men with whom she operates in the taxi ranks.

"I have survived the taxi violence because I talk to people and show them when they are wrong," she says.

"I also know that the government regulations were the cause of violence and I made people understand that."

Mrs Gorvalla gave up teaching in 1964 to concentrate on her thriving business.

She owns a fleet of taxis which operate in Kraifontein, Bellville and the Northern Suburbs.

At 64 years, Mrs Gorvalla is no longer a taxi driver.

She is now looking after the operation of her 14 companies including numerous filling stations and leases her taxis to other people. "That's the way it should be," she said. "I am empowering them."

However, other women are also trying to make their mark in the industry, working as drivers.

They enjoy the work and command respect from their male counterparts. (332)

"When things go wrong I depend on my mouth," says Mrs Idie Palmer of Athlone. She said

there is no need to fight when a trouble erupts but "to talk is much better".

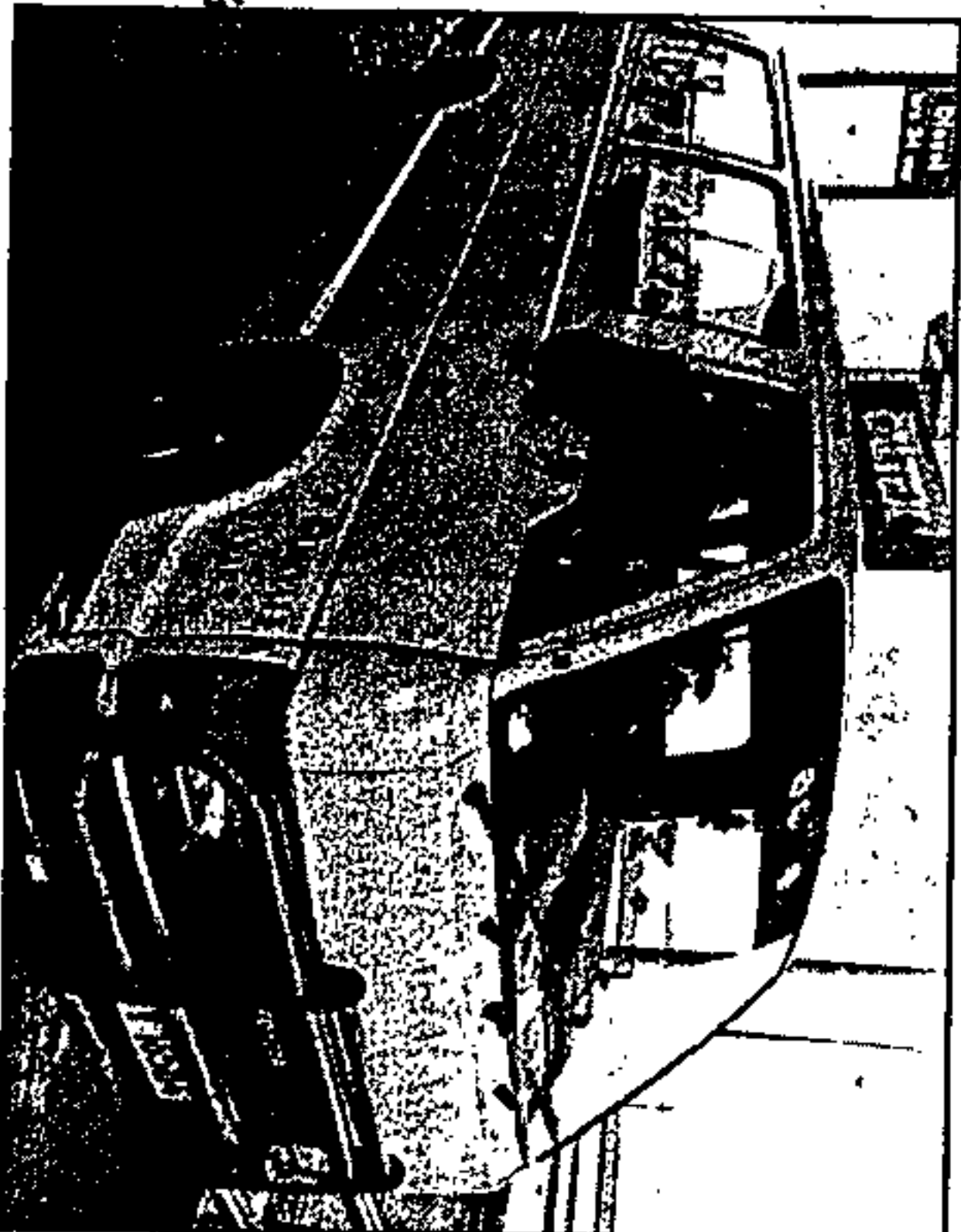
Mrs Palmer has been operating as a taxi driver for the past four years. Her 13-hour day starts at 6am and ends at 7pm.

"I really enjoy the job," she says and believes "more women should join" the industry.

Miss Wendi Stoffle of Guguletu, who started work as a taxi driver in 1986, also depends on her mouth to make things right 1746-2116/4

Miss Stoffle has much respect for her male counterparts and they also treat her in the same manner.

"We preach peace among ourselves, and guide each other when there is a need," she says.



DRIVING FORCE: Pat Gorvalla in one of her taxis
Photo: Roger Sedres

Southern African leaders promise prosperity

WAGHIED MISBACH

SOUTHERN African leaders' promised increased investment and prosperity for the region at the World Economic Conference held in Cape Town last week.

They included President Nelson Mandela, Zimbabwe's Mr Robert Mugabe, Tanzania's Mr Hassan Mwinji, Mozambique's Mr Joaquim Chissano and Namibia's Mr Sam Nujoma. International and local business leaders were also present for the two days of private discussion around the development at the region.

The mood was one of optimism and hope with the return of South Africa to the Southern African Development Council and the Organisation of African Unity.

Most of the talks between the politicians and the business leaders took place behind closed doors, but there was no longer a sense of "scepticism" which pervaded last year's meeting under the previous regime.

Mr Mandela opened the conference appealing for a "rebirth of the region and the continent".

Mandela said the legacy of colonialism had left a "lopsided development" in the region which led to

mass migration of skilled people.

A long-term goal was the creation of an African Common Market. Mr Mugabe spoke about the possibilities of economic co-operation with South Africa in tourism and manufacturing.

In one of the few incidents at the conference Mr Mugabe told a journalist to "go to hell" for asking a "racist" question.

Mr Mugabe was asked when he was going to stop blaming the whites for Zimbabwe's problems.

Mr Mugabe told the journalist that it was a racist question and said "You might as well go to hell for that racist question".

Break into property

BY LOVEJOY KWEZA

THE Seeff Organisation and Sanlam Properties, are offering bursaries for people wanting to become estate agents.

The bursaries are worth a total of R200 000 and are aimed at helping those "who would not otherwise be able to gain access to the property industry".

The five-day course starts on July 18 with 30 students.

Sanlam and Seeff will help successful candidates to find jobs.

Applications forms can be obtained from any Seeff branch or regional office. For details call Eddie Finkelstein (021) 419-0920.

Taximen angry Sowetan 17/11/94 over fuel hike

BLACK taxi associations have asked for an urgent meeting with Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha to discuss the 8c/l increase in the price of petrol from midnight today.

The SA Black Taxi Association and the National African Federated Transport Organisation have expressed shock at the hike and have vowed to protest against the decision.

They demand, among other things, that the black taxi industry be subsidised.

In announcing the increase, Botha said the rise was unavoidable because of a higher crude oil price and the worsening rand-dollar exchange rate. He said the Cabinet had accepted a recommendation by the National Economic Forum that the price of petrol be increased by 8c from midnight today. (332) (183) (244)

This will raise the price of petrol from the present R1,75 to R1,83 a litre. However, the price of diesel and paraffin will remain the same.

The associations said the announcement was probably the first unpopular decision taken by the African National Congress-led Government.

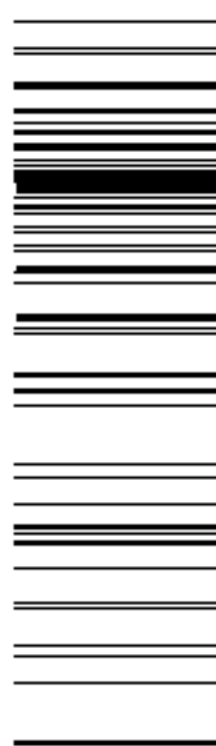
They said the move would force consumers to dig deeper into their pockets.

Sabta's national treasurer, Mr Joe Mabaso, said taxi owners were angry because they were not consulted when the Minister increased the petrol price. He said the taxi industry would hold protest actions outside Government buildings if their demands were not met.

Nafto president Mr Peter Rabali said Botha should give "special concessions" to the taxi industry.

The Motor Industries Federation said it was "a great pity" that it had been necessary to increase the petrol price.

The Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut said every effort should be made to create a new petrol-pricing system which would limit Government intervention.





Taxi owner Mr Dan Mawasha lies dead next to his car after he was gunned down by four attackers.

PIC: JONAS MANKEA

Fuel hike protests possible — Sabta

By Sharon Chetty

■ BOUGHT OFF Taxi industry

AN URGENT meeting between the South African Black Taxi Association and Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Mr Pik Botha will be held next Monday to address taxi drivers' opposition to this weekend's fuel price increase.

Sabta has warned of protests if the meeting fails to arrive at an "action plan of relief" for the industry.

Sabta's main complaint is that the industry was not consulted when the minister decided on the eight-cents-a-litre hike.

Situation is volatile

"The situation is volatile," Sabta told Botha in a letter this weekend.

"Sabta will do all it can to contain the

should have been consulted:

situation but it must be anticipated that the frustrations of individual taxi operators may again manifest in protest action," it added.

The association says that it is "imperative" for Botha to discuss with the industry ways in which the burden of regular petrol price increases can be eased.

Sabta added that at the time of the last increase, the industry was "bought off" with promises of investigations which never took place.

Meanwhile, retail giant Pick 'n Pay and local fuel supplier Engen have been

warned by Botha that their refusal to comply with the price hike may result in court action.

Old prices

Pick 'n Pay has said that it will continue selling fuel at the old price until stocks at its 14 outlets run out.

Engen has vowed to do the same.

Pick 'n Pay expects to start selling new stock by June 30, for which they will charge the new price.

The supermarket chain says it will continue its 20-year fight for the deregulation of the industry.

Five percent bus-fare rise for pensioners and pupils

Staff Reporter

(332) CT 20/6/94

PENSIONERS and school pupils will pay an extra five percent in fares from July 18, Golden Arrow Bus Services said today.

General manager Frans Mayoss said the increase would affect pupils' weekly and term tickets as well as

cash fares for special school buses and pensioners' clipcards. Ordinary tickets remained unchanged.

"The company regrets having to implement this increase, but it must be borne in mind that these tickets are entirely subsidised by Golden Arrow as a social service and at a substantial loss to the company."

Some examples of the new fares are: pupils' clipcards — average increase five percent; pensioners' clipcards — from R7 to R7,40; Go as You Please — from R130 to R136,50; Go as You Please (Hout Bay and Melkbos) from R200 to R210; Homeward Bound — from R85 to R90.

City busfares to go up 5% next month

CT 21/6/94
Staff Reporter

~~214~~ (332)

GOLDEN ARROW Bus Services yesterday announced an average 5% across-the-board fare increase for the Greater Cape Town area to be effective from July 18.

The company said scholars' weekly and term tickets would be increased by an average of 5%. Cash fares for special school buses and pensioners' clipcards would also rise by the same amount.

A spokesman said that from July 18 scholars' weekly fares for under-13s would increase from R10 to R10,50, and those for under-17s would go up from R15 to R16. Pensioners' clipcards were to be increased from R7 to R7,40.

Go As You Please fares would be increased to R136,50 from the present R130 and the Hout Bay and Melkbos route Go As You Please fares would rise from R200 to R210. Homeward Bound fares would go up from R85 to R90.

Buses not bullets

Southeaster Suppl to Sauti

BY SABATA NGCAI

Peace monitors have a new role to play after the elections: monitoring buses that operate between Khayelitsha and Cape Town. 24/6 - 28/6/94

This follows the restoration of bus services in Khayelitsha, Guguletu and Nyanga last month.

Golden Arrow bus company suspended its services in African townships seven months ago after they were disrupted by sporadic incidents of shooting.

A Transport Crisis Forum was convened to facilitate finding a solution to the crisis.

A forum spokesperson, Mr Larry Josephs, said the monitors were deployed on all bus routes in Khayelitsha.

"They will be taking note of any irregularities occurring during the operation of the busses," he said.

They will report back to the forum on their findings.

Mr Josephs said the monitors

were deployed in two shifts a day with 25 in each shift.

The morning shift works from 5am to noon and the afternoon shift from 1pm to 9pm.

Mr Josephs said both the peace committee and the bus company had to raise cash "urgently" to pay the monitors.

In Guguletu and Nyanga, the forum agreed that local community monitors should be deployed to oversee the smooth running of bus services.

Mr Josephs said the forum was formed by the Cape Metropolitan Transport Forum under the auspices of the Western Cape Peace Committee (332)

It was formed in response to an appeal by the bus company for intervention.

The forum consists of representatives from various organisations ranging from community to political organisations.

Mr Josephs said the agreement was publicised in 50 000 pamphlets distributed in the townships.

Transport sector well positioned for recovery

31 Day 24 16 194

MICK COLLINS

LAST week's dip in the transport sector index was temporary, with analysts at the weekend forecasting a renewed spurt in line with the economic recovery.

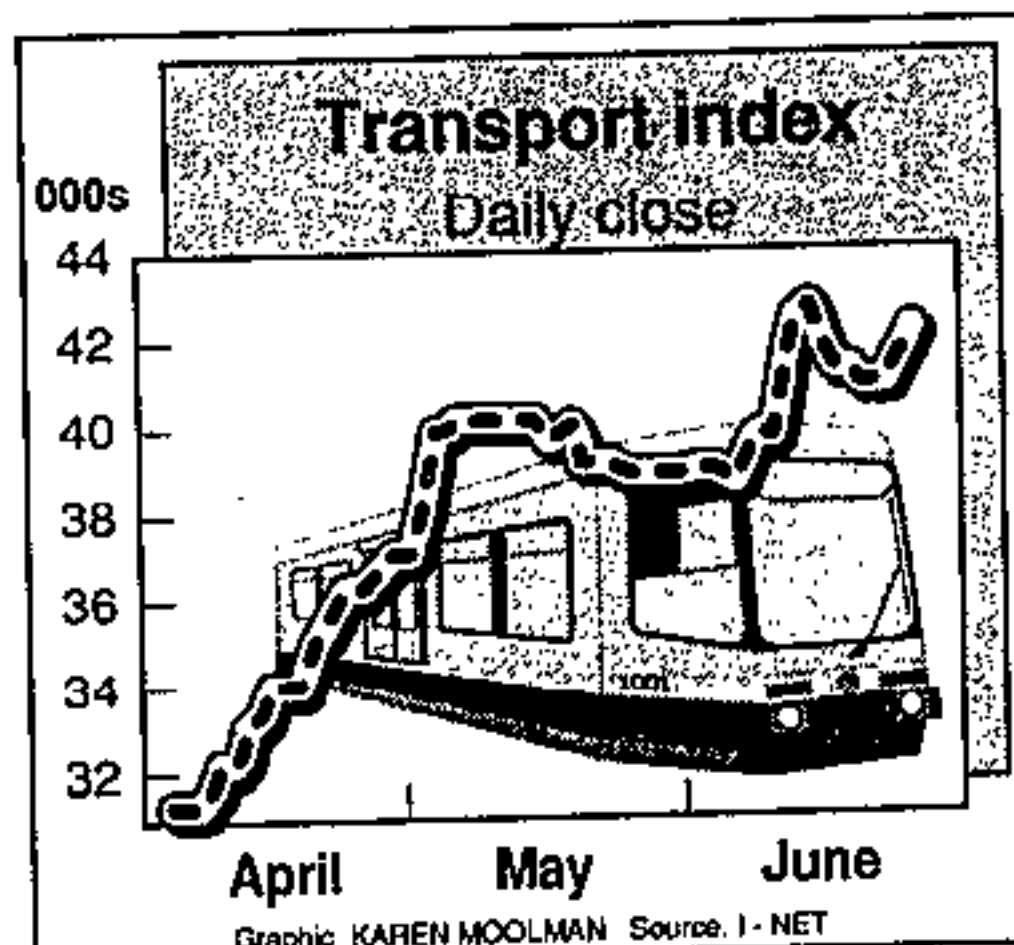
The index hit a low of 31 752 in April but put on 36,7% to a June 15 high of 42 727. The index slid sharply through the week, before regaining some of its losses to close at 42 050 from the previous day's 40 894.

"Economic recovery means transport stocks kick up. The sector is well positioned — SA is going to need wheels on the road," said one analyst.

Major index component Trenchor eased 3% from a June 15 high of R19 to Friday's R18,50. Other shares to follow suit have been Cargo which hit 300c earlier in the month only to slip back to 220c.

Unitrans — the other major component of the index — was fixed at R17. Mobile saw some support at the 445c level.

A market source said with the eco-



nomy growing at 3% there would be a multiplier effect on the transport industry but costs had to be well-controlled.

Fleet management was much more scientific than five years ago and that was the only way the sector survived through the recession.

He said while there had been no increase in diesel prices, this could be offset by higher wage demands.

An analyst said the temporary hiccup in the index had been caused by Trenchor where there had been a

double-whammy effect.

"The market didn't like it when the W&A acquisition was made," he said. "A lot of the package from W&A looked a bit questionable."

The market then started to ease off and this had contributed to a demise in the share and affected the index.

The share had found reasonable support at the R18 level.

"What with its transport division, container division and trailers, the company looks set for growth. If it wasn't for the W&A factor which seems to be weighing heavily on the market, the share could be worthwhile at these prices. One could be looking at earnings growth in the region of 25% (832)

He said Cargo and Longrail were recently very much in vogue after rumours of major restructuring in both companies.

This had since turned out to be a damp squib and "we are now seeing Cargo finding levels of 220c".

Longrail traded at 150c on Friday from a May high of 160c.

licence to print money' • Ramodike's demand to be reinstated

Taxi industry endangered

By Musa Zondi

THE taxi industry is facing a serious viability crisis, says Toyota marketing managing director Mr Brand Pretorius.

"Perhaps the greatest problem of all is the myth that operating a taxi is a licence to print money," he says.

This belief attracted a large number of operators, often with older vehicles, who went into the business at a time when the customer base was shrinking and the recession was biting deep into

commuters' pockets, he said.

The spiralling rise in the price of new vehicles because of the weak currency was also exacerbating the situation.

The rising petrol price and insurance premiums did not help this state of affairs either.

"The situation we have today, where maintenance is neglected and road safety norms are not always respected, is a direct consequence of operators maximising the utilisation of their vehicles at all costs. It is little wonder that the

industry has boiled over into its current state of violence," he said.

He proposes the establishment of a new taxi forum in which all the stakeholders participate. He also proposes a form of subsidy for the taxi industry. "It should not be impossible to establish a commuter-based subsidy programme in place of the industry-based schemes that have been used from time to time in other sectors.

The taxi industry may have to impose some form of self-regulation but must

steer clear of total regulation. "However, there has to be order in the taxi industry if it is to have any future at all," he said.

Manufacturers have a role play in the future of the industry. They should provide road safety training, transport management expertise and logistical support.

"The taxi industry should not be allowed to collapse any further and a fully integrated long-term approach is called for," he said.

CARGO CARRIERS

Picking up speed

Activities: Road transportation.

Control: Bolton Industrial Holdings 34,6%.

Chairman: G H Stein. Joint MDs: M J Bolton, G D Bolton.

Capital structure: 20m ord. Market capitalisation: R56m.

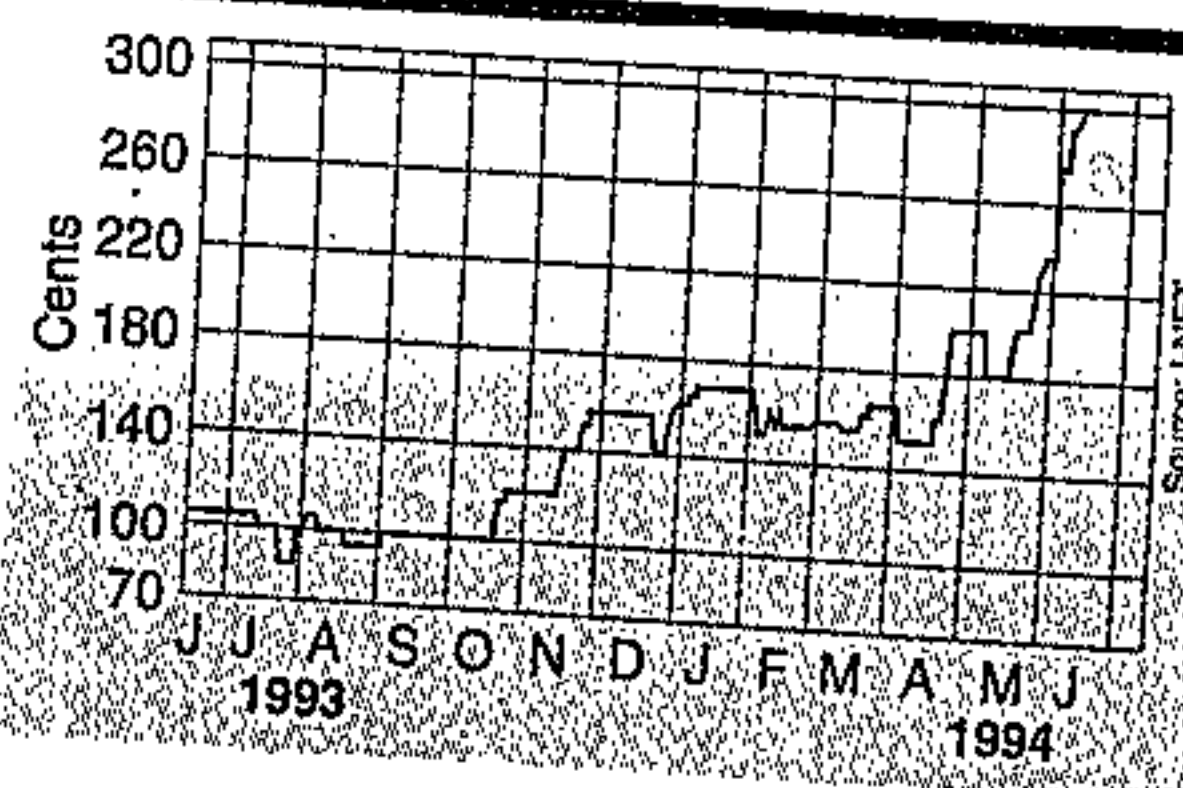
Share market: Price: 280c. Yields: 2,2% on dividend: 11,3% on earnings; p:e ratio, 8,9; cover, 5,1. 12-month high, 300c; low, 85c. Trading volume last quarter, 225 000 shares.

Year to February 28	'91	'92	'93	'94
ST debt (Rm)	29,1	20,8	7,7	0,5
LT debt (Rm)	7,5	7,7	8,2	16,7
Debt:equity ratio	0,65	0,50	0,27	nil
Shareholders' interest	0,47	0,51	0,56	0,51
Int & leasing cover	0,93	0,13	1,59	3,60
Return on cap (%)	6,4	0,9	8,7	9,6
Turnover (Rm)	180	182	175	180
Pre-int profit (Rm)	7,6	1,0	9,2	11,7
Pre-int margin (%)	4,2	0,5	5,2	6,5
Earnings (c)	0,5	(15,4)	11,7	31,6
Dividends (c)	3,5	nil	nil	6,3
Tangible NAV (c)	283	284	296	318

Management, having weathered market criticism that a change in the vehicle depreciation policy was behind Cargo Carriers' return to profitability in financial 1993, reported an almost trebling of earnings in the year to February.

Trading remained torrid but improved asset management and extensive planning focused on operations were behind the 28% climb in operating income to R11,7m on turnover which was up just 2% to R179,5m.

Cargo Carriers



Chairman Gerald Stein says the closure of some operations and the ending of several contracts curbed turnover. (332)

The improvement in the pre-interest margin is encouraging, up from 1993's 5,2% to 6,5%, but remains well below 1988's 15% — a level necessitated by the capital-intensive nature of the business.

Boosting the bottom line was the R1,6m (R50 000) capital profit on the sale of vehicles and a 45% decline in the interest bill to R3,2m, which saw pre-tax profit up at R10,1m (R3,4m). The change in the gearing of the transport group is dramatic. From 50% in 1992, it is now ungeared.

Joint MD Murray Bolton says the cement operation based in Pretoria was closed because of the depressed building and road construction industries, and the branch in Botswana was closed after a major contract ended. The assets, he says, have been redeployed in other profitable operations.

In line with management's belief that it can improve profitability by finding opportunities in domestic and regional markets, Cargo has expanded activities to the north and east of SA. However, managers remain concerned at the prejudice being shown towards SA carriers by transport legislation in neighbouring countries.

With benefits expected from the government's reconstruction programmes and a general improvement in the economy, management forecasts better earnings this year.

Despite the share price climb to 280c over the past few months, the counter remains at a slight discount to NAV. Investors wishing to make the most of an undervalued share have probably missed the chance, though benefits from an economic improvement will flow through.

Marylou Greig

NEWS FEATURE

'Hired assassins tail anyone who speaks about the taxi war'

By Khathu Mamalia

THE UNENDING war among different taxi associations, which has claimed hundreds of lives in the past five years, could perhaps be summed up in one phrase: Taxi operators are victims of success.

In almost all areas affected by the so-called taxi feud, *Sowetan* has established that the root cause of the carnage is the fight over routes.

The Northern Transvaal, especially the former homelands of Lebowa and Venda, has become the flash point of the bloody violence. At least 15 people have been killed in taxi related incidents in Venda this year, while more than 35 were murdered in Lebowa during the same period.

Most of the taxi drivers and owners interviewed spoke on condition of anonymity. They argue that hired assassins go after anyone who speaks about the taxi war.

In April *Sowetan* interviewed Mr Billy Zitho on the prospects of peace following the taxi indaba held at the Mahwelereng stadium near Potgietersrus. Two weeks later, Zitho was gunned down by unknown hitmen who ambushed him outside his Alexandra home.

Zitho, former general secretary of the Lehlabile Taxi Association which spear-headed the peace rally, gave a detailed account of the problems which he said resulted in the death of more than 400 people in the past five years.

He said that the real issue was taxi operators' successes. Explaining this assertion, Zitho said taxi owners who were prospering in the taxi industry

S. Victims of success

■ SENSELESS Taxi industry will

collapse if commuters continue to die:

tended to buy more vehicles, some of which could not secure routes.

Subsequently, said Zitho, they influenced other potential taxi operators to form a rival association which operated basically on the same routes.

"The 'original' association, claiming exclusive rights to the routes, mobilises its killing mechanism and the war erupts.

"The other group, believing that they too have a right to business, employ the best form of defence: attack. This leads to a vicious circle of violence as the rule of the jungle that 'eat or be eaten', takes charge."

He said in other instances, successful taxi operators who defected from their associations because they did not want to pay fines imposed on them, were the engine behind the formation of rival taxi groups. While the taxi-men continue to snipe at one another in the quest for total control of the routes, it is the innocent commuter who is caught in the crossfire.

Commuters, especially those who undertake long-distance journeys, have to weigh up the chances of reaching their destination against the tragedies that hang over the taxi industry. Last week, I boarded a taxi destined for Johannesburg at Pietersburg. Dur-

ing the good old days when the level of taxi violence was minimal, taxis travelling between Johannesburg and Pietersburg were arguably among the busiest.

But as the media and the police continue to count corpses of victims of the raging taxi war, commuters have resorted to other means of transport including trains and buses.

The driver of the taxi admitted to his handful of commuters that it was not a good day for business. It was about 10.30am on Thursday and the first taxi to Johannesburg had only four passengers.

He said several taxis would have left with full loads if it were not for the poor business resulting from the uncertainty of commuters.

Realising that the taxi might not get a full load and therefore not leave at all, the driver agreed with his colleague, who was transporting commuters to Germiston, to form one load. Those who were in the taxi did not feel safe. They said it was just a matter of time before they adjusted to other forms of transport.

Their message to the taxi operators was unambiguous: Stop the senseless killing or the taxi industry will collapse.

These fears are not unfounded. Several weeks ago, six Zimbabwean nationals were killed when a taxi was torched after being sprayed with AK-47 bullets in a Johannesburg taxi rank.

On Monday this week a mother and her 12-month-old baby was shot and wounded after unknown gunmen fired on a kombi at a taxi rank outside Lebowakgomo.

While some of the hired assassins are briefed to eliminate specific individuals in the taxi industry, others seem to be out to sow havoc and destruction by shooting at taxis full of passengers. The idea appears to be to instil fear in commuters and discourage them from using taxis belonging to a rival or particular association (332)

Some taxi drivers interviewed say the various peace meetings being held will not end the bloody fighting. They argue that most of the participants in these meetings are not sincere and that the real issues are never talked about.

"We normally commit ourselves to co-operation and co-existence but the fact is that it is this very co-existence that is the source of trouble. How can different associations operate on the same route without encountering problems? We should look into these issues more realistically and agree to form one association," said a taxi operator. Another taxi owner said some taxi-men have stopped attending these peace meetings as some of them were followed and killed by hitmen who selected and tailed their targets from the meetings. He called on the government to intervene as a matter of urgency to stop the carnage that threatens the existence of the black-owned business.

Irate taximen *Sowetan* to see Botha

By Joshua
Raboroko 27/6/94

IRATE black taximen are to meet Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs Mr Pik Botha today to discuss the increase in the price of petrol.

The South African Black Taxi Association and the National African Federated Transport Organisation have expressed their shock and vowed to protest against the decision.

They demand that the minister consult them immediately to discuss the rise and that the black taxi industry be subsidised like buses and other modes of transport. (332) (13)

Sabta national treasurer Mr Joe Mabaso said taxi operators and owners were angry because they were not consulted before the minister increased the petrol price.

Nafto president Mr Peter Rabali expressed his shock and criticised the unilateral decisions which he said was reminiscent of apartheid.

Violence 'blot on new SA'

Mufamadi meets taxi associations (332)

■ BY JUSTICE MALALA

The SA Police Service will be urgently requested to consider the establishment of a special investigation unit to probe taxi violence, Minister of Safety and Security Sidney Mufamadi announced yesterday.

In a statement after separate meetings with three rival taxi associations, Mufamadi said it had been agreed that the three would hold a joint meeting as early as possible next week in order to develop concrete proposals to deal with taxi violence.

Yesterday's meetings took place after Mufamadi invited the Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association, the Letlhabile Taxi Association and the Southern African Long Distance Transport Association to participate in discussions aimed at resolving the taxi conflict in the Transvaal.

The taxi industry has been tense since violence flared on May 28, claiming 11 lives in one week. A truce between the three associations was

MINISTER to urge police to set up special unit to probe fighting

brokered by the National Peace Secretariat on June 2 but sporadic violence has flared in the industry since.

The proposal to establish a unit to probe taxi violence will be considered a priority on the agenda of the committee of commissioners of the various police establishments which meets on Thursday, Mufamadi said.

During the discussions with the associations, he had made it clear that peace between the various rival organisations could not be achieved unless the taxi industry "puts its house in order first".

He said taxi violence was rivalling political violence in intensity and was a blot on the country's new democracy. It was also sabotaging the economic growth necessary to uplift the community.

Taxi war claims another life

Taxi association officials yesterday condemned the shooting dead of a taxi operator in Pretoria earlier in the day.

A member of the Letlhabile Taxi Association was shot dead about 4.30 am at the Bosman Street bus terminus.

Shots were fired at another driver near a Pretoria taxi rank at 7.30 am, but missed.

Port Elizabeth-based Unceto Service Taxi Association official Gibson Nombeo told a press con-

ference in Pretoria that Unceto opposed violence as a means of solving problems in the industry.

Southern African Black Taxi Association official Joe Mabaso told the conference that peace agreements between officials of taxi associations could not end violence without addressing the cause of the violence, namely the poor economy. He said the Government should take steps to increase the profits of taxi operators. — Sapa.

Taxi industry wants to install petrol pumps

THE Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) has demanded licences to erect petrol pumps at 25 major central taxi points throughout SA to ease the burden caused by rising prices.

In a submission to Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha, the OTI, which claims to represent 80% of SA's taxi associations, said it took the step to help taxi operators reduce overheads and improve profitability.

In that way it will help bring down the level of violence in the industry.

OTI executive Joe Mabaso said the organisation dissociated itself from the National Economic Forum (NEF), which had agreed to the recent petrol price increase without regard for circumstances prevalent in the taxi industry.

Mabaso, who is treasurer of Sabta, told a media conference: "If our demands are not met, we might not be able to control our people and will blame govern-

THEO RAWANA

ment for any action that might follow."

In its submission, the OTI said it would not accept "restrictive red tape" such as special reporting systems at those pumps and there should be no interference in the selection of petrol suppliers. (332)

"There must be no quota system," Mabaso said.

"The solutions we propose are tried and tested. They have been used for decades, and continue to be used, by farmers' co-operatives and big business. The taxi industry now demands the same treatment.

"Taxi operators throughout the country have reached the point where, unless a satisfactory response is received from the Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs, they will take some form of protest."

Mabaso said Botha had promised to take the list of demands to the Cabinet as

soon as possible.

"Botha said he has sympathy for the problems facing the taxi industry and we will get a response as soon as possible.

"We will be going to our members to tell them to suspend whatever protests they planned after last week's petrol price increase," he said.

Operators had rejected the suggestion of a special taxi pump at designated petrol outlets, because that would fly in the face of the reconstruction and development programme, Mabaso said.

Operators demand that government impose a specific levy on the petrol price and that money raised be made available to Minister without Portfolio Jay Naidoo for the reconstruction and development of the taxi industry.

Transport subsidy 'overhaul' needed

81 Day 28/6/94

TRANSPORT Minister Mac Maharaj yesterday warned that a major overhaul of the R2bn-a-year passenger transport subsidy system was needed.

Speaking at the annual transportation convention in Pretoria, Maharaj said the present system for commuter services, as administered by the Transport Department, failed to meet the basic needs of potential passengers. He doubted whether bus and train subsidies benefited those who really needed them.

Putco, one of the main recipients of the subsidy, said passenger subsidies were an important element of the industry.

MD Mike Oldham said he was "apprehensive" until it was clear what was being envisaged. The subsidisation of passengers was an integral part of SA's transportation system and what was needed was a more integrated system.

Analysts said other independent passenger transport companies could be affected including Bophuthatswana Transport Holdings, Spoornet's Metro Services and major municipalities.

Maharaj said SA faced a daunting task relative to the basic needs of the majority

MICK COLLINS

of its population. Large concentrations of people had been marginalised from mainstream socioeconomic development.

"This has also given rise to a shockingly inadequate provision of public transport infrastructure and services in urban and rural areas." (332) (334)

A better method had to be found to meet the requirements of the communities in planning commuter services. The time was past when this could be carried out in isolation. "Improving the public transport system in urban and rural areas is important to achieving the goals of the reconstruction and development programme (RDP). I will do everything in my power to ensure that public transport receives its rightful place in the RDP."

Transport policy must be part of government's macroeconomic and institutional policy reforms.

World Bank studies had shown that SA needed to upgrade its public passenger transport system substantially to be more competitive internationally.

☐ To Page 2

Mufamadi promises unit to probe taxi violence

PRETORIA — Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi announced yesterday that the police would set up a special unit to probe taxi violence.

He intervened as news came that another taxi driver had been shot dead in the city yesterday, despite a peace accord reached by long distance taxi operators three weeks ago.

Mufamadi said he had met three taxi organisations to discuss government's concern about the increasing taxi violence, and the SA Police Service would be asked to set up a special investigation unit.

The organisations were the Lethlabile Taxi Association, the association to whom the dead man belonged, the Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association and the Southern African Long Distance Transport Association.

He said a joint meeting with the organisations would be held next week to discuss proposals to deal with the situation.

STEPHANE BOTHMA

He said he had made it clear to them that peace between the various rival taxi organisations could not be achieved unless the industry put its house in order. This would include credible and effective disciplinary steps against the perpetrators of violence in their own ranks.

"I impressed upon them that taxi violence was rivalling political violence in intensity and was not only a blot on SA's new democracy but was sabotaging the economic growth necessary to uplift the community."

The driver was shot twice in the chest with a 9mm firearm at 5.10am at the Bosman Street bus terminus and died on his way to hospital, police spokesman Capt Dave Harrington announced.

Police on routine duty had found the seriously injured man next to his taxi and the area had been cordoned off while police searched for clues. The driver, who may not be identified

before his family has been informed, was from Hammanskraal.

About two hours later, several shots were fired at another operator in the same area, but nobody was injured in the incident.

The shootings took place three weeks after city police brokered a peace accord between warring taxi industry leaders operating the lucrative Pietersburg-Pretoria route. At the time, industry leaders said the agreement reached was a "lasting peace accord".

The agreement was signed by the Lethlabile Taxi Association, the Pretoria-Pietersburg Long Distance Taxi Association and the Federated Local Long Distance Taxi Association a few hours after unidentified gunmen opened fire on the Dairy Mall taxi rank where yesterday's shootings also took place.

Yesterday's killing was still under investigation, but Harrington said police "presumed it was part of the ongoing taxi violence in the city".

Government looking to slice housing red tape

A NATIONAL Housing Forum investigation into land invasion and squatting could lead to government slicing through legal and bureaucratic measures which have stymied affordable housing development for decades.

A forum spokesman said yesterday that one measure under consideration was the development of mass housing on unproclaimed land, but the legal ramifications of such a move had to be considered.

There were also proposals to construct, in the short term, basic homes — which could be upgraded later.

"There is a general realisation that we have to get rid of bureaucratic controls hindering the provision of services to land and the construction of low-cost homes."

"These and other measures have to be implemented as quickly as possible as it is clear that SA's poor are prepared to risk being criminalised to gain access to land," he said.

The forum's investigation follows the recent call by Housing minister Joe Slovo for speedy solutions to squatting, which was beginning to

ROBYN CHALMERS

reach crisis proportions.

Slovo requested regional housing ministers to identify suitable tracts of land in or surrounding urban areas which could be used for temporary or permanent housing proposals.

"I will also request them to develop, in conjunction with my department, an acceptable policy and strategy with regard to the invasion of land and the handling of squatting in as humane a manner as possible."

He feared land invasion was undermining the government's affordable housing programme and could jeopardise the chances of SA's destitute gaining speedy access to homes.

Slovo said that he had sympathy for landless people, but the government would not allow any queue-jumping.

"Squatting on land which is in the process of being developed for housing clearly has a detrimental effect on the very programmes which are being designed to provide the poor with housing opportunities," he said.

Wits staff in work stoppage

JACQUE GOLDING and MELISSA NIVEN

ABOUT 500 National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union members (Nehawu) launched a work stoppage at Wits University yesterday in response to a R2,046m cut in the university's government subsidy.

Wits said the personnel budget was reduced because two-thirds of it was used for staff benefits and cuts in money to students or levies on student fees were not feasible.

Nehawu spokesman Vusi Nhlapo said workers were demanding that the money be restored into the personnel budget because the funds were needed for their wage increases.

Nehawu members were demanding a R200 across-the-board increase while the university was offering R26 across-the-board, Nehawu said.

"The minimum wage of R1 300 will be raised by at least R100 should the money be placed in the personnel budget," Nhlapo said.

Wits said government's subsidy cut was to fund election costs and to contribute to the reconstruction and development programme. It already expected a R3m deficit for 1994.

Members ruined as taxi finance scheme fails

BY MONTSHIWA MOROKE

A multimillion-rand scheme devised by the Southern African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) and banks, to provide access to vehicle financing has collapsed, leaving thousands of taxi operators in financial ruin.

The association's members are carrying debenture certificates which are worth virtually nothing.

The shock announcement of the Sabta Foundation Scheme collapse was made by Sabta president James Ngcoya during a press conference yesterday.

Ngcoya, who is also president of the Foundation for African Business and Consumer Services, said Sabta had decided to appoint an independent commission of inquiry to investigate circumstances under which the money had gone missing.

"This scheme was started in 1986 by Sabta and Wesbank to provide the taximan with access to vehicle finance, which had been beyond his reach because of criteria adopted by the financial services industry," said Ngcoya.

"Since Sabta did not have the resources, skills and expertise to

30/6/94
administer the scheme, it was done for Sabta by Wesbank initially and subsequently by FutureBank," he added.

"Regrettably, because of economic and political reasons, the operation of taxis became increasingly uneconomical, which led to the repossession of many vehicles and ultimately the collapse of the scheme."

Sabta treasurer Joe Mabaso was unable to disclose the amount of money lost because he did not have records. However, Sabta spokesman Cyprian Lebese estimated the figure to be more than R10 million.

(332)

Cellular phones for minibuses taxis.

THEO RAWANA

THE SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) yesterday unveiled a project in which about 200 000 taxis throughout the country would be fitted with specially designed cellular mobile phone units.

Announcing the "biggest cellular phone deal in SA", which enjoyed the full endorsement of Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe, Sabta president James Ngcoya said at a news conference in Midrand the deal entered into with Panama Investment Corporation was part of Sabta's plan to provide optimal service to the black taxi industry.

Panama MD Seelan Moodley said Sabta would acquire a shareholding in Panama and a "substantial shareholding" in Panama's equity would be set aside for sale, on a private placement, to Sabta members.

A number of officials in provincial structures of Sabta would be directors of Panama and its subsidiaries.

Moodley said his company had entered the SA cellular phone industry through its subsidiary, Panama Communications.

Major cellular phone manufacturer Motorola would supply all Taxifone equipment and car-fitted company Pro-fit would install the Taxifones.

Motorola's SA representative Neville Huxham said the company's total financial commitment was still

being negotiated.

MTN had been chosen as the official network operator and Seacom, in the MTN stable, would be the service provider.

"During the day and in the early hours of the evening, these units will be used by taxi commuters to make calls," Sabta's Ngcoya said.

"After hours, the taxi owner can remove the unit, put it in his house and neighbours can use it."

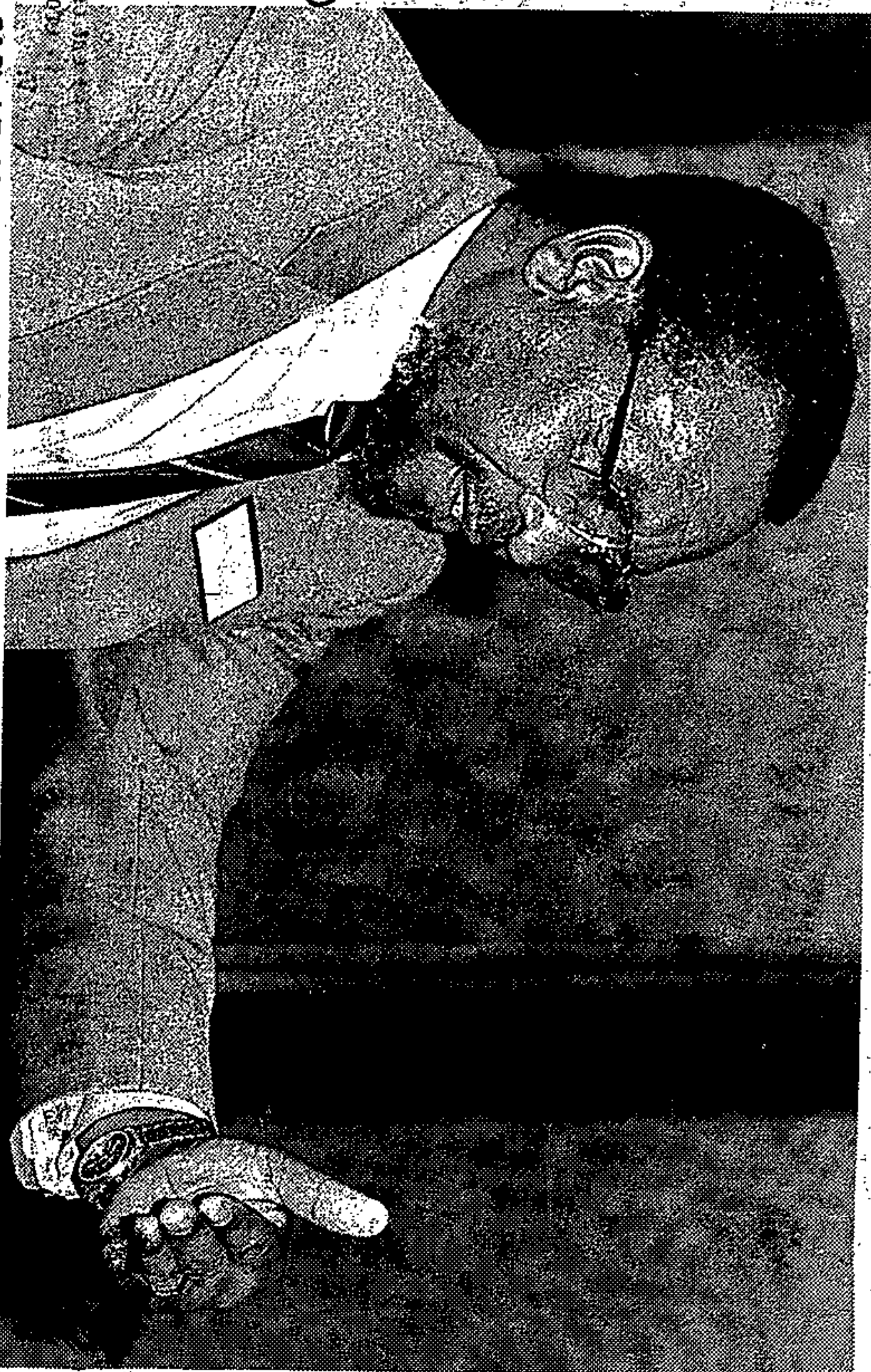
"The taxi owner will charge the user a premium for the use of the phone, thus allowing him to supplement his income."

Since the taxi owner received a detailed statement from the service provider at the end of the month, the driver would have difficulty misappropriating income from the Taxifone, Moodley said.

He said the cellular phone deal was only part of the partnership the two parties had entered into, which includes insurance schemes.

The Public Works Department said the project fell within the objectives of the reconstruction and development programme.

"The taxi industry is a cornerstone of our economy. As such, any successful development plans will have positive spin-offs for the entire macro-economic growth in the country."



SA Black Taxi Association president James Ngcoya announces a project to supply cellular phones for taxis. Picture: GARTH LUMLEY

Taxi fare increase angers commuters

Sowetan 30/6/94

By McKeed Kotlolo

ATTERIDGEVILLE taxi commuters will have to dig deeper into their pockets from tomorrow following a 50c fare increase.

The Atteridgeville-Saulsville Taxi Owners' Association yesterday announced that fares within the township would increase by 50 percent. Taxi fares between the township, Pretoria and Laudium will go up by 25 percent.

The association's secretary, Mr William Sithole, said the increases were unavoidable because of the recent petrol price rise as well as increased prices of vehicle parts. He added that the last fare increase in the area was three years ago.

The new fares would come into effect tomorrow morning.

Sithole said taxi fare within the township would go up from R1 to R1,50. Commuters travelling between Bloed Street Taxi Rank and Marabastad would now pay R2 instead of R1,50.

Trips between Atteridgeville-Saulsville and Pretoria have been increased from R2 to R2,50. The same

■ DIGGING DEEPER Taxi fares go up by 25 or 50 percent depending on routes; Putco bus fares up 4 percent:

amount would be charged for trips between the township and Laudium.

Criticising the price rise, commuters said they were not consulted. (332)

Mrs Mina Mthimunye, of Extension 2, said taxi owners should have informed commuters of their intention at least a fortnight ago.

"They did not even place notices on their taxis to warn us of the impending increase in fares," she said.

The Mamelodi Tshwane Taxi Association, Mamelodi United Taxi Association and the Soshanguve Taxi Association are expected to announce their fare hikes soon.

Meanwhile, officials of Putco, whose buses were boycotted by angry commuters on Monday because of a four-percent fare increase, were due to meet commuter representatives in Pretoria last night to discuss the issue.

Taxi fund folds

Sowetan

30/10/94

By Mzimkulu Malunga

A R10 MILLION FUND SET UP by taxi owners to provide security for themselves against loans to purchase minibuses taxis has collapsed.

The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association formally announced the scheme's collapse yesterday.

The scheme, which collapsed in September last year, affects more than 3 000 taxi owners.

"The collapse has caused a lot of problems to Sabta," said the organisation's president, Mr James Ngcoya, yesterday.

Ngcoya said Sabta would appoint a commission of inquiry to investigate how the money disappeared. The inquiry would also look into ways of overhauling the organisation.

The Sabta leadership still maintained that those who participated in the scheme would get their money back once the organisation was back on its feet. They did not know, however, how long it would take before the affected taxi owners could be refunded.

The Sabta Foundation, as the scheme was known, was established in 1986 and it only functioned well for the first two years.

It was initially administered by WesBank but was later passed on to FutureBank.

The scheme has given Sabta a lot of headaches since the late '80s. During last year's annual meeting members were warned about the problems being experienced with the scheme. (332)

Its collapse can be seen as the final bursting of the over-extended Sabta bubble after its development in the '80s prompted many to hail it as the "success story" of black business.

Asked why it took so long for the organisation to announce the collapse, general manager of the marketing arm of Sabta Mr Cyprian Lebese said it was because the organisation had been undergoing a reorientation programme for some time.

Ngcoya said all the partnerships in which Sabta was involved were under review. The organisation has also cancelled this year's annual general meeting which was to have been held at Sun City in September. Instead, a workshop on reconstruction will be held in October in Warmbaths.

Meanwhile, Sabta has announced a joint venture with a financial services company, Panama Investment Corporation, and a cellular phone service provider outfit, Sebcom, to install cellular phones in taxis. The target was to have the phones installed in more than 200 000 taxis.

Br!!! Br!!!



Sabta scheme's failure probed

91
BIDAY 30/6/94
THE SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta) was to conduct a "full and open" inquiry into the collapse of the Sabta Foundation Scheme, which was designed to help finance the purchase of vehicles, Sabta said yesterday.

Sabta president James Ngcoya told a news conference in Midrand the scheme, in which about 3 100 members had lost more than R10m, was a joint venture first with Wesbank and later Future Bank.

"Because of economic and political reasons the operation of taxis became uneconomic, which led to the repossession of many vehicles and to the scheme's collapse," Ngcoya said.

THEO RAWANA

Inviting Sabta members to come forward to give evidence before the commission, Ngcoya said Sabta was faced with a disgruntled membership while the other partners were "sitting comfortably" (332)

Treasurer Joe Mabaso said the scheme, which initially ran smoothly after being set up in 1986, started running into problems in 1988/89.

Ngcoya also said Sabta, in its programme of recovery, would not hold its annual conference at Sun City this year, but would hold a reconstruction workshop at Warmbaths in October.

Grinsaf bid to extend fleet

GRINSAF Holdings, a company owned by shipping firms Grincor and Safmarine, would list subsidiary Griffin Holdings next month and raise R200m to extend its fleet, the company said yesterday.

Griffin MD Mike Meehan said the Durban-based company would call a rights issue for R100m, with the balance raised from international ship finance markets.

The proceeds would be used by the company's wholly owned subsidiary, Southbourne, to buy a fleet of bulk carriers, and container and multipurpose ships.

Southbourne would charter ships to SA operators to export and import SA's raw materials, and to SA liner shipping operators, Meehan said. (332) (222)

AMANDA VERMEULEN

Negotiations were under way to buy four handy-size bulk carriers and container ships to be used by SA operators.

The company intended buying ships to the value of R200m by next March.

Griffin acquired Grinsaf's 100% shareholding of Eastbourne Holdings in January this year. Meehan said Hong Kong-based Eastbourne, which was formed in 1988, currently controlled a fleet of nine ships with a net worth of R180m.

Grinsaf, formerly Unicorn Shipping, is 60% owned by Grincor and 40% by Safmarine. Safmarine is a wholly owned subsidiary of Safren.

City Press 3/7/94

Zola Budds can speak too!

(332)

By ALI MPHAKI

THERE was a time when they were known as "third class" taxis. In fact, some strange law obliged them to display the "third class" sticker.

RIIDE TO ORDER... A commuter uses a newly installed cellular Taxiphone. Soon every Sabta taxi will have one.



But changing times and technology are turning them into first-class status symbols — fit for the most snobbish yuppie commuter. The cellular phone craze has hit the taxi ranks — and a ride to or from town will never be the same again.

Once project Taxi-phone is in full swing all SA Black Taxi Associ-

ation (Sabta) taxis are eventually to be fitted with specially designed cellular mobile units. To see what it was like, I took a "test ride" this week in a prototype Taxiphone minibus.

As I examined the phone at our Faraday Station starting point, I immediately sensed a hitch. The phone unit is fitted behind the driver's seat — and it would create a problem if someone in the back seat of a Zola Budd wanted to use it. Passengers in the middle seats would have to awkwardly shift their heads

aside to allow the phone cord to pass by. No problem, Sabta president James Ngcoya suggested later — the devices can just be fitted in the middle on the side of the taxi, allowing more flexibility. To make a call one uses a card that can be bought from the driver or a post office. The phone is removable — so that after hours the driver can use it in the comfort of his home, or let his neighbors use it. As we drove off, the commuter immediately found a use for it — he

called his employer to say he would be late for work. Then, as we entered Booyens, the driver noticed a taxi that had packed up — and called the owner to inform him. I started seeing a great future for the Taxiphone. Then, the acid test: as we approached Diepkloof the phone rang, and our driver had to answer. With one hand on the steering wheel, he held the receiver with the other, while his eyes watched the road. I wondered: would he react quickly enough if the vehicle in front stopped unceremoniously?

Despite my fears the Taxiphone will supplement taxi drivers' incomes, compensating somewhat for the recent increase in the petrol price.

As it turned out we reached our destination safe and sound. Long full contact with the world as it were. Whether these phones will have a negative impact on the driving of our taxi drivers is a matter of conjecture, but the erstwhile "third class" taxi has come of age.

Putco puts up fares

By Mzimasi Ngudle

PUTCO yesterday announced a 10 percent increase in bus fares countrywide.

Putco spokesman Mr Isaac Tait said the increase was the lowest for many years, and was in line with inflation.

The announcement comes after Putco last week suspended fare increases following boycotts and protests by commuters.

Tait confirmed that angry passen-

gers stopped about 170 buses in Pretoria on Tuesday in protest against the increases.

He said the fare hike was caused by a need to cover increases in wages, the high cost of replacing and maintaining buses, and last year's fuel increase which was not passed on to the passengers. (332)

Other cost increases had raised Putco's overall operating costs by more than 10 percent.

Tait dismissed perceptions that the company increased fares because it intended to offer its workers wage

417194
increases of between two and three percent.

"This perception has no basis. We are currently talking with trade union representatives and we hope that a settlement comparable to inflation will be reached," he said.

However, Tait said, excessive wage demands would jeopardise Putco's desire to keep the fare increase at a realistic level. Tait said Putco would arrange further talks with passenger representatives, and regional and central governments to discuss future passenger subsidies.

Taxis may soon get petrol pumps

TAXI associations are soon likely to win the right to operate and control petrol pumps at taxi ranks, with Cosatu representatives on Liquid Fuels Task Force set to agree to the proposal. *E/D*

Further meetings would be held this week and an agreement could be signed as a result, sources said. *4/17/94*

Cosatu negotiations co-ordinator Jayendra Naidoo confirmed on Friday the federation would support the proposal. But, reacting to a suggestion that this would represent a form of back-door deregulation of the liquid fuels industry, Naidoo said Cosatu believed a new regulatory framework should be introduced.

Naidoo said Cosatu believed the taxi industry had to be heard in discussions about the future regulation of the fuel industry as it had previously been excluded from the process. In addition, transport costs directly affected workers who lived

ERICA JANKOWITZ

far from their workplaces.

He urged the task force to reach agreement on how to minimise the effect of the recent petrol price hike on commuters as the increases were due to factors beyond the control of all players. *(332)*

He said meetings between Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha, the taxi industry and representatives of other parties, including Cosatu, took place last week.

On the issue of a new regulatory framework, he called for an independent regulatory body to fulfil this function and ensure government did not, through deregulation, merely hand over to an "oil industry cartel" which would fix prices.

The new system should also be structured to meet the government's reconstruction and development objectives.

Driver killed in renewed taxi violence

Crime Reporter

A PART-TIME taxi driver was shot dead in Brown's Farm squatter camp yesterday — and police are investigating the possibility that his murder could be linked to an AK-47 attack on four taxi drivers at Philippi taxi rank on Saturday.

Police said they feared that another taxi war could erupt soon.

Yesterday the body of a 31-year-old Brown's Farm squatter camp man was found near his vehicle after he had been shot in the head.

The man, who worked for iKapa town council, cannot be identified as his next of kin have not yet been informed of his death.

Mr Coleberg Ngebeza, 59, Mr Toto Mofu, 47, Mr Wiseman Wata and Mr Sigenu Hlangalwake, 45, were all shot in the leg on Saturday.

A police spokesman said gunmen opened fire at them from houses when they were standing talking outside their taxis at the Philippi rank.

The men were admitted to Groote Schuur Hospital.

No arrests have yet been made in connection with the attacks.

332 CFS/7/94

Taxi feud behind massacre

JOHANNESBURG. — Crisis talks yesterday between taxi owners, civic associations and the African National Congress found that Wednesday's East Rand massacre was the result of a taxi feud and was not politically motivated.

Eleven people were killed and 11 others wounded when gunmen opened fire in a drive-by shooting near Katlehong.

The attackers, according to a

local taxi industry leader, appeared to be from a splinter group of the Katlehong Peoples' Taxi Association which was now operating from Wadeville.

Local Kapta chairman Mr Nelson Ngwevyama said it appeared the shooting could have been as a result of "ill-disciplined Kapta elements" who reportedly intimidated, provoked and assaulted Wadeville taxi operators on Friday last week.

"They responded by killing innocent people. We condemn the attacks and extend our condolences to the victims' families."

Kapta would take disciplinary steps against the group that provoked the Wadeville drivers.

The SA National Defence Force and the police would provide security at the Germiston and Wadeville taxi ranks, local SA National Civics Organisation president Mr Paul Sehloho said.

Taxi industry badly in need of overhaul

Star

■ BY PATRICK WADULA

The taxi industry is going through a severe viability crisis caused by factors beyond its control. 817194

Toyota MD, marketing, Brand Pretorius says: "Perhaps the greatest problem of all is the myth that operating a taxi is a licence to print money."

"The belief that this is the case has attracted large numbers of operators, often with older vehicles, at a time when the customer base is shrinking because of recessionary trends and high unemployment."

Further pressure stems from escalating vehicle prices and maintenance. The high cost of insurance and fuel price hikes add to the predicament.

The situation we have today, says Pretorius, where maintenance is neglected and road safety norms are not always respected, is a direct consequence of operators maximising the utilisation of their vehicles at all costs. It is little wonder that the industry is beset by violence.

"However the strategic significance of the taxi industry from a social point of view will have to be recognised in the face of a relatively inadequate alternative transport infrastructure." (332)

The industry desperately needs to co-ordinate action to ensure its survival. He suggests the best way to achieve this would be through the establishment of a national forum with all stakeholders participating.

The industry may have to impose some form of self-regulation, but must steer clear of total regulation.

Pretorius says: "Vehicle manufacturers have a role to play in its future, as does the Government. The risk of all parties has to be reduced, as does the situation of an overpopulation of operators."

City Press
10/7/94
(332)

Long wait for taxi widow Sue



LONG DELAY . . . Sue Tshabalala has waited two years for compensation.

Dear Hotline,
My husband was a member of the Faraday Taxi Association, an affiliate of SABTA. He was a victim of the taxi war and was killed in 1992.

According to the terms of the association's membership contract I am entitled to funeral costs and funeral contributions collected at the Faraday taxi rank. As a widow I am also supposed to take over my husband's position at the rank. I have received none of these benefits. I have written three letters to

the association requesting permission to take over my husband's position at the rank but they don't respond.

I have also phoned the association and Sabta a number of times and they promise I will get what belongs to me but I have been waiting since 1992 and I am still waiting.

I have no income and my pensioned parents have been helping to support me and my two children. I have been trying to make ends meet by baking biscuits and selling them, but I cannot even afford to

pay my children's school fees.

I am sure my late husband did not imagine that I would be going from door to door selling in order to get a little money for food.

Could you please help me to speak to Sabta and Faraday Taxi Association so that they live up to their responsibilities and stop treating me this way? - Sue Tshabalala, Meadowlands

Dear Ms. Tshabalala,
We took up your problems with Sabta regional chairman Ken Lay.

neth Nkosi. He apologized for the long delay and said Sabta had been trying to reach a solution but had not received co-operation from some members of the Faraday Association.

Nkosi promised to make sure you were reimbursed immediately for the funeral expenses and that you received the money collected at the rank on your behalf. He also assured us that you would be able to take your rightful place at the rank without delay.

Taxi chaos: Hopes on new station site

(332)

ARL 12/7/94

□ Steps to solve Strand Street problem

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council has assured irate residents that all attempts will be made to keep Strand Street clear of minibus taxis once the new R2,1 million upper station deck taxi rank is in operation.

Executive committee member Ian Iversen said the council was committed to making the new rank work.

Mr Iversen — who is also chairman of the council's utilities and works committee, under which the city's traffic department falls — said steps were being taken to combat the problem in Strand Street.

The traffic department had already doubled the number of traffic officers assigned to the street to crack down on errant minibus taxi drivers.

Video cameras were also being used to catch drivers who violated traffic laws.

"We are cutting down enormously on people who escape the net," Mr Iversen said.

Some traffic officers had computer equipment on their motorcycles, allowing them to tap into the department's main computer system to check if drivers had previous offences, or if they had outstanding fines.

He said officers "resisted" delivering summonses to areas like Guguletu and Khayelitsha.

At the committee meeting yesterday, councillors commented on a weekend Press report calling for a tougher approach to combat errant minibus taxi drivers and an accompanying front-page picture showing taxis blocking traffic lanes.

Councillor Gordon Oliver said the

report reflected the "mood of impatience" of the people of Cape Town at the taxi situation in Strand Street.

While he was not criticising the traffic department, Mr Oliver observed: "The article reflects that our response has been weak."

Traffic manager Wouter Smit said the report did not accurately reflect measures taken to curb traffic offences by taxis in Strand Street.

He said there were up to three traffic officers on duty in Strand Street every day.

The number of officers assigned to Strand Street had been increased from 20 to 43, and a total of 5 833 traffic fines were issued in Strand Street in the first six months of the year.

This included 2 116 "driving violations", 670 overloaded vehicles and 1 377 parking fines.

Mr Iversen said he was convinced the council would be able to deal with the taxis in Strand Street once the rank moved to the station deck, but he said it would not be an easy process.

There were only about 230 traffic officers who had to deal with more than 4 000 taxis.

Councillor Kenny Penkin said Mr Smit should write a letter to the editor of the morning newspaper concerned complaining that certain facts were not included in the story.

Mr Oliver said the Press was not at fault, and it was important to keep the media on the council's side.

"This kind of report goads everyone into action."

Mr Iversen said the taxi liaison committee would meet today in a bid to iron out problems.

Taxi association Codeta was running a training scheme to improve driver behaviour.

Taxi rank pumps 'will be powder keg'

Day 12/7/94

THEO RAWANA

ALLOWING the erection of petrol pumps at taxi ranks — as demanded by the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) — would be a "powder keg which could ignite widespread violence", Nafcoc public affairs director Gab Mokgoko says.

OTI leaders met Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha last month to demand that 25 consumer pump concessions be granted to the industry to operate at taxi ranks countrywide, to lessen the effect of the recent petrol price increase.

OTI spokesman Joe Mabaso said after the meeting Botha was sympathetic to its position and had promised to respond soon.

A Ministry spokesman said yesterday a task force "much like the National Economic Forum task force on liquid fuel" had been set up and had been looking into the issue.

"It is expected to report to the Minister soon — the report might even be with him already.

"There is a lot of work being done on the question," he said.

The idea also found favour with Cosatu, whose representative on the liquid fuel task force, Jayendra Naidoo, said his labour federation would support the proposal.

Mokgoko said in a statement the idea of petrol pumps at taxi ranks was "a powder keg".

"Dissent about this proposal could ignite widespread violence and could severely destabilise the taxi industry," he said. (332) (488)

He added: "Neither petrol price deregulation nor taxi rank fuel pumps will address any of the major issues with which the taxi industry is grappling.

"Rather let all players get together to formulate a joint strategy.

"Perhaps the Transport Department should take the lead and get the taxi industry, the National Transport Policy Forum and the Department of Finance together in a forum to find mutually acceptable solutions."

Mokgoko said companies and individuals calling for the deregulation of the petrol price were doing so out of self-interest and without the support of black business or black labour.

Deregulation would not empower black business, but would cause large-scale unemployment because of the closure of hundreds of petrol stations, Mokgoko said.

Taxis split on station deck deal

332
ET 15/7/94

THE Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association has distanced itself from a campaign by the Peninsula Taxi Association not to relocate to the new station deck taxi rank.

Codeta secretary Mr Morris Nomala said yesterday Codeta would stick to its part of the deal and relocate from the Strand Street rank.

He said it would be unfair and unprofitable for other taxis to remain.

All Codeta taxi drivers were looking forward to the new rank because Strand Street was unsuitable for business.

Drivers were penalised daily for traffic offences, he said.

The move from Strand Street would probably be made in September.

Peninsula Taxis treasurer Mr Moegamat Leeman denied it would be unfair to leave his association in Strand Street while moving the rest.

His association would resist the move, but would not ignore the council.

— Staff Reporter, Sapa

Taxi boss warns against violence

Staff Reporter

(332) ARG 19/7/94
CONVENTION for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) chairman Kidwell Magwayi has warned Philippi taxi drivers who signed a peace pact with local residents to be "careful of your own members who favour violence because they are benefitting from it".

Mr Magwayi was speaking after Ramsey Mukayi, chairman of Philippi Taxi Association, and Sidwell Sityebi, chairman of the local civic association, agreed to an end to a two-week-old conflict that turned violent at times.

In terms of the accord, individual taxi owners will become members of the PTA.

Last week a 31-year-old man was shot dead and four men were injured after several Philippi residents tried to operate their own minibuses on established taxi routes.

A person was killed and four were injured in clashes at the weekend.

Yesterday Mr Magwayi said it was easy to make peace but to maintain it was very difficult.

"You must remember in your organisation there are people with secret agendas who like violence because they are benefitting. Such people will target you because you now support the peace move."

"This means your commitment to peace will be tested by your very own members. And you have to show them you are strong on your peaceful stance."

"But we appeal to our members to restrain themselves. We should identify the troublemakers and help to bring them to book."

Today Codeta members will again discuss the conflict at a meeting at the Civic Centre.

Call for look into public transport aid

AKG 20/7/94
Staff Reporter

THE minibus industry transports 1,6 million people daily without a state subsidy, while the "heavily-subsidised" train and road transport sector carries 600 000 passengers only a day.

It was, therefore, "abundantly clear" that the public transport subsidy policy needed "a radical overhaul", said National Transport Policy Forum secretary-general Ntise Matlhoko.

This was one of the key issues which would be discussed at a two-day workshop in Johannesburg in September.

It would be aimed at expanding and developing the existing policy on subsidies and making recommendations to Transport Minister Mac Maharaj. (332)

Council to 'enforce' taxi move

332 CT 13/7/94
Staff Reporter

ALL minibus taxis will operate from the new R2,1 million station deck rank when it is completed, despite a taxi association placard protest yesterday.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said all taxi associations had agreed to operate from the new rank when the matter was first discussed.

"The deck is being built and it will be enforced that they operate from there," he said.

Regular meetings between the council and taxi associations were held to discuss the issue, he said.

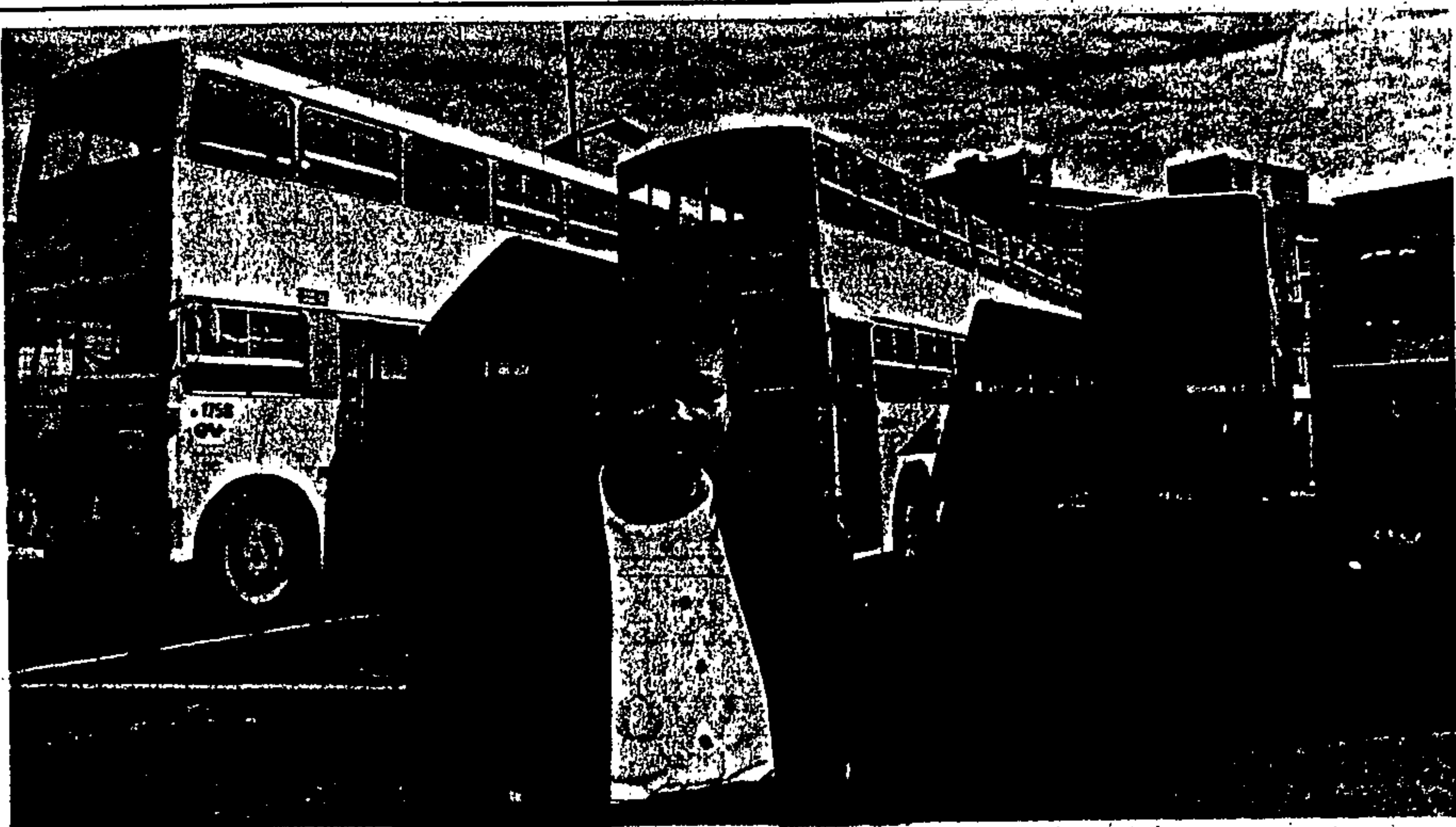
Mr Dolby described the demonstration, protesting the move from the Adderley Street side of Strand Street to the station, as "good humoured".

Taxis were seen displaying placards asking commuters to call the mayor's office if they did not want to board taxis at the station deck.

They also called for the mayor's office and the traffic department to stop harassing them in Strand Street, claiming that the council practised apartheid, and called for the removal of traffic chief Mr. Wouter Smit.

Mr Smit said he had no comment on the placards as "everyone was free to express their view".

● Anger as gangs harass taxis — Page 5



AT THE WHEEL: Nomaindia Mfeketo, the first woman director of Golden Arrow Bus Service, also holds several other community-based portfolios. Picture: BRENTON GEACH, The Argus

Dynamic Nomaindia determined to get buses on the right road

□ Golden Arrow's new director wants to help commuters by improving service

NOMAINDIA took three days off two weeks ago to spend some well-earned time with her two children. Making quality time available for her family is necessary, but not always possible.

Besides her new position as a director of Golden Arrow Bus Services, Nomaindia is also involved in the ANC Women's League, a member of the SA National Civics Organisation, co-chairperson of the Cape Metropolitan Negotiating Forum, and co-ordinator of the Local Government Committee.

"My children don't always understand my work situation, and that is frustrating, but this is the sacrifice I have made.

"At some point in my life I had to forego the luxury of being a mother and a parent to be able to dedicate myself to what I believe in. I think it's for the good, as I've always been a fighter against racism and sexism."

Nomaindia regards herself as an

ordinary person who has developed because of the struggle. She wants to see more women becoming involved in business, not only in the bus company, but in similar positions, as she believes there are many women who are capable. For now she has her hands full improving the bus services for the community of Cape Town.

FOR the first time in the 133-year history of public transport operators in Cape Town, Golden Arrow Bus Services has appointed a woman as a director. Staff Reporter FRANCESCA VAN ROOYEN spoke to Nomaindia Mfeketo, who holds several other community-based portfolios, about her new position and the future of public transport.

"One of my main aims is to promote efficiency. The buses have to arrive on time, which is not happening now, and we can't do business like that."

"The taxi service is just as important to the community, and I feel

that Cape Town has a population big enough for both taxis and buses," said Nomaindia.

"There is space for both because buses can get where taxis can't. The bus service just needs to be developed sufficiently, especially in the townships."

Safety is another issue that needs to be considered.

"Taxis or buses are not safe if you don't build an environment of safety. That competition between buses and taxis mustn't lead to an insecure situation, therefore taxis mustn't see buses as taking profit away from them, or vice versa."

Nomaindia feels buses are much safer because they are bigger and less accident prone.

"The taxis drive fast, and usually in overcrowded conditions. This creates a higher risk of accident."

Her community involvement is of utmost importance to Nomaindia.

"It is not only the bus company, but also the community I am representing," she says.

"Wherever I am, I am supposed to be speaking for things that would benefit the people more than anything, and it's a real challenge."

Nomaindia explained that Golden Arrow ploughed profits back into the community through a training and education foundation that was founded last June and which spawned a bursary fund as well.

About her appointment as the first woman director in the company, Nomaindia says: "I intend to play my role constructively, as I'm not a token, and definitely not here just to balance the gender question."



VICTORY SIGNS: Midrand Local Peace Committee chairman Roger Oxlee, surrounded by leaders of a dozen taxi organisations.

PHOTOGRAPH: TJ LEMON

12 Reef taxi groups offer hand of peace

ANNA COX

TWELVE taxi organisations joined hands on Thursday and took part in a peace-signing ceremony committing themselves to resolving differences peacefully and improving their service to commuters.

in the transport industry such as the lack of subsidies, of infrastructure and of training, but this signing is a major step towards peace in the industry."

The peace initiative was started by the local peace

committees of the north-east, Alexandra and Midrand in October last year.

According to Oxlee, since the establishment of Ivory Park in 1990/1, conflicts have emerged between taxi organisations in this sub-region.

There was open conflict in August 1992 and the peace structures embarked on an ongoing process of mediation to prevent further violence.

In October 1993 the three peace committees established a Taxi Peace

Forum for the sub-region.

"This forum has resulted in the taxi industry taking responsibility with other role-players for solving conflicts, and negotiations were held to resolve problems on routes involving all 12 associations.

"It has been successful in that no major violence has occurred since August 1992. The aim is that the small success which has been achieved so far over two years can translate into permanent peace," Oxlee said.

ers. The organisations were from the volatile taxi areas of Alexandra, Midrand and the north-east Rand, which includes Tembisa and Kempton Park. In future they hope to negotiate their differences.

Midrand Local Peace Committee chairman Roger Oxlee said. "There are still many inequalities

More police, monitors for W Cape taxi ranks

Political Staff

(332)

MORE police and peace monitors are to be deployed at Western Cape taxi ranks because simmering tensions have resurfaced, provincial Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane announced yesterday.

CT 26/7/94

He said problems included "the apparent intimidation of operators and passengers".

He called on operators to exercise restraint and to refer all grievances either to the task force investigating a single taxi association for the region or to the independent mediators.

Taxis want piece of govt action

By Waghnied Misbach

LACK of government support lies at the heart of the taxi industry crisis, a taxi association official claims.

While the rail and bus industries receive government subsidies, taxi drivers feel they have been ignored.

Apart from that the problem could be within the taxi associations. Disunity and in-fighting have dogged them over the years, often resulting in bloody clashes.

The associations were scheduled to meet the Department of Transport this Thursday to discuss various issues.

The largest taxi association in the Peninsula is the Convention of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta). Secretary Mr Morris Nomala said they want "equal treatment".

"We transport more people than buses and trains put together, but we do not get the same treatment," Nomala said.

Without a government subsidy, drivers are hard-pressed to pay their

hire-purchase instalments and inflated insurance costs on their vehicles.

With the spiralling cost of spare parts, tyres and petrol, the industry has become increasingly vulnerable to the recession.

South
"In this industry taxi drivers only last between two or three years," Nomala said.

But internal wrangling in the various taxi associations is also a major obstacle towards moves to regulate the industry. While Codeta is the biggest association, with about 3 500 members, there are many smaller associations.

(332)
Those divisions were highlighted last week when the Peninsula Taxi Association (PTA) drivers protested in the city centre against the plan to move hundreds of taxis from the Grand Parade and Strand Street to the R2,1 million station deck ranks.

This is expected to solve the problems of traffic control, queuing of passengers and the taxi driver's constant headache of paying out hundreds of rands in fines for illegal parking. The deck, provided by the

City Council, will cater for 250 taxis to 23 destinations.

For the PTA, the move to the station would mean the loss of their special permit which allows them the best standing place in Strand Street, said the City Council's Mr Alan Dolby.

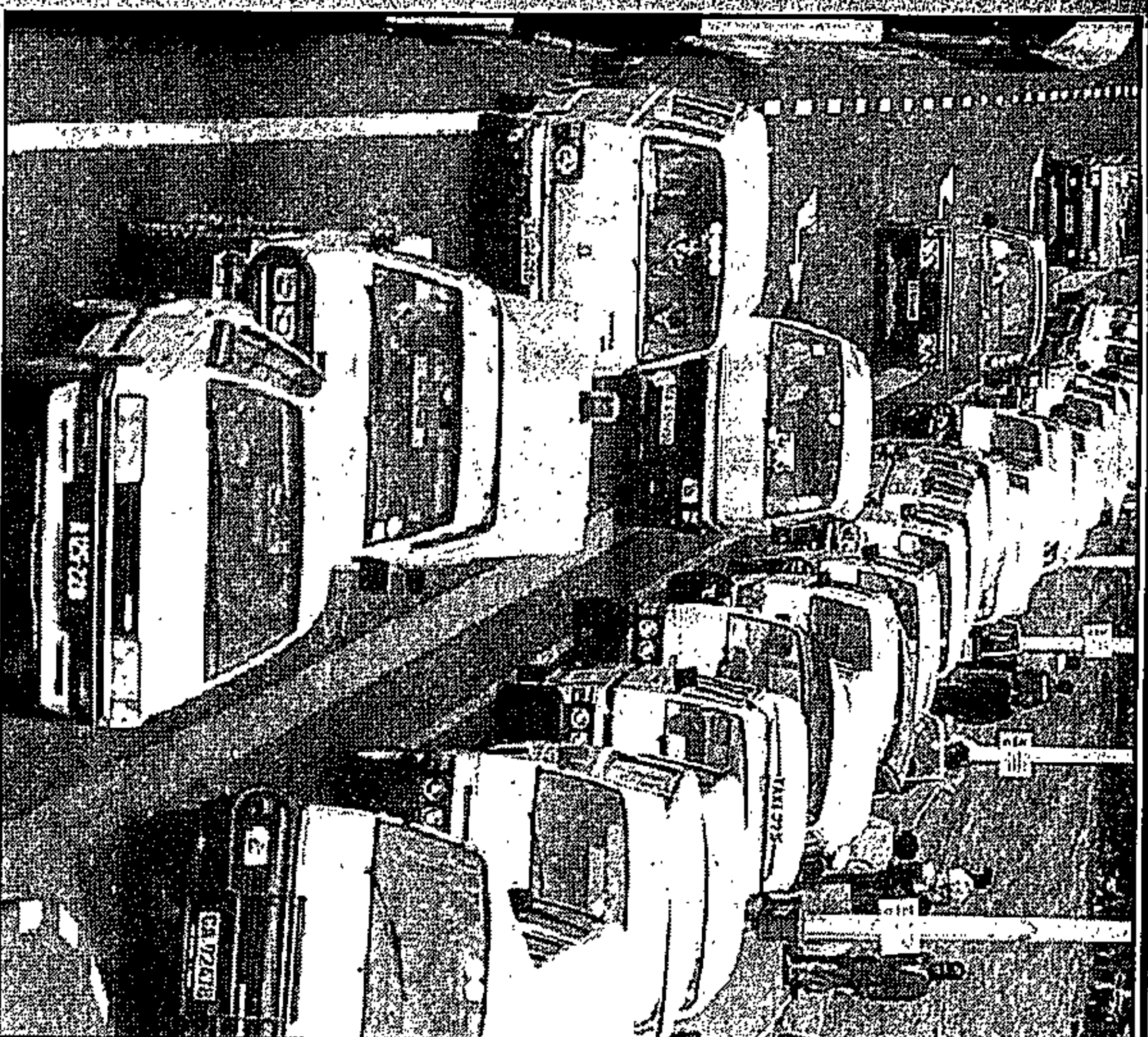
The PTA had refused to agree to the move since negotiations for a suitable venue started two years ago.

Dolby insisted that parking on the Grand Parade and Strand Street from September was "non-negotiable".

● The Western Cape Peace Committee has brokered a peace agreement between the warring Philippi Taxi Association and the area's residents following a clash in which one person was killed.

The conflict started when a group of 15 resident taxi drivers refused to pay the association R600 each to join the Philippi rank.

Peace Committee fieldworker Mr Mailbongwe Sopangisa said that residents had agreed to pay the fee by July 25.



TAXI JAM: Traffic chaos is one result of the lack of control in the taxi industry

Transnet bids for Libyan contract

332

CT 2817194
From SELLO MOTLHABAKWE

JOHANNESBURG. — Transnet had bid for one of the contracts for Libya's proposed \$5bn construction of a 3 000km railway line, said Bertie Hekroodt, project leader for wholly-owned Transnet subsidiary Trans Trade.

Hekroodt said Trans Trade had submitted a tender for the technical evaluation of the project.

He declined to disclose the value of the SA bid.

The successful tenderer would review three technical presentations and select the most feasible. Alternatively, it could suggest alterations.

"The successful tenderer will be invited to set up a joint office with Libya's Railway Authority for Project Construction and Operation."

Trans Trade would complete the technical scrutiny, if awarded the contract, before deciding to tender for the major contract.

A new form of petrol outlet

Fuel price cut for taxis in pipeline

Star 29/7/94

■ BY MONTSHIWA MOROKE

Cheaper fuel for the taxi industry is in the pipeline following an agreement between the Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs and the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) this week.

This breakthrough was announced at a press conference in Johannesburg by OTI co-ordinators who said they hoped the first fuel outlet would be operating from early September.

The OTI includes the SA Long Distance Taxi Association, SA Black Taxi Association, National Federated Taxi Association, SA Metered Taxi Association, and other taxi bodies.

It is expected that 25 permits will be issued by the end of next month following the initial pilot applications. The petrol pumps

are to be installed in densely populated areas.

"After a year's talks agreement has been reached between all members of the liquid fuels task force of the National Economic Forum (NEF) that a new form of fuel outlet — a taxi installation — should be created.

"The purpose of the taxi installation is to provide relief to the industry by accruing and distributing benefits to its members," said an OTI statement.

Members of the NEF's task force include organised business, all the major oil companies, the Government, organised labour and the Motor Industries Federation.

OTI members believe this body will be seen as speaking with one voice and helping the industry to reduce violence.

Taxi industry set to erect petrol pumps

B1 Day 29/7/94

THE taxi industry had been given the green light to erect petrol pumps at taxi ranks nationwide, the Organised Taxi Industry said yesterday.

The breakthrough was a sequel to a meeting with Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha earlier this year when an industry delegation demanded licences to erect petrol pumps at 25 major central taxi points, industry convenor Boetie Letsoalo said.

The organisation, which represented 80% of SA's taxi associations, said it took the step to help taxi operators reduce overheads, offset fuel price increases, improve profitability and bring down the level of violence in the industry.

The organisation said all members of the National Economic Forum's liquid fuel task force had agreed that a new form of fuel outlet, called a fuel installation, should be created to

THEO RAWANA

provide relief for the taxi industry by accruing and distributing benefits to its members. (332) (183)

Botha had promised he would "present this to Cabinet next week for rubber stamping".

A Ministry spokesman confirmed yesterday that a report on the issue had been drawn, finalised and sent to Botha, who had indicated last week he would raise the issue with Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

Letsoalo said 25 pumps would be erected in densely populated areas. A committee would sit next week to work out the finer details.

Letsoalo said the organisation catered for the interests of different taxi associations and the benefits would accrue to pump operators.

Profits from fuel sales would be used to reduce taxi operators' insurance premiums and other overheads.

Angry taxi operators threaten huge strike

B1 Day 518/94

THEO RAWANA

TAXI operators were threatening the biggest strike SA had seen because oil companies were trying to sabotage plans for petrol pumps at taxi ranks, an Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) source said yesterday.

The source, who wished to remain anonymous, said petrol companies were known to be trying to persuade Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha not to go ahead with the pumps plan. (332)

The OTI seemed to have made a breakthrough last week when it announced that the liquid fuel task force of the National Economic Forum had agreed that a new form of fuel outlet — called a fuel installation — should be created.

The organisation had met Botha earlier this year and demanded licences to erect petrol pumps at 25 major central taxi points, to provide relief for the taxi industry by accruing and distributing benefits to its members. The organisation said Botha had given the green light for the erection of 25 pumps at taxi ranks across the country. (332)

Ministry spokesman Roland Darryl confirmed then that a report on the issue had been finalised and sent

to Botha, and the Minister had earlier indicated he would raise the matter with the Cabinet.

Darryl said yesterday pressure of other business in the Cabinet had "squeezed" the petrol pump matter out of the agenda, and the issue would be discussed next Wednesday.

He said the Minister refused to comment on the allegation that oil companies were putting pressure on him not to go ahead with the plan. "He said you are welcome to speculate on your own to that effect," Darryl added.

The OTI source said: "The taxi industry is totally unhappy with this situation and could go on the biggest strike SA has seen if its efforts are frustrated."

A forum source, who also spoke on condition of anonymity, said the problem was "not insurmountable", although oil companies had raised serious concerns over the issue.

"The business component of the task force had raised serious concerns over the pumps, indicating they were unhappy that their interests would be put out by the decision," he said.

Petrol pumps for taxi ranks

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The taxi industry has received the green light to erect petrol pumps at taxi ranks nationwide, the Organised Taxi Industry said yesterday.

The breakthrough followed a meeting with Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Mr Pik Botha earlier this year when an industry delegation demanded

licences to erect petrol pumps at 25 major central taxi points, industry convener Mr Boetie Letsoalo said yesterday.

The organisation, which represented 80% of SA's taxi associations, said it took the step to help taxi operators reduce overheads, offset fuel price hikes, improve profitability and reduce the violence in the industry.

Mr Botha had promised he would "present this to the cabinet next week for rubber stamping".

A ministry spokesman confirmed yesterday that a report on the issue had been sent to Mr Botha, who indicated last week he would raise the matter with the cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

(332) CT29/7/94

Mines dispute on new path

ERICA JANKOWITZ

THE NUM and Chamber of Mines have agreed to appoint independent political and economic analyst Eugene Nyati as the chairman of a conciliation board hearing which is scheduled to start today. 8/8/94

Commentators said they believed this was the first time a chairman without a legal background had been appointed to head a statutory dispute resolution mechanism of this kind.

Nyati, who is director of the Centre for African Studies, is expected to bring a new perspective to the collective bargaining process and actively participate in the hearing.

His grounding in economic and social processes was welcomed by both parties in the belief this would contribute to the conciliation process. (20)

The parties reached deadlock with the chamber offering an average 8% wage increase and the NUM demanding 12%. The NUM lodged a second dispute with the chamber on the issue of adult basic education and the development of skills.

The conciliation board is scheduled to sit for two days in the hope that the parties will end the dispute and reach a settlement.

Meanwhile, Seifsa and its 12 recognised trade unions begin a wage mediation process today after the parties failed to reach a settlement. Seifsa has offered an 8% wage increase but the unions are demanding between 9% and 12%.

An exemption proposal proposed by some employers was also in dispute.

Black fuel retailers reject petrol pumps at taxi ranks

THEO RAWANA

THE erection of petrol pumps at taxi ranks was not a good plan because it meant taking a slice of business from black petrol retailers, the National Black Fuel Retail Association (Nabfra) said at the weekend.

The Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) is on the verge of getting government approval to erect 25 petrol pumps at major taxi ranks nationwide following talks with Mineral and Energy Minister Pik Botha.

The scheme, which will provide relief to the taxi industry through distribution of benefits to members, received the approval of the Minister, who is in turn due to present it to Cabinet on Wednesday.

Nabfra chairman Moses Moloele said last Friday that while his organisation sympathised with the taxi industry, the deal did not address affirmative action because it amounted to taking from blacks to give to blacks.

Moloele said whatever arrangement was worked out in addressing the question of fuel-dispensing to taxis should be worked out with his organisation, which had more than 450 members in the Transvaal alone. (382) (758)

"Our organisation has many service stations in the townships.

"We benefit a lot from the taxi industry and we see the two sectors as members of the same family which should not be separated by any other force.

"We have been trying to get in touch with the OTI, with a view to finding a solution that will benefit both sides, but they have been at meetings all week, Moloele said.

"We feel that any deal that comes out should have our input. We all come from a disadvantaged community."

Land offer draws SA farmers

LOUISE COOK

THE promise of free land in Mozambique had attracted large-scale inquiries from SA farmers, sources said at the weekend.

Farmers were also being enticed by promises of various attractive guarantees and financial incentives from Mozambique.

Deputy director of Mozambique's Investment Promotion Centre Mussa Usmen said at least 25 inquiries from SA reached his office every month.

The move had the backing of the Mozambican government, which was encouraging the resettlements in a bid to help the economy recover after years of civil war.

Jose Albert, senior manager of Mozambique's Trade and Travel, a company assisting in visa appli-

cations, said rice, cotton, maize and cattle were the main sectors attracting interest. Most of the inquiries were from Eastern Transvaal farmers. (BIDe)

He added that interest was also being shown in potato and maize farming in the area on the Mozambique side of the Sabie region. Interest was also being shown in fruit farming, despite the fact that farms were smaller than similar units in SA. (383)

Mozambique was looking for investment and skills from all over the world and South Africans could be joining many others settling there, Albert said.

"Once an agricultural project proposal is approved, Mozambique allocates free land for a two-year period, during which sufficient progress must be made with the farming project," he said. 8/8/94

Meanwhile, sources from the Northern Transvaal Agricultural Union confirmed that efforts were being made to help resettle struggling farmers in Africa, but these farmers were more likely to move to Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Northern Transvaal Agricultural Union chairman Gert Ehlers said local farmers' interest in moving elsewhere was linked to bleak economic prospects locally.



Unitrans vaults hurdles to post earnings increase

MUNGO SOGGOT

ROAD transport group Unitrans shrugged off a slowdown in the company's drought-hit sugar operations and a poor performance from its cross-border operations to lift attributable profit 26,6% to R47,1m for the year to June.

Fully diluted earnings a share rose 22,4% to 100,4c and a final dividend of 23,5c (19,5c) a share was declared, which lifted the total dividend 15% over the previous year to 34,5c a share. Turnover was up 22,1% to R436,1m.

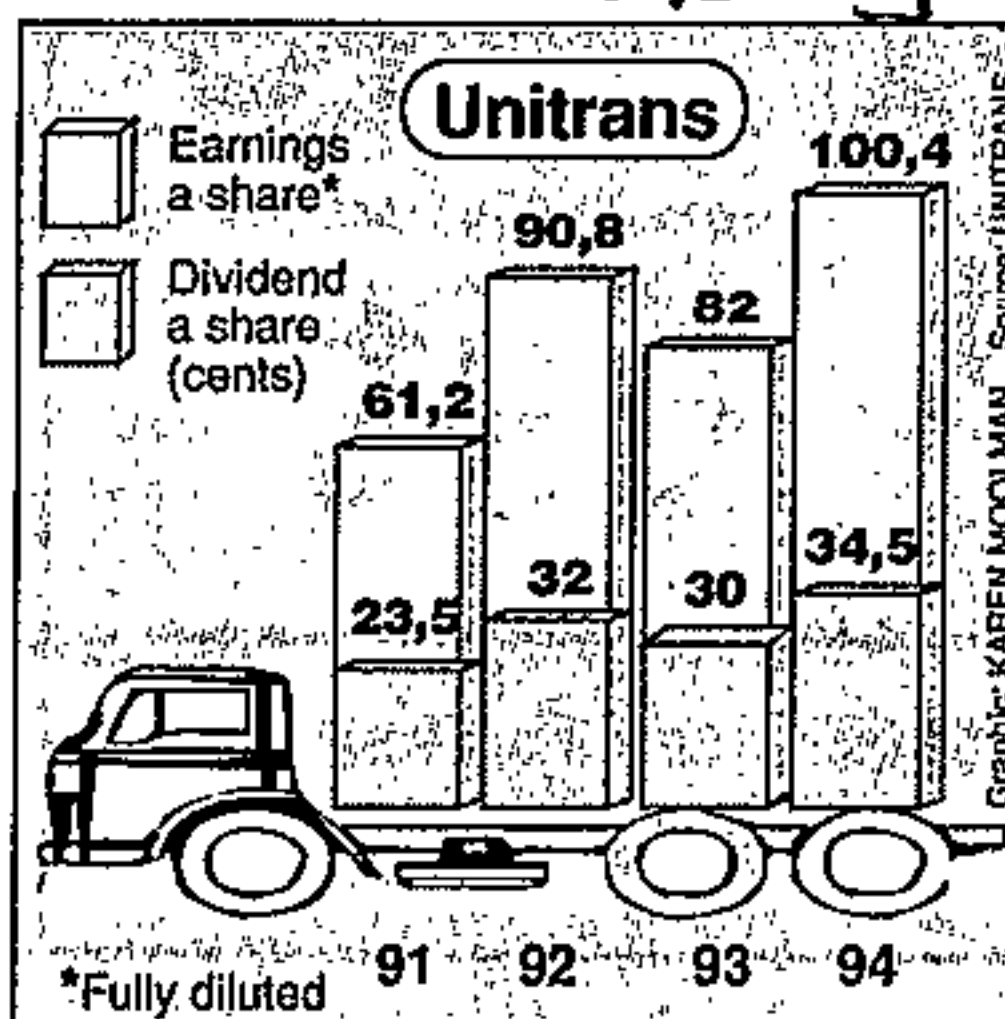
On Friday, the share matched its July 18 high of R17,75c after a low of R9,75c on August 4 1993.

CE Eduardo Garcia said the company had been hit by three loss-making contracts but that these were now "out of the way".

He said the company continued to have a sound financial base and earnings were expected to show "further real improvement".

Profit from disposal of vehicles and other assets had made a "significant contribution" to the company's earnings, he said.

Profit before interest and tax was



up 21,4% to R67,6m (R55,7m).

Net interest paid rose to R13m (R11,2m) because of a delivery of new vehicles which was part of the order for 400 new Mercedes Benz trucks reported last year.

Tax paid increased to R6,7m from R6,3m previously.

Garcia said the purchase of the new vehicles had been financed by fixed period loans on "advantageous terms".

Unitrans's capex bill has risen dramatically over the last two years, almost doubling in 1993 to R120,4m from R64,3m for the 15 months to June 1992.

The company reported extraordinary profit of R6,4m which had arisen from the sale of property.

"The past year has been one of the most difficult in living memory. The trading results of our freight subsidiaries did not meet our earlier expectations," Garcia said.

But he said the "formation of Unitrans Motors has proved to be a good decision".

"In its first full year of operation it has made a meaningful contribution to earnings, while Greyhound Coach lines has increased its fleet by almost 50% since it was acquired in February 1993. (332)

"The expanded fleet makes it possible for the company to open new routes and to enter the charter business on a limited scale."

Greyhound Coach Lines and Unitrans Motors contributed to the company's results for the first time when Unitrans posted its interim results in February.

The company again overcame difficult trading conditions to notch up a 22,8% increase in turnover to R217,3m, but it said that, had the results of these two companies been stripped out, turnover would have risen only 11,8%.

Retirement not linked to probe of Goniwe's death, says SADF

General named in inquest bows out

Star 8/4/94

■ OWN CORRESPONDENT

Port Elizabeth — The South African Defence Force has denied that the retirement of intelligence chief Lieutenant-General Joffel van der Westhuizen was a result of pressure from the inquest into the deaths of Matthew Goniwe and three other Cradock activists.

Van der Westhuizen quietly bowed out of intelligence circles on March 31.

He is said to have retired for medical reasons.

Van der Westhuizen's retirement comes less than two months before a finding is to be made in the reported inquest into the brutal murder of Cradock activist Clive Nkomo at Port Calata, Cape town, 31 months

MEDICAL reasons given for departure of Joffel van der Westhuizen from military intelligence service

and Sicele Mthembu in June 1985.

The 51-year-old general, a central figure in the inquest, worked his last day on March 31, after which he set off on a two-week holiday to an unknown destination.

His hush-hush retirement was confirmed by the SADF yesterday.

SADF spokesman Colonel John Koth said the SADF was not

in a position to divulge Van der Westhuizen's medical status.

He has been temporarily replaced from April 1 by Major-General Dirk Verbeek as head of Military Staff Intelligence.

Van der Westhuizen's name appeared on the controversial signal message calling for Goniwe's "permanent removal from society".

Evidence before the inquest court was that the signal, dispatched from Eastern Province Command while Van der Westhuizen was still a brigadier, had been Goniwe's death order.

Twenty days after the signal was sent to General Johannes Janse van Rensburg, head of strategy at the Secretariat of the State Security Council, Goniwe and his three United Democratic

Front colleagues were slain near Bluewater Bay, about 20 km outside Port Elizabeth.

Further evidence before the court, which has sat for 14 months in an attempt to unravel the eight-year-old mystery, was that Van der Westhuizen was the author of a top-secret military plan, with the codename Operation Katzen, which aimed to destabilise the Eastern Cape and included a plan to murder former Ciskei strongman Lennox Sebe.

Legal counsel for the Goniwe family at the inquest, George Bizos, SC, called during final argument for Van der Westhuizen and two other retired military officers to be charged with murdering the Cradock four. — Ecna.

¹ SAA in control — regionally

SAA has gained effective control of the southern African air travel market following the alliance between Airlink and SAA-aligned South African Express (SAX). ~~264~~ (332)

The move "will necessitate short-term re-trenchment" of some Airlink stewards and cutbacks in cockpit staff, Airlink joint MD Rodger Foster said.

Foster said it was likely staff would be re-employed once Airlink had consolidated its markets. *CR 8/8/94*

In terms of the alliance, Airlink's four 47-seater aircraft will be phased out in favour of 33-seaters, which will be used to service remote areas.

SAX would provide a secondary service using aircraft with a seating capacity of up to 70 passengers.

Soweto taxi boycott threatened

■ BY ABBEY MAKOE
SOWETO BUREAU

The ANC's Soweto region yesterday threatened to call for a boycott of mini-bus taxis in the township following a taxi blockade in Dube, Soweto, during which passengers were dragged out by striking drivers yesterday.

The organisation's regional treasurer, Norman Prince, who is also head

of the Government's Reconstruction and Development Programme in Soweto, described the behaviour of taxi operators as appalling.

"I saw elderly people being pulled out of taxis by striking operators. We cannot tolerate such hooliganism," Prince said.

Non-striking taxi operators, ferrying commuters from Zola, Soweto, to

the city centre and to Baragwanath Hospital, were stopped by strikers in full view of the police.

Many schoolchildren were also left stranded after being forced out of taxis.

Some taxi operators were seen refunding passengers. "But we have evidence that others could not continue to their destinations because they were not re-

funded.

"If the rivalry in the taxi industry is going to persist in this manner, we may be left with no choice but to call on our people to boycott them," Prince added.

"Those who are involved use commuters for their selfish ends. The number of commuters who have died in the crossfire is just too much," he said.

Transnet fund deficit axes profit

SAA pares bumper losses by R55m

JOHANNESBURG — State-owned transport group Transnet improved operating profit nearly 50% to R2,9bn for the year to March, but the black hole in its pension fund swallowed the lot, leaving it with a net loss of R2,79m.

This compared with the previous year's R1,7bn net loss which included an extraordinary cost of R831m for rationalisation.

Turnover for the group — which operates SAA, Spoornet and Portnet — rose to R14bn (R13,6bn).

Transnet had asked government to issue it R5,9bn in loan stock which would have yielded about R700m a year to help service the nearly R6bn pension fund deficit. But government refused, leaving Transnet to support pensioners

By AUDREY D'ANGELO

STIFF competition on international routes kept SAA in the red in the year to March, although its losses were reduced by R55m.

Domestic routes notched a net operating profit of R155m (R77m), but this was wiped out by a net operating loss of R178m on its international services.

This left the SA national carrier with an overall loss of R23m compared with a loss of R78m last year.

Senior public relations manager Leon Els said yesterday that "intense competition on the international side", with some national carriers still heavily subsidised by their governments, was to blame for this.

"SA's over-liberal application of its

who retired from the old SA Transport Services (Sats) before the formation of the present company in 1990. It was also supporting members who had retired since 1990.

Transnet MD Anton Woolman said government accepted responsibility for the pension deficit, but

could not accommodate the company's request within its own limited budget.

The liability in respect of Sats pensioners was R5,4bn, and there was a further R537m in respect of non-pension fund members. The board had adopted specific

international air transport policy makes it difficult for SA carriers."

"This policy permits foreign carriers access to SA regardless of the extent of demand from their own nationals and even if they are heavily subsidised by their own governments."

Els said this was one of the reasons SAA had decided to withdraw its services to Athens and Lisbon next month.

strategies to increase the pension fund's level of funding. The short-term fall decreased from R10,5bn in March 1992 to R4,6bn in March 1994. The fund had a healthy cash flow and paid out R886m to 18 500 employees in the past year. Total income was R3,3bn, while R2,6bn

was spent.

Transnet's "rightsizing" strategy had seen 30 000 employees lopped off the payroll in the past year. The staff level was now at about 116 000, compared with 280 000 employees 10 years ago.

While employee numbers were considered appropriate, there were significant unproductive assets in the group. Productive use of these assets, currently hampered by market conditions, could further improve the group's return on operating assets, which was 7,7% in 1993/94 against 5,3% in 1990/91. The medium-term goal was 8% and long-term 10%.

Capex for 1995/96 would be R1,9bn while borrowings would come in at about R4bn, partly financed locally.

232 DT 9/8/94

ce was obliged to give this
ment to the Attorney-General,
idge said.
gave the State leave to object
21 days from yesterday.
trial was postponed until Sep-
r 19.

Malaysian group housing deal

JOHN DLUDLU

African Development Corpora-
tion, a non-governmental or-
ganisation, and Malaysian-based El-
ternational yesterday signed a
random of understanding, pay-
ing way for a \$200m housing dev-
elopment in the Springs area.

According to Elcon vice-chairman
Aziz Abdullah, his company
will raise the \$200m. This would be
to build 40 000 low-cost homes,
shops, shopping complexes and
community centres. Afcor would pro-
vide for the development.

Elcon would provide \$10m to set up
a factory which would supply build-
ing materials for the development.

Malaysian trade commissioner Ab-
dullah said several other deals
were in the pipeline.

The deal included a distribution deal
signed today in Cape Town by
Paints SA.

that all rent arrears be written off and amenities be upgraded.

Feuding taxi groups in bold peace initiative

MARK ASHURST

FEUDING taxi associations yesterday an-
nounced a new peace initiative in a bid to
end the dispute between taxi operators
that has claimed 20 lives since May.

The "peace and co-operation agree-
ment" offered the SA Police Service and
other governmental bodies a basis "to
change their attitudes towards the taxi
industry", said Federation of Local and
Long Distance Taxi Associations (Feldta)
chairman Sam Manganye.

In terms of the agreement, members of
breakaway taxi associations will return to
their original routes and ranking stations.
These will be monitored by a joint commit-
tee of five representatives from each taxi
association and the Eastern Transvaal-
based Taxi Operators' Peace Initiative
Committee.

Negotiations between three associations
operating routes from Johannesburg to
destinations in the Northern Transvaal and
Eastern Transvaal had been brokered over
a three-month period by the ANC peace
department in Johannesburg.

Shootings broke out on May 28 between
members of the SA Long Distance Taxi
Association (Saldta) and the Lethlabile

Taxi Association (LTA) after LTA drivers
occupied Johannesburg ranks allocated to
Saldta by the Johannesburg City Council.

Saldta and LTA drivers will share Jo-
hannesburg ranks in King George Street
and Noord Street from August 15.

The LTA had been offered alternative
ranks free of charge by the council, but
LTA spokesman George Lekgau said the
allocation of separate ranks exacerbated
tensions between rival operators.

Police would be invited to develop a
specialist taxi unit to investigate taxi-re-
lated crime in conjunction with the joint
monitoring committee.

The agreement will form the basis of
future negotiations on overcrowding and
self-regulation within the industry. The
Joint Monitoring Committee would also
serve as a research body to draft proposals
on restructuring the industry.

Feldta would present the agreement to
its members at a taxi peace rally in Mon-
sterloss in the Eastern Transvaal today,
said Manganye.

Namibian debt announcement due

WINDHOEK — An important an-
nouncement on Namibia's R800m
debt to SA was likely to be made "in
due course", President Nelson Man-
dela said yesterday during a state
visit to Windhoek.

Speaking before the start of talks
with President Sam Nujoma, he said
the announcement would also cover
SA assets in Namibia, including those
left behind in Walvis Bay when the
port was ceded to Windhoek.

These issues, as well as the extradi-
tion of SA citizens to Namibia to
stand trial, would be discussed with
the ANC and government of national
unity.

"We understand very well these
problems and the concern of the
Namibian government that these
matters are addressed so as not to
increase the hardship of the Nami-
bian people," Mandela told Nujoma.

Nujoma said he and Mandela had

discussed the colonial debt and SA
assets in Namibia, the repatriation of
Namibians who served SA's military
during the long war against Swapo
and the extradition of people suspect-
ed of murdering Swapo advocate
Anton Lubowski.

The civil war in Angola, elections
in Mozambique and the political cri-
sis in Lesotho were also discussed.

Nujoma said he was confident the
special relationship between SA and
Namibia would be strengthened fol-
lowing the ANC's election victory.

The countries have about 30 bi-
lateral agreements, including pacts
on water usage, the movement of ani-
mals, justice, education, citizenship
and the secondment of personnel.

"I have no doubt that as a conse-
quence of your visit to Namibia, we
will be able to expand on the already
wide field of co-operation," Nujoma
told Mandela.

Mandela, 76, described being in
Windhoek as "one of the most unfor-
gettable moments" of his life. He said
it had taken 25 years off his age.

He stressed the close relationship
between Swapo and the ANC and be-
tween Namibia and SA, saying they
had to co-operate to ensure economic
and political stability.

Earlier, Mandela was honoured
with one of Windhoek's main streets
named after him. The presidential
motorcade then drove the length of
Nelson Mandela Avenue on the way
to talks with Nujoma.

Hundreds of colourfully-dressed,
singing and dancing Namibians
turned out to greet Mandela, who
took time to watch a variety of cul-
tural acts performed in his honour.

Mandela described having a street
named after him as a "singular hon-
our", bestowed not just on him but on
all of SA. — Sapa.

Taxi associations in peace agreement

By Joshua Raboroko

Sowetan 10/8/94
■ **STOP BLOODSHED** About 100

people were killed in taxi wars:

LEADERS of taxi associations in the Northern Transvaal reached a peace agreement yesterday and committed themselves to negotiations.

The Lethlabile Taxi Association, the South African Long Distance Taxi Association and the Federated Long and Local Taxi Association have formed a committee to monitor the implementation of the peace pact on all their routes.

At a Press conference held jointly with the ANC peace secretariat in Johannesburg yesterday, the associations called on splinter groups to rejoin their original associations and taxi ranks as from August 15.

The affected areas are Johannesburg, Pietersburg, Tzaneen, Jane Furse, Louis Trichardt, Venda, Mabopane, Lebowakgomo, Zebediela, Dennilton,

Marble Hall, Pretoria, Gazankulu, Soshanguve, Hammanskraal and Burgersfort. Routes in these areas had been marred by a wave of violence which resulted in the brutal killing of taxi owners, drivers and passengers.

No official death toll is available, but unofficial sources claimed that more than 100 people became victims of the violent clashes.

Several minibus taxis were hijacked

and operators and passengers attacked.

ANC national peace co-ordinator Mr Mandla Dlamini said the feuding associations had agreed that the killings on the roads should be stopped. (332)

A message of peace from the PWV MEC for safety and security Mrs Jessie Duarte urged the associations to stop the bloodshed. Fella spokesman Mr Morore Mello said the peace agreement was an important milestone.

Objection to OTI petrol bid

THABA NCHU — The National Black Fuel Retailers' Association has written a memorandum to government objecting to the Organised Taxi Industry's (OTI) petrol pump programme, in a move that could frustrate the organisation's cheaper petrol scheme.

And the OTI, which is well on its way to achieving its mission of unifying the taxi industry, has again threatened mass action if its demand for petrol pumps at taxi ranks is not met.

A Mineral and Energy Affairs spokesman said yesterday the latest move by the black petrol retailers could delay the plan to erect 25 petrol pumps at taxi ranks nationally. He said Minister Pik Botha did not present the OTI's plan to Cabinet yesterday because the day had been set aside for financial matters.

The associations had objected last week to the taximen dispensing petrol, saying this would take a big slice from petrol dealers' business.

In its submission to government, the associations said the loss of the taxi fuel

THEO RAWANA

trade would undermine the viability of black service stations. *BIDAY*

OTI co-ordinator Boetie Letsoela said his organisation had an agreement with the NEF on the cheaper fuel programme and could not go back to it as suggested by government. *11/8/94*

He said black retailers were part of the NEF and had a chance to lobby against the programme at the time.

"The taximen are furious and we fear the worst strikes," Letsoela said.

Meanwhile, the conference held in Thaba Nchu to unite the taxi industry seemed to have found cause, with all associations — including those that had raised objections — agreeing on the formation of one body. *(332) (88)*

Final resolutions will be worked out today.

□ Sapa reports police reinforcements have been sent to the SA/Lesotho border post because of mounting tension among taxi drivers on the SA side.

Call for tighter security at PWV govt offices

SECURITY should be tightened at the offices of the PWV executive council in Johannesburg after an electronic listening device was discovered, spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said yesterday.

He said the device had been found two weeks ago during an electronic "sweep" of the office occupied by MEC for education Mary Metcalfe.

Mamoepa said sweeps of the offices of

premier Tokyo Sexwale and other MECs had detected nothing, although Sexwale's office was broken into recently.

Documents, some of them sensitive, had been accessed and others damaged.

Mamoepa said the executive council met to decide what steps to take. He attributed the breaches to "people seeking to undermine the PWV government".

Sapa.

'Talks needed' on Pact

THE future of the Performing Arts Council of Transvaal (Pact) and other art institutions had to be discussed if government's reconstruction and development programme (RDP) was to be adhered to, PWV sport, recreation, arts and culture minister Peter Skosana said yesterday. *BIDAY*

Skosana said the RDP advocated that the arts and culture department "democratise" the performing arts councils, museums, libraries and archives.

According to the RDP, commissions had to investigate existing publicly funded and parastatal cultural and arts structures. *11/8/94*

It also stipulated that "complete tasks of transformation within two years" of appointment had to be made. *(282)*

A one-day conference on

JACQUIE GOLDING

the PWV's public funding of the performing arts, held on Monday, was the beginning of a process in line with the democratisation of arts and culture, he said.

Pact did not attend the conference but sent Skosana a dossier outlining its proposals and visions.

Skosana said he was "sad" that Pact did not attend, but a meeting with the council to discuss its future was planned.

Pact CEO Louis Bezuidenhout said the council's 52-page dossier "addressed everything the minister needed to know".

He added: "The time allocated at the conference was 20 minutes for every participant and Pact's detailed proposals could not have been fully explained in limited time."

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is 30 September 1994.

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SA Rail Commuter Corporation MD Wynand Burger and S Ndlungwane, right, at a news conference on the train accord and its role in the future. ROBERT BOTHA

Violence on trains is down, thanks to accord

Biday 11/8/94
JACQUIE GOLDING

POLITICAL violence on trains dropped to almost nothing this year because of the train accord, SA Rail Commuter Corporation MD Wynand Burger said yesterday.

The accord — signed by an alliance of SARCC, community organisations and the SAPS — reduced political violence on trains by between 30% and 32% last year.

Four people had died on trains in July this year, compared to a monthly average of 25 killed and 55 injured in 1992.

The alliance was formed in 1992 when train violence peaked during a period of confrontation between community groups, police and Metro rail authorities.

Speaking at a Johannesburg function to honour the achievements of the train accord, Burger said although politically-motivated violence had been reduced over the past two years, crime on trains, especially in the PWV, was escalating.

Burger said the train accord alliance would have to devise ways of combating crime. He said more than R300m had been spent on measures to secure trains and stations over the past two years.

Measures included security fencing at all stations in the former southern Transvaal, the establishment of the Rail Guard, the production of two prototype high-security trains, the upgrading of certain stations and the development of hi-tech ac-

cess control systems which were used to secure entrances to high-risk stations.

Burger said several of the measures taken began with the train accord itself and were taken up in the recommendations of the Goldstone commission. (332)

He added that the commission's recommendations were also fully accepted and implemented by the train accord alliance in a bid to reduce violence. (244)

About 75% of the trains on the Soweto and East Rand lines were fitted with new bullet-proof windows and doors to increase safety, Burger said.

He said the sociopolitical situation and the effects of long-standing joblessness contributed towards a "barrage" of crime, including fare evasion on a massive scale, vandalism, theft, assault and murder.

There had been 35 cable thefts on the Reef in one month alone, resulting in more than 400 trains being delayed, Burger said.

PWV ANC deputy general secretary Obed Bapela said yesterday ex-gratia payments for transport victims would be discussed with PWV transport minister Olaus van Zyl and government to devise a plan involving a fund for victims of taxi, bus and train violence.

Pharmaceut

VOLTAREN tablets seized Medical Cash and Carry's (gam warehouse last year were packaged and distributed marketing director Anton the Johannesburg Regional day.

Potgieter was testifying former MCC chief buyer and nis Symons, who allegedly pharmaceutical goods wort

Potgieter said Ciba-Geigy company in SA to legally ma distribute the anti-inflamm

The 170 packets of Voltare MCC warehouse had not been distributed because the b printed on the boxes as well themselves were not used Symons was arrested after

Land reform

STELLENBOSCH — A White Paper on land reform would be drawn up this year after input from agricultural and affected industry sectors, deputy Land Affairs Minister Tobie Meyer said yesterday.

At a conference marking the establishment of the Farm Management Institute, Meyer said land restitution, redistribution and tenure reform would be the basis of the land reform programme, which would

transport sector • De Kock's bid for 1

Changes to taxi industry

Sowetan 17/8/94

THE minibus taxi industry would have to be reregulated to bring order to the industry, Transport Ministry director-general Dr Skippie Scheepers said yesterday.

The previous government accepted deregulation of all transport, including urban transport, he said during a briefing to the National Assembly's select committee on transport.

"I know this is a serious issue," he said. "But that is our reading at the moment, that some measure of reregulation is important to order the industry."

The department had 400 taxi associations on its books and did not know how representative they were or how they were structured or managed, which presented a major problem in dealing with the industry.

Talks with supposedly nationally representative bodies were plagued by constant disagreements and splits. The majority of taxi owners would have to

agree on one formal body to represent them in talks with the Government.

Although taxi operators should be given help in entering the industry, he was opposed to subsidies which might kill off small enterprises.

"We must help them to help themselves, not make them depend on the State, as is the case with many bus companies," he said.

It would be a good idea to establish a special taxi operator insurance scheme at lower rates. (332)

Deputy director-general Dr Malcolm Mitchell told the select committee that the Rail Commuter Corporation had spent some R40 million over the past two-and-a-half years in direct efforts to eliminate train violence.

This excluded the R100 million spent on general station improvement since the wave of violence began. There were fewer incidents of violence after the elections, but there had been an upsurge in recent weeks. — Sapa.

Taxi industry in drive for peace

332 Arg 17/8/94

PIETER MALAN
Staff Reporter

THE taxi industry is about to launch a drive to curb taxi violence in the region.

The Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) is setting up a "taxi violence committee" to deal with conflict situations, liaise with the police and mediate between warring parties.

An anti-crime campaign will be mounted with the police and there will be a campaign to promote the Codeta code of conduct.

Other ideas by the "new-look" Codeta include a road safety campaign with the traffic authorities and the installation of cellular telephones in all Codeta members' taxis.

□ And there'll be phones on board, too

Codeta chairman Kidwell Magwayi said the changes formed part of Codeta's restructuring into a Section 21 company. All the company's profits will be ploughed back into the industry.

Mr Magwayi said the organisation's emphasis would shift from being a politically affiliated pressure group to being a customer-orientated company.

"More emphasis will now be put on the quality of service and passenger safety in order to broaden its passenger spectrum and promote itself to the lucrative tourist market," he said. A new company, Thubalethu, will administer Codeta's insurance needs

and act as a general consultant. It will also play an important role in the commercialisation of the taxi industry.

The shareholding of the new company will be split between a Cape Town insurance company, Falcon-Burr Marine & General, and Codeta.

Codeta has also signed a contract with a cellular network and service provider for the installation of phones in 6 000 taxis over the next two years.

Mr Magwayi believed the benefits of the new "phone booths on wheels" would be far greater than just the convenience they offered customers.

"A percentage of our income will eventually go into a Codeta community fund and we hope to plough this money back into our communities," he said.

Each Codeta taxi will be fitted with a cellular handset that can be passed to the person who wishes to make a call.

Some taxis will also have a microphone and speaker system so that conversations can be conducted without the handset.

At the end of calls, drivers will charge passengers the normal cellular phone rate plus a slight profit.

Afritel chairman Mark Headbush said a large number of taxi commuters lived in communities where there was fewer than one telephone line per 100 people.

Taxi phones would also enhance taxis as a means of metropolitan transport, he said.

A percentage of the connection fee would be paid into a community fund that would be managed by Codeta, while the beneficiaries of the fund would be nominated with Afritel.



RANK AND DIAL: Taxi driver Mawetu Mtwetwe uses Codeta chairman Kidwell Magwayi, middle, and Falcon Burr director Anton Burger as passengers to try out the first of 6 000 cellular telephones that will be used by drivers and passengers.

Picture: PIETER MALAN, The Argus.

Safety, service new aim of Codeta taxis

CT 18/8/94 (332)

By YVETTE VAN BREDA

CUSTOMER service and community safety will be the primary aim of the leading taxi organisation, Codeta, which announced yesterday it is to become a non-profit company.

Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwayi also announced the formation of an anti-crime initiative in conjunction with police, an extensive road safety and driving skill campaign and the establishment of a community fund that will be managed as a trust by Taxi Liaison Forum member and city councillor Mr Frank van der Velde.

Codeta has signed a multi-million rand agreement for the installation and maintenance of more than 6 000 cellular phones in Codeta taxis.

It will no longer seek affiliation with specific political parties and will deal

with internal conflict through negotiation rather than mass action.

Mr Magwayi said this meant "the dawn of a new dispensation for the organised taxi industry in the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape".

Vehicles will be retested for safety, there will be stricter control and checks on licensing and the traffic department will employ Xhosa-speaking beat officers to assist drivers.

A committee will be formed to monitor potential conflicts and act as informers and arbitrators.

The community fund will generate its funds through taxi-fare contributions and donations. With the help of two cellular telephone companies and the formal business sector "we expect this fund to play a crucial role in reaching our goals", Mr Magwayi said.

AKG 18/8/94
**'State must
not take
over taxis'**

(332)
Political Correspondent

THE state must resist the temptation to re-regulate the taxi industry, said Democratic Party deputy transport spokesman Douglas Gibson.

Subsidisation of commuter transport would cost billions a year, he said during yesterday's transport debate in the national assembly.

He called on authorities to help end taxi wars and to insist on proper driver training and obedience to traffic laws.

Mr Gibson said the taxi industry was a "modern miracle" which grew from nothing to a flourishing giant in a few years.

Half of all South African commuters travelled by taxi each day.

"More remarkable is that the taxi industry is totally unsubsidised.

"What I am firmly opposed to is the idea the taxi industry should more or less be taken over by the state which would then regulate and subsidise it."

Call to cut costs with diesel power

 Business Staff

(332)

DIESEL-powered taxis would reduce costs and converting the engines from petrol would give an opportunity for the industry to be regulated, says Glynn Whitmore, manager of Powerhouse Engineering, Atlantis Diesel Engines' distribution company on the Reef.

ADE has presented four diesel-powered minibuses to major taxi organisations through the Organised Taxi Industry, for members to try out.

Whitmore said the demand for conversions came initially from countries like Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

"These conversions have been successful on the export market."

CT 18/8/94

Engen joins Unicorn in R250m oil tanker management venture

BIDAY 22/8/94

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Engen and shipping group Unicorn Lines had entered a R250m joint venture for the construction and management of two 40 000-ton deadweight oil tankers, the groups said on Friday.

The vessels were ordered from the Polish-based Szczecin shipyard. Engen logistics CE John Crompton said one of the vessels would trade in coastal waters while the other would export fuel products to east African ports such as Dar es Salaam and Mombasa.

Engen's Energos tanker, which Crompton said was becoming "long in the tooth", would probably be sold on delivery of the two new vessels in 1996.

The group exported between 7- and 8-million barrels of fuel, which would rise to about 10-million barrels once Engen's refinery expansion was completed at the end of this year, said Crompton.

CE Rob Angel said the new vessels, which would be chartered by Engen, would bring economies of scale and enable trans-

port of product at lower cost.

Two new Unicorn vessels, Bastion and Bulwark, currently on international charter, were delivered from the Polish yard last year and early this year. Unicorn Lines CE Ivan Clark said the yard won the orders against other tenders from shipyards worldwide.

Unicorn recently increased its investment in ships and reconfigured its fleet, having purchased nine vessels in 1993 and disposed of only five. Clark said Unicorn's experience in tanker ownership and Engen's role in the oil industry augured well for further co-operation. (322)

Crompton said the vessels were believed to be the first to operate in African waters with double hulls, built according to stringent US legislation which followed the oil pollution disaster from the Exxon Valdez. The inner hull prevented oil from spilling if the external hull was ruptured.

Air Zimbabwe considers options on new

AIR Zimbabwe flew into D F Malan Airport last week bringing President Robert Mugabe. But the Boeing 737 that brought him was a special charter.

Air Zimbabwe's area manager for SA and Namibia, Charles Nakabau, says that although a scheduled service to Cape Town is under consideration there are no firm plans to come here yet. "But we are looking at it," he emphasised.

Meanwhile Cape Town people who fly with Air Zimbabwe can book through directly and go as far as Johannesburg with SAA, which also flies to Zimbabwe 12 times a week.

Nakabau says that so far passengers who book through from Cape Town account for 13% of revenue compared with 64% from the Transvaal and 10,5% from Natal.

He and SAA expect both business and tourist

ON A DIFFERENT PLANE



by **AUDREY D'ANGELO**

travel to increase on the route.

But Comair, which will fly between Johannesburg and Harare twice a week from Friday, September 16, is aiming specifically at holiday traffic. It will fly on Friday and Sunday evenings using its 80-seater Fokker F28 jet aircraft.

Comair commercial director Bert van Linden said the flights, leaving Jan Smuts at 5.30pm to arrive in Harare at 7.15pm, with the return flight

leaving Harare at 8.15pm to be back in Johannesburg at 10pm, are timed for the convenience of SA holidaymakers.

PROFITABLE **332**

LUFTHANSA and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines have rejoined the ranks of the few profitable international airlines, in spite of continuing fierce competition.

The industry as a whole is still suffering multi-billion rand losses, for the fourth successive year.

But on Friday Lufthansa announced pre-tax profits of DM 105m (R240m) for the first six months and forecast a return to paying dividends at the end of the year.

Karin Duncker, who heads the airline's public relations department in SA, said increased productivity and tight cost control were among fac-

tors that had contributed to the turnaround. Sales had increased although more staff had been shed.

"Average yields in passenger traffic rose for the first time in years. Gross revenue from flight operations in the first six months increased by about 11% in both the parent company and the group."

Passenger traffic rose by 0,2% to 14m in the parent company and by 3% to 17,6m in the group as a whole. Freight increased too, by 17,6% to 664 000 tonnes.

CT 22/8/94
COST CONTROL

KLM made a net profit of R254m in the first quarter of its tax year. Its president, Pieter Bouw, reporting a rise of 82% in earnings per share, told shareholders that since initiating a competitive cost control programme in 1991 productivity had

risen by 36% and fleet utilisation by 18% while unit costs declined by 16%.

KLM's GM in Southern Africa, Peter Janssen, said these results had been achieved through a commitment to free enterprise "and a strategy that embraces the three pillars of customer preference, strengthened market presence and competitive cost levels. The cost control programme is based on better utilisation of resources, sensible purchasing policies and cutting out waste."

He said business class travellers had played a major part in the turnaround. Research had shown that although first class was prestigious it made no contribution to profits. KLM and its US partner, North West Airlines, had therefore consolidated business class with first class to introduce their new World Business Class.

Cape Town route

Reinforced security 'ensures safer ride'

Commuters return to trains in wake of diminished violence

Star 26/8/94

■ BONGIWE MLANGENI
CITY REPORTER

Train violence on the Witwatersrand has declined remarkably since the April elections but added security measures have not yet helped to completely fill the trains again.

Once a popular pulpit for preachers and a meeting place for old friends, violence made trains a death trap in the early '90s.

Reinforced

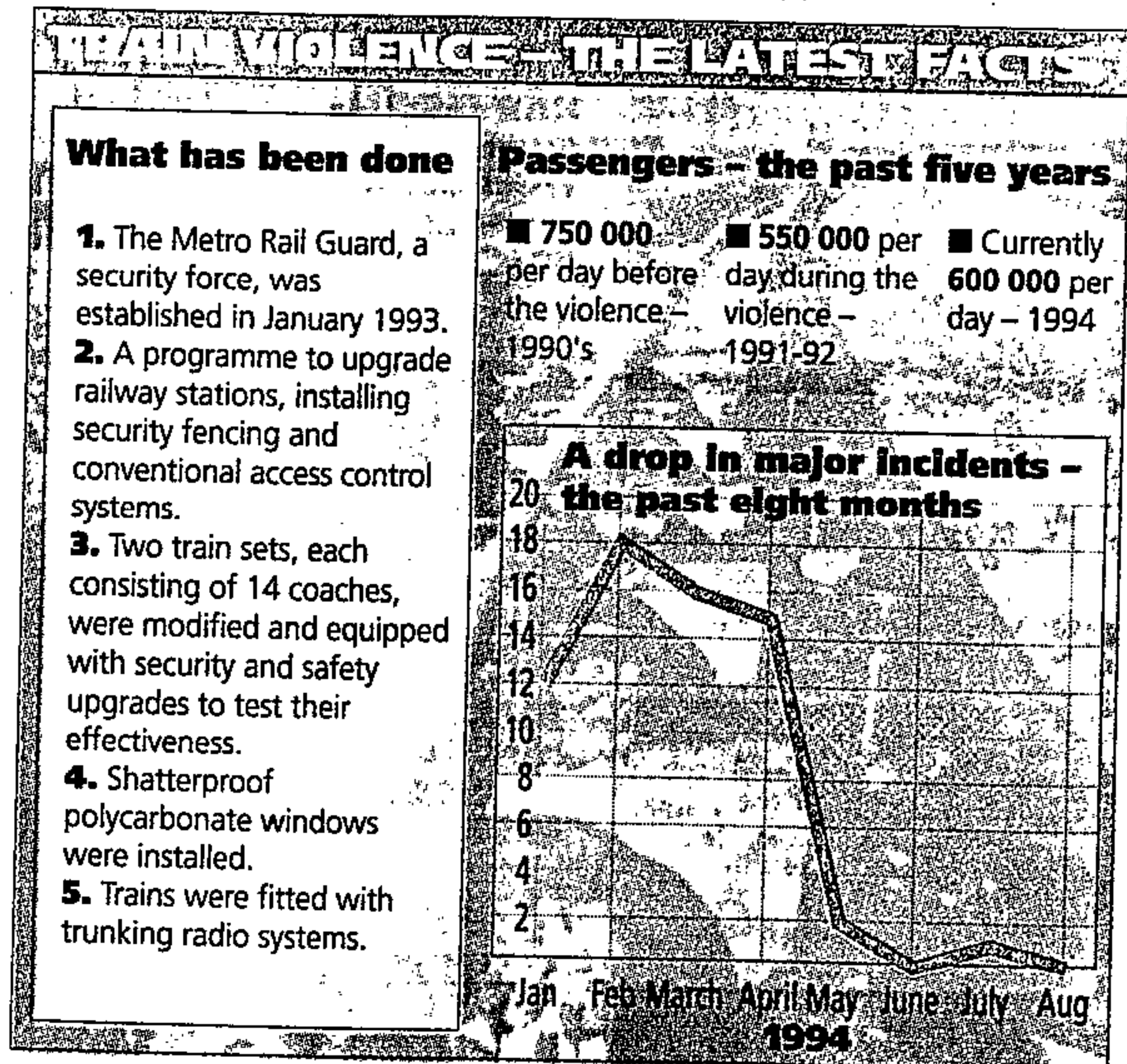
Recently, Witwatersrand Metro announced that security on trains had been reinforced and commuters were assured of a safe ride.

Metro communications officer Annmarie Strydom said commuter traffic on trains had been affected by the violence with numbers dropping from 750 000 in the early '90s to 500 000 during the violent months.

However, since the elections, more people had begun using trains and commuter traffic had increased to 600 000 a day.

"The increase of security forces on trains has helped prevent violence. We are now slowly having more people on trains and are confident more will come back with the recent changes," said Strydom.

Metro reported three cases of violence between



May and July this year.

This is a dramatic drop from pre-election violence when 15 incidents were reported in April.

According to Strydom, trains are patrolled by about 300 Metro railway guards.

There have also been extensive moves to upgrade stations and trains.

"Safety will start on the stations before people move into trains," she said.

The upgrading includes security fencing

around the stations, guards and access control gates where commuters are searched for weapons and tickets.

Modified

She said there were two full train sets with 14 coaches each which were modified and equipped with selected security and safety equipment.

"We are putting the trains on trial to see our passengers' response and improve where we

have to.

"We hope everything will work according to plan," said Strydom.

"The trains also have shatterproof windows which cannot break easily. It will also be impossible to jump out of the windows.

"Drivers are now able to communicate with police or contact our security if there is any trouble in the train.

"The trains are going to be a communal place again."

Unknown labour leader to the fore

(332) (752) CT 26/8/94
JOHANNESBURG. — Until this week's lorry drivers' blockade of national roads few people had heard of the Turning Wheel International Workers' Movement or its president, Mr Richard Madime.

Yet this unknown organisation spearheaded the blockade by about 7 000 drivers which cost the country about R15 million a day and had cabinet ministers intervening in what was essentially a labour dispute.

Mr Madime, 40, a driver for a Heidelberg company, and Ms Perdita Bokeer founded the organisation a month ago and claim more than 1 000 members.

Mr Madime describes himself as a communist aiming to unify and strengthen workers in their struggle.

"I've been against labour laws all my life and have been regarded as a troublemaker by most employers.

"It's been a case where I've worked and then been fired, worked and been fired."

He says the blockade was a success largely because the drivers were disciplined and well-behaved. They, not he, deserved the credit, he said. — Sapa

Govt 'soft' on blockade truckers

CT 26/8/94

THE government came under attack from the opposition yesterday for being soft on truckers who held the travelling public to ransom by blockading toll roads in four provinces this week. (332)

But ANC Labour Minister Mr Tito Mbolweni defended the government's decision not to take tough action — such as

sending in troops — against the strikers, saying conflict should at all times be resolved by negotiation.

Representatives of truckers who mounted blockades in kwaZulu/Natal, Transvaal, Northern and Eastern Cape this week will meet trucking industry employers in Pretoria today for talks.

In a snap debate on the issue in Parliament yesterday both DP MP Mr Kobus Jordaan and former NP Manpower Minister Mr Leon Wessels said the government should prosecute people who broke the law.

The Freedom Front's Mr Pieter Groenewald said his party was not against strike action but it should be carried

out in terms of the law.

PAC MP Ms Patricia de Lille said conflict should be resolved in the workplace.

● Mopping-up at the Mooi River toll plaza in kwaZulu-Natal was completed yesterday afternoon with oil patches covered, litter picked up and traffic moving freely. — Political Staff, Sapa

Trencor delivers on dividends

CT 29/8/94

332

By ARI JACOBSON

TRANSPORT group Trencor, still trying to shrug off the effects of the W & A purchase, saw earnings a share drop 12,5% to 94,2c (107,7c) for the year to June.

But the total dividend at 24,5c a share (final dividend of 15,5c) is unchanged from the previous year.

Reporting on the year's results at the weekend, executive chairman Neil Jowell said the results had been buoyed by overseas operations and exports, which had contributed more than 80% of earnings, and were most satisfactory, particularly when viewed in the light of two special factors.

"First, our earnings last year were significantly boosted by a 20% decline in the exchange rate of the rand to the dollar.

"The exchange rate affects not only the profitability of the current year's exports but also the valuation of our long term receivables that are mainly denominated in dollars.

"Furthermore, Trencor has this year not had the benefit it previously received of earnings from approximately R300m now invested in W&A."

Attributable earnings before accounting for the loss in the W & A group (R19,2m for the year) were marginally lower at 107,4c a share.

In addition, W & A looks to be on the

road to recovery — reporting significantly lower losses (R39,6m compared with R117,2m restated) for the six months to June.

W & A executive chairman Raymond Hasson has forecast that the group will reach "operating breakeven" in the second six months.

And once again Trencor has the support of analysts with the share currently trading close to its peak for the year (R23) at R21,75 a share — a 25,7% gain despite the problematic W & A purchase.

Corrective action

Turnover jumped 15,3% to R853,9m (R740,6m) based on the strong showing from the group's container operations — in manufacturing, leasing, export and finance — as well as a satisfactory performance from the engineering division.

However, corrective action to management was needed and taken in one of the transport operations "to counter problems which affected results".

● Mobile Industries, whose main investment is its 47% stake in Trencor, reported an earnings a share drop from 26,5c to 23,3c for the year to June.

A final dividend of 4c was declared taking the total for the year to an unchanged 6,2c a share.

Taxi conflict speculation scoffed at

332 CT 1/9/94
By CHRIS BATEMAN

SPECULATION that the government's scheme for 25 new fuel stations for taxi owners would become a source of renewed conflict in the industry was scoffed at by the Western Cape's Transport Minister, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, yesterday.

Profits from the service stations are intended to boost the taxi industry and serve as compensation for government subsidies to bus and train operators — a long-standing grievance of taxi operators.

Fresh from successful negotiations to add three representatives of the Southern Cape taxi industry to the Peninsula's eight-man taxi task force yesterday, Mr Ramatlakane said he seriously doubted that conflict would ensue.

"We've spoken to 58 taxi associations in the Peninsula alone to get their eight members onto our provincial taxi task force and an enormous amount of work like this has been going on countrywide," he said.

The fuel station decision was taken on Tuesday between Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs Mr Pik Botha and representatives of the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI), the Western Cape Taxi Industry and oil companies.

Speculation, specially from local township sources yesterday, was that attempts by rival taxi associations to secure a monopoly on the profits would re-ignite animosities.

A committee, consisting of OTI and other taxi associations, the government, labour and oil companies will form a site allocation committee for the installations and is due to report back within 14 days.

Grindrod

Unicorn

Star 21/9/94
in top gear

Shipping and transport company Grindrod Unicorn has posted a 58 percent rise in operating income in the six months to June.

Its performance, buoyed by a foreign exchange surplus on a forward cover contract related to vessels under construction and an adjustment to ship depreciation, saw group operating income rise to R44,85 million (1993: R28,4 million).

The tax charge was reduced by an adjustment to deferred taxation as a result of decreased company tax rates.

Earnings per share were 25 percent up at 71,8c (57,6c).

An unchanged interim dividend of 11c a share has been declared — reflecting concern over the recent increase in secondary tax on companies (STC).

Chairman Murray Grindrod said yesterday that while the prolonged domestic recession had continued, there were signs of gradual improvement in the post-election period.

Barring unforeseen circumstances, the group should at least equal 1993's full-year earnings, he said. — Sapa.

(332)

Grincor achieves increase despite economic climate

by YURI THUMBRAN

SHIPPING and transport company Grindrod Unicorn Group (Grincor) posted earnings up by 25% at R25,8m for the half year to June, despite the tough economic climate and election disruptions.

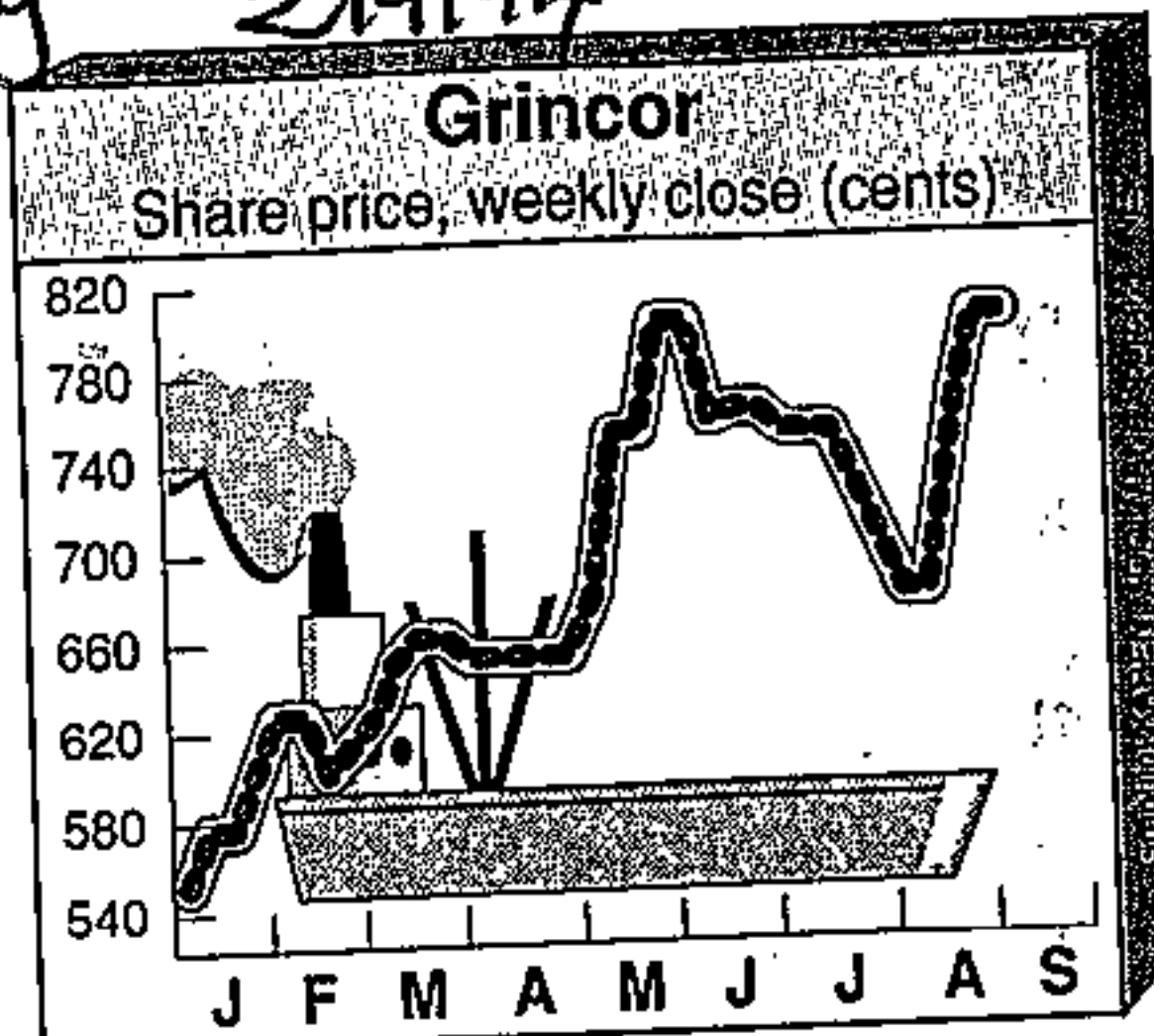
Earnings a share rose by 25% to 71,8c (57,6c) while an unchanged interim dividend of 11c was declared. (332)

Turnover rose to R330,7m (R350,7m), while operating income jumped to R44,8m (R28,4m), propelled by a foreign exchange surplus on a forward cover contract for vessels under construction and an adjustment to ship depreciation.

Tax slipped to R320 000 (R12,7m), which the company attributed to an adjustment to deferred taxation as a result of decreased company rates.

Capital expenditure was R62m, including payments on the new container ship, the Bulwark, and progress payments on the ship under construction in Poland and due for delivery in February.

Capital payments necessitated a R48,8m increase in interest-bearing debt to



R323,8m.

Chairman Murray Grindrod said while the prolonged domestic recession had continued, there were signs of improvement.

"Barring unforeseen circumstances, the group should at least equal 1993's full-year earnings."

He said the recent successful JSE listing of subsidiary Griffin Shipping Holdings and the proceeds of the rights offer would provide capital to acquire additional ships for charter to SA operators.

Arbitration on new taxi rank rights

Municipal Reporter 332

TAXI associations and the city council are jointly to appoint an arbitrator to iron out a last-minute dispute on the granting of "ranking rights" on the new R2,1 million station deck taxi rank. *ALT 2/9/94*

Council spokesman Ted Doman said associations were competing for routes and "this is an issue which urgently needs to be addressed".

He said the rank was almost complete except for road markings and signage. The ranking rights had to be accepted by all parties before it could be commissioned. However, the rank could still start operating later this month.

"Numerous and ongoing meetings have been held with the taxi associations concerned in order to resolve the dispute and a great deal of consensus has been reached."

Mr Doman said the associations were committed to moving to the station deck provided their concerns and interests were resolved in a fair and reasonable manner.

Arbitration over new taxi deck

CT 3/9/94

1332

Municipal Reporter

THE proposed move of taxis from Strand Street to the new station deck rank has come a step closer, with two competing taxi associations agreeing that an arbitrator must make a ruling that will bind them both.

Yesterday the council announced that both groups and

the council would jointly select and appoint an arbitrator. A limit of two weeks for this has been stipulated.

After that, the arbitrator will need some time to become familiar with all the intricacies of the situation.

"It is, however, still hoped that the commissioning of the new rank will take place later this month," the council's pub-

lic relations office said.

The central conflict between the two associations is that one group has ranking facilities in Strand Street but not in outlying areas, while the other group is in a reverse situation.

The outlying group is vying for ranking facilities on the new city deck, while retaining its rights in the outlying areas. The other group objects to

this, as it means they will all then share outward-bound passengers, and there are allegedly not enough passengers for both associations.

Of the 19 routes that will be served from the deck, only six are the subject of competing association interest. These are Bonteheuvel, Athlone, Manenberg, Wynberg, Heideveld and Mowbray.

Taxi industry threatens strike over fuel pumps

B/Dey 8/19/94

PRETORIA — The Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) yesterday threatened to strike because of the Mineral and Energy Affairs Department's "delaying tactics" over installing fuel pumps for the taxi industry.

Sapa reports OTI national co-ordinator Boetie Letsoela said: "We will make the recent Pick 'n Pay strikes look like a Mickey Mouse affair if our concerns are not addressed before next Tuesday."

THEO RAWANA reports that OTI delegates walked out of a meeting to finalise the installation of fuel pumps because the department imposed its own chairman, OTI said.

The OTI last week obtained permission from Deputy President Thabo Mbeki to install 25 fuel outlets countrywide after talks on ways to bring the taxi industry to profitability.

Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha, oil companies and the Western Cape Taxi Industry also attended the talks in Cape Town.

Mbeki had directed that OTI and other taxi associations, government, labour and oil companies would form a site allocation committee to report within 14 days.

Letsoela said yesterday his organisation had now written to Mbeki.

He said the department, which was

"part of the old order", could not be allowed to be both player and referee. The department had placed a moratorium on the granting of the licences to the taxi industry in 1992, so it could not be trusted to be impartial in any discussions.

Mineral and Energy Affairs Department spokesman Theunis Burger said the walk-out was unjustified and that the matter had been referred to Mbeki (332)

OTI official Joe Mabaso said the Cape Town meeting agreed that a subcommittee would be set up to oversee the allocation of outlets according to commercial viability.

Delegates at the meeting decided the committee had to complete its work within 14 days. It was also agreed that the subcommittee would include a representative from Mbeki's office.

"When we arrived at this (Wednesday) morning's meeting a official from the department was in the chair and Mbeki's representative was nowhere in sight," Mabaso said.

Letsoela said OTI's members were expecting the fuel outlet scheme to start by Tuesday next week. "Our industry has all along refrained from strikes. If the deadline is not met we will not be able to hold them back and we foresee strikes on a large scale," Letsoela said.

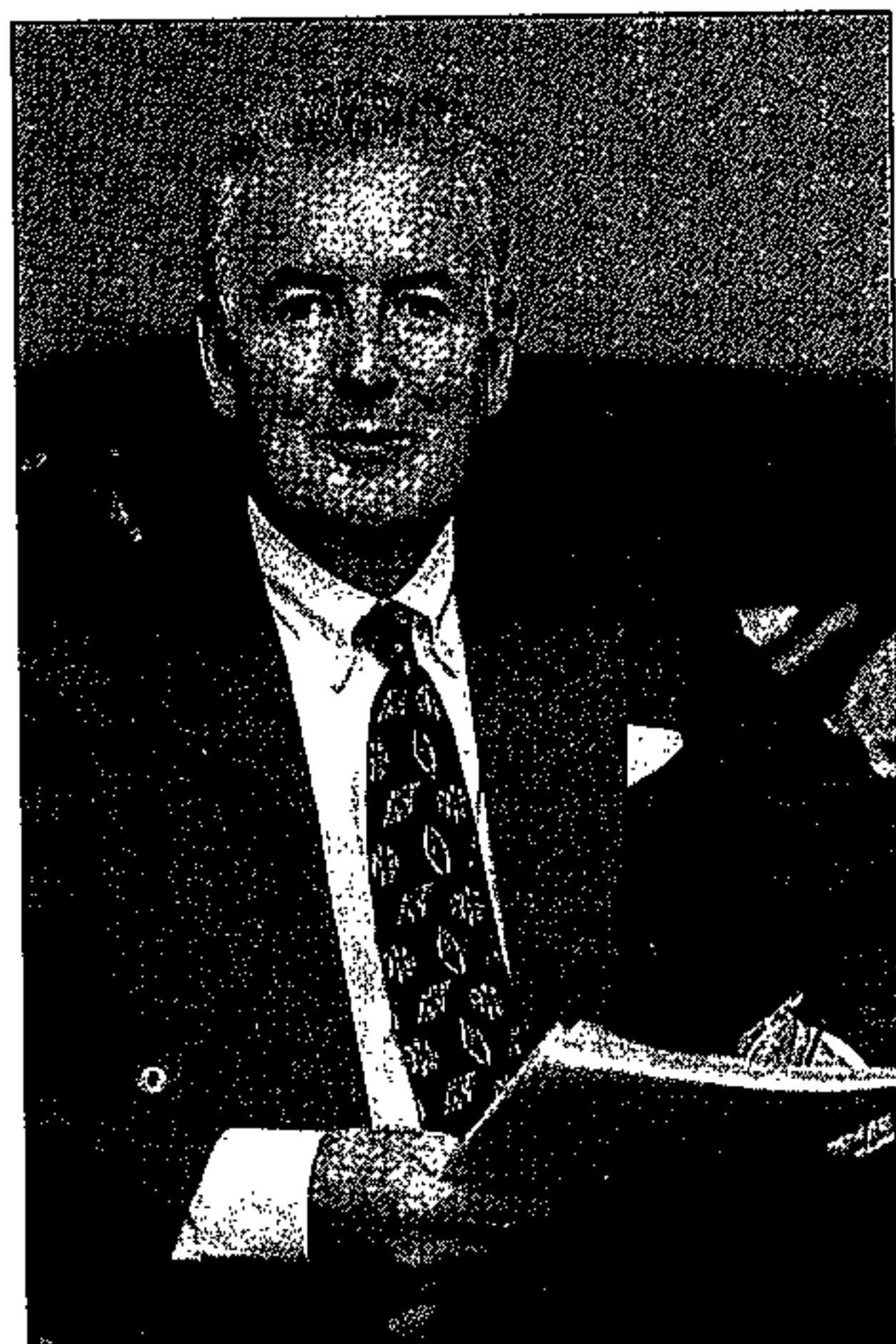
LONGRAIL

Lighter debt load

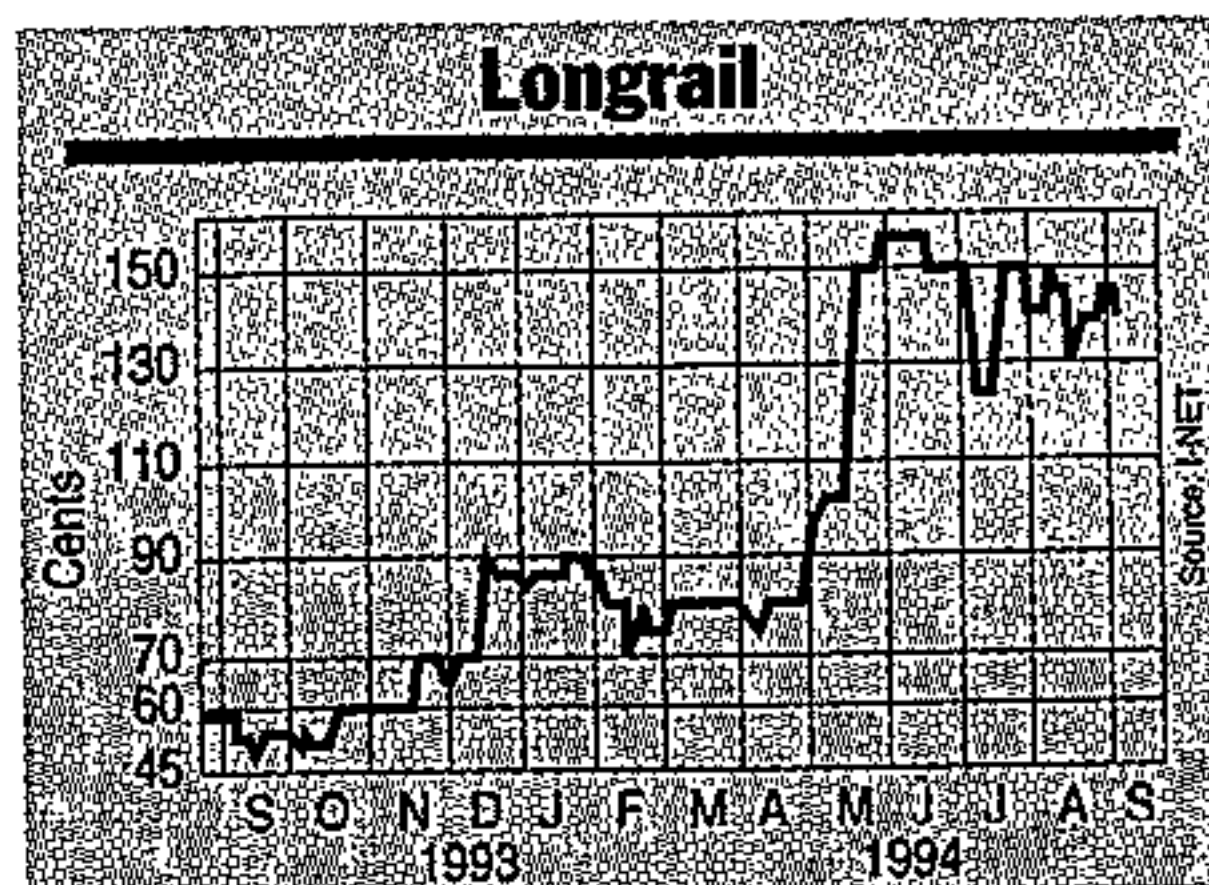
fm 9/9/94
The most striking feature of Longrail's 1994 results has to be the reduction in gearing from almost twice shareholders' equity to 68%. This dominoed on to the income statement, where finance costs absorbed 30% (1993: 43%) of operating income. (332)

Though demand improved during the year, transport tariffs remained depressed by excess capacity and generally low volumes. Also, upward pressure on costs continued, especially labour expenses and the costs of imported vehicles because of the falling rand.

These cost factors are particularly relevant as Longrail's operational fleet was expanded by the addition of several new truck tractors and trailers last year. Payloads



Longrail chairman Bill Lynch ... strong price appreciation



fm 9/9/94
Activities: Long distance road transportation, warehousing, storage and local distribution of manufactured goods and raw materials.

Control: Directors 56,4%.

Chairman: W G Lynch; MD: M H Els.

Capital structure: 31,8m ords. Market capitalisation: R46,1m.

Share market: Price: 145c. Yields: 2,1% on dividend; 6,2% on earnings; p:e ratio, 16,1; cover, 3,0. 12-month high, 160c; low, 50c. Trading volume last quarter, 1,3m shares.

Year to February 28	'91	'92	'93	'94
ST debt (Rm)	5,7	6,1	7,8	5,0
LT debt (Rm)	8,4	9,4	17,7	8,1
Debt:equity ratio	1,07	0,85	1,93	0,68
Shareholders' interest	0,31	0,29	0,23	0,28
Int & leasing cover ...	2,7	2,9	2,3	2,4
Return on cap (%) ...	17,7	15,2	13,4	16,0
Turnover (Rm)	n/d	n/d	70,6	92,3
Pre-int profit (Rm)	6,4	6,4	7,5	8,5
Pre-int margin (%) ...	n/d	n/d	10,6	9,2
Earnings (c)	5,2	7,6	7,6	9,0
Dividends (c)	4,5	4,0	2,5	3,0
Tangible NAV (c)	36	39	41	47

(332)
on a large part of the fleet were increased by the conversion of trailers to a more cost-effective configuration permitted by amended road transport legislation.

Longrail also bought property for its maintenance activities, as well as an ancillary business operation, Ferguson Freight. Both acquisitions were funded by the R5,3m share issue underwritten by Imperial Holdings — one of the main shareholders. (Imperial's shareholding is now 42%).

Financial director Andre Pretorius says Ferguson Freight is proving to be a worthwhile acquisition, as will be reflected in interims for the six months to end-August. Pretorius says debt has been contained. "Longrail is now a sharply focused transport company having rid itself of Alrode Tyre Den, which delivered poor results, at the end of the year."

The share's performance has been spectacular — it has almost trebled over the past 12 months to 145c.

The increased involvement of Imperial has presumably contributed to this, but the yield pattern now suggests the share is fully priced.

Kate Rushton

Taxi strike threat rejected

ET 14/9/94
PRETORIA. — The South African Taxi Drivers' Union yesterday rejected a strike threat by the Organised Taxi Industry to press for independent petrol supplies.

The union said in a statement petrol outlets dedicated to the industry would benefit only the taxi associations. It said a strike would be impossible without the co-operation of drivers.

— Sapa.

No subsidy for taxis — Maharaj

Sowetan

15/9/94

Sowetan Correspondent

THE minibus taxi industry will have to be stabilised before the government considers subsidising it, says Transport Minister Mac Maharaj.

Speaking during the transport policy debate in the Senate on Tuesday, Maharaj said public transport needed a drastic overhaul.

Provincial governments had to take responsibility for this overhaul with help from central Government.

"It is of crucial importance to the Department of Transport that provinces start executing the powers and functions given to them."

A "transformation model" for transferring transport functions from central to provincial governments would be presented to the provinces at the end of the month, Maharaj said.

A possible source of funds for provinces to oversee transport was a share of fuel taxes from their regions. Permanent structures would be set up to liaise between the tiers of government.

Maharaj said he was worried by the lack of a clear vision on the role of the State in relation to the private sector in transport.

Deregulation of the transport industry did not mean a total "free play of market forces" (332)

The Government had to see transport needs were met to ensure higher productivity and wealth creation.

Drastic renewal

The department also had to take a "forceful role" to ensure South Africa's economic and social development goals were met.

This would include far-reaching reforms and rationalisation of planning bodies such as the Transport Advisory Council, Roads Board, National Transport Commission and the Department of Transport. Maharaj said public passenger transport needed "drastic renewal".

Present policy was fragmented and the subsidy system was unwieldy, opening the Government to accusations of discrimination in favour of taxis.

Dice tumbles in Safren's favour

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Improved economic conditions saw shipping, transport and leisure group Safren lift attributable earnings 15,2% before extraordinary items to R340,5m for the year to June.

Despite pre-election unrest, which affected its resort and casino operations, the group boosted turnover 12,7% to R5bn, while operating profit before depreciation came in 14,2% higher at R1,2bn.

After depreciation, operating profit was 9,8% higher at R845,3m.

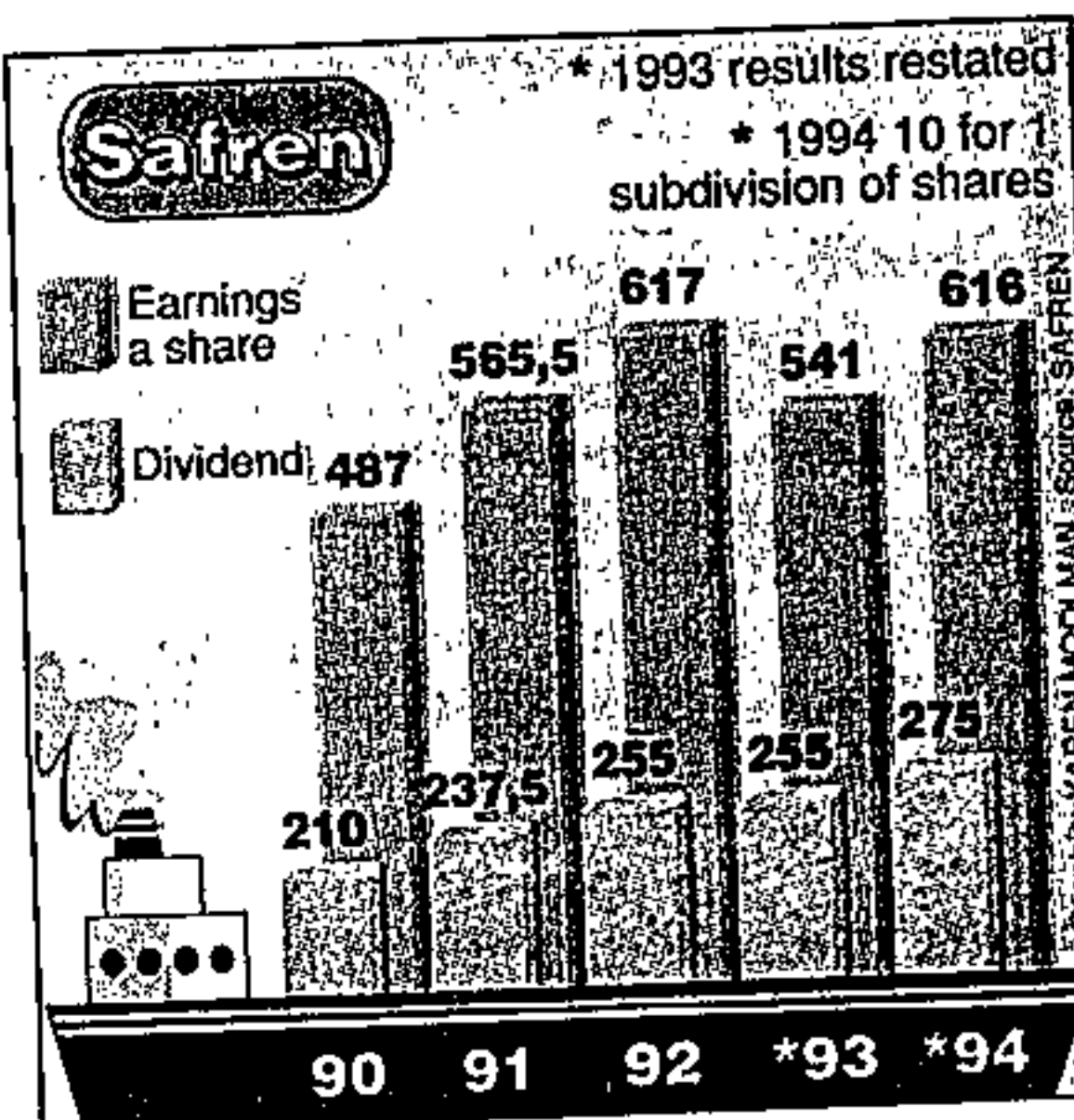
Earnings a share rose 13,9% to 616c and the total dividend was lifted 7,8% to 275c. But following Safren's 10-for-one share split in July a final dividend of 20,7c was declared per 5c ordinary share.

Pre-tax profit rose 11,6% to R774,2m but a higher tax bill of R145,6m (R91,7m) saw after-tax profit reach R659,3m (R602,1m).

Depreciation increased substantially to R365,2m (R290m) and additional depreciation of R28m was written off against operating profit after a review of the market value of Safmarine's assets.

A R14,7m extraordinary item represented closure costs of Safair's unprofitable domestic air freight service.

The 1993 results were restated as a result of the consolidation by Kersaf Invest-



ments of its offshore leisure subsidiary, Royale Resorts, which was previously equity accounted. Following the share split, pro forma earnings amounted to 61,6c (54,1c) a share while the pro-forma dividend for the year of 27,5c could have been compared with 25,5c for the previous year. The group benefited from the gradual economic upturn through improved trading conditions. Safmarine in particular produced a substantial profit increase as a result of improved trading in the European

□ To Page 2

Safren

and US liner trades and in most of its bulk operations.

Safmarine's contribution to attributable income rose 21,4% to R158m (R130,2m), while freight and travel group Rennies' contribution climbed 17,1% to R50,1m (R42,8m). Kersaf's contribution increased only 7,8% to R275m (R255m).

Kersaf's results were affected by unrest in the Northwest in the third quarter and earnings for the second half were only

moderately higher than the previous year, when compared with 15% growth in the first half of the 1994 financial year.

Directors said the group was also adversely affected by unregulated gaming.

Safren said it was in a good position to take advantage of a continued improvement in trading conditions at home and abroad following the lifting of sanctions. The group expected earnings to continue growing this year.

□ From Page 1

'Disappointment' on all fronts for Unitrans

SAMANTHA SHARPE

TRANSPORT company Unitrans suffered a disappointing year in the year to June, with operating results falling well short of budget, the company said in its annual report.

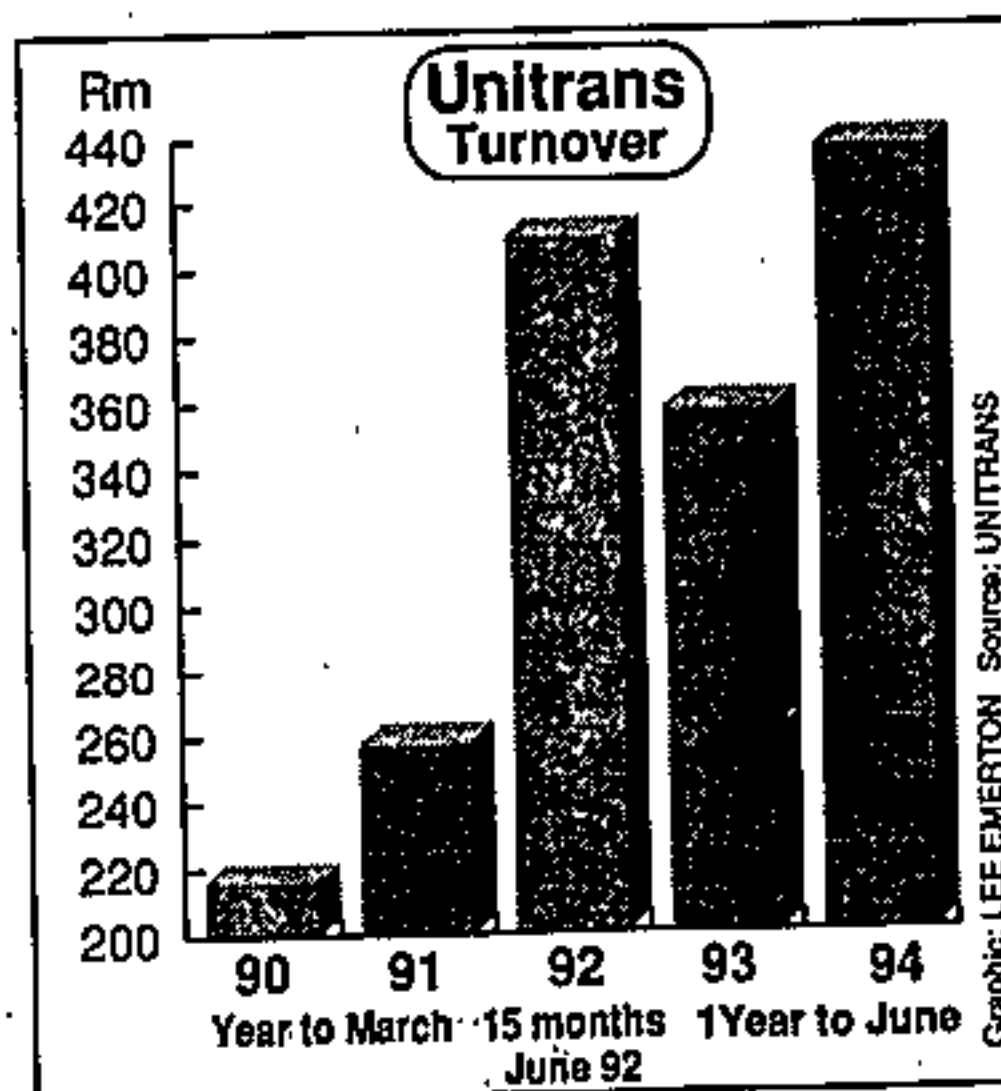
Turnover for its freight companies had risen a disappointing 10%, with the balance of the increase coming from the introduction of a motor dealership during the year and the inclusion of a full year's results from the Greyhound Coach Lines.

Subsidiary freight company Unitrans Reef had a "disastrous year", with actual operating profit R8m less than expected. This was exacerbated by the disappointing year for Unitrans Malawi, which suffered a setback from Malawi's economic and political upheaval. (332)

The group's specialist sugar cane transport operator Unitrans Sugar also had a difficult year, hit by the poor crop harvested in Natal.

But the purchase of two small transport companies to extend Unitrans Sugar's activities into a new cane growth area would introduce valuable new customers.

Unitrans reported a 26,5% increase in attributable earnings to R47,11m for the year to June. Operating profit rose 21% to R68m and included R43m from the sale of second-hand vehicles



and other assets.

The group declared a dividend of 34,5c, compared with 30c at the same time last year.

While economic statistics indicated the SA economy had improved during the year, this had been slow to have an effect on the road transport industry. But the upturn in the economy and its inevitable knock-on effect to the industry, the expected recovery in the Natal sugar crop, rapid improvement of Unitrans and healthier Malawi economy boded well.

The group said transport infrastructure had been neglected and urged government to use this as a target for the RDP.

taxi industry

Three die in taxi feud

Sowetan 22/9/94
■ SET ON FIRE Commuters left

stranded as taximen fight for routes:

By Sibusiso Mabaso

THE ONGOING TAXI feud between two rival organisations in Soweto has claimed the lives of three more taxi operators and left about six seriously injured.

Several minibus taxis belonging to members of the taxi associations were also set on fire by angry taxi operators yesterday morning.

Commuters were left stranded because there was no transport to ferry them to work in the city. Many were forced to use alternative transport.

This comes a day after fighting between taxi operators at Mlamlankunzi, Soweto, on Tuesday when a taxi driver was shot dead and others were wounded in a gunfight between members of the Witwatersrand Taxi Association.

Soweto police spokesman Colonel Patrick Ndopu confirmed that three taxi drivers were shot dead yesterday. This brings to four the number of taxi operators killed in the feud so far.

Several cops assisted by the army were yesterday sent to restore order.

In an attempt to defuse the explosive

situation between members of the Meadowlands/Dube Noord Street Taxi Association and the Diepkloof/Meadowlands Taxi Association, an urgent meeting involving senior members of the police, civic associations and taxi representatives was called yesterday.

The feud between the two rival organisations was said to have been sparked off by the inadequate taxi facilities and the use of routes.

The meeting, said to have been held in a good spirit, ended with both parties committing themselves to peace to both passengers and operators.

It was resolved that as from today:

- Diepkloof/Meadowlands should ferry commuters in Zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Diepkloof and Orlando East, Mzimhlophe and Phefeni;

- Meadowlands/Dube/Noord Street should operate from Zones 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 in Meadowlands and Dobsonville, including Zone 4 West;

- Meadowlands Hostel should be shared by both organisations and be monitored by the joint committee; and

- Meadowlands/Dube/Noord Street should also ferry commuters to the city via Phefeni Garage.

332

Traffic officers 'intimidated'

(332) CT 23/9/94
Crime Reporter

TAXI organisation Codeta told police and traffic department officials in a meeting yesterday they will appeal to their drivers to carry permits and ensure their vehicles are roadworthy, a police spokesman said.

Codeta representatives had promised to ask its members to stop intimidating traffic officers.

The meeting followed a swoop on at least 81 pirate taxi owners in Wynberg this week.

Police explained to Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwai they took part in Operation Pirate Taxi because traffic officers were often

intimidated by taxi drivers. If the intimidation of traffic officers stopped, police would not need to assist them in their operations.

Codeta are expected to set up a meeting soon with Department of Transport officials to iron out delays and red tape in obtaining permits.

19 city taxi drivers arrested

PORT ELIZABETH. — Nineteen Cape Town taxi drivers who allegedly forced eight people to accompany them to Transkei in a search for stolen vehicles were arrested on charges of abduction and attempted murder yesterday.

Police said the 19 drivers had been arrested after firing on a police vehicle at Idutwya, wounding a policeman in both legs, and for assaulting a passenger in the vehicle.

They are to appear in court at Idutwya today. — Sapa

UNITRANS

Compensating for setbacks

Activities: Road freight transport.
Control: Murray & Roberts (76,8%).
Chairman: A M van der Colff; MD: E Gutierrez-Garcia.

Capital structure: 37,9m ords. Market capitalisation: R606m.

Share market: Price: 1 600c. Yields: 2,2% on dividend; 1,8% on earnings; p:e ratio, 12,8; cover, 3,6. 12-month high, 1 850c; low, 1 170c. Trading volume last quarter, 167 820 shares.

Year to June	*'91	†'92	'93	'94
ST debt (Rm)	12,8	7,8	18,3	19,1
LT debt (Rm)	16,1	16,9	38,9	91,6
Debt:equity ratio	0,04	(0,14)	0,19	0,18
Shareholders' interest ..	0,65	0,68	0,65	0,59
Int & leasing cover ...	3,2	7,2	5,0	5,2
Return on cap (%) ...	16,4	15,7	14,1	13,6
Turnover (Rm)	257,1	327,3	357,2	1436,1
Pre-int profit (Rm)	41,8	53,0	55,8	67,6
Pre-int margin (%) ...	16,3	16,2	15,6	15,5
Earnings (c)	72,5	88,9	99,5	125,1
Dividends (c)	23,5	27	30	34,5
Tangible NAV (c)	311	436	507	602

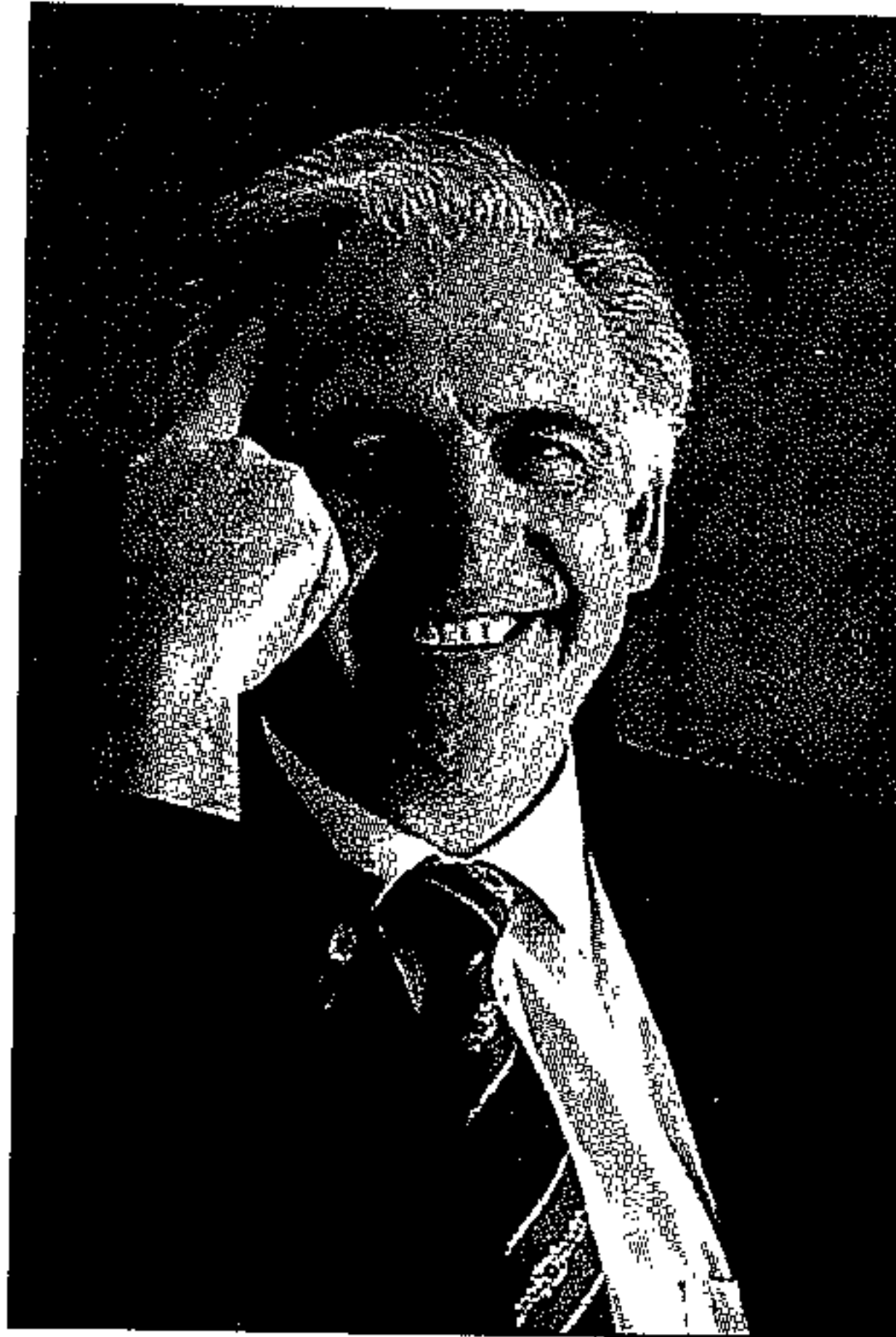
* Year to March. † 15 months annualised.

Given a 22% turnover gain, 21% operating profit improvement and 26% rise in EPS — all substantially better than the corresponding 1993 growth rates — anyone casually perusing Unitrans's latest annual report would probably be quite startled to see operating results described as "rather disappointing."

But on closer examination, they would find that chairman Andre van der Colff and CE Eduardo Gutierrez-Garcia do have a point: operating results were, in fact, decidedly substandard for this group and the main reasons for the growth had little to do with the freight haulage business.

For one thing, organic turnover growth last year was only 10%. The rest of the gain in sales came from full-year contributions from Greyhound Coach Lines, acquired in February 1993 and, therefore, included for only four months of the 1993 financial year and the new motor dealer subsidiary, Unitrans Motors, which also started operating late in the 1993 financial year.

The report does not indicate what these new activities contributed in profit, but the saving grace for the group operating result



Unitrans's Garcia ... operating results rather disappointing

was the R43m profit earned from the sale of used vehicles as part of a fleet upgrade programme. Benefits here were offset by higher depreciation on the 191 new (and more expensive) vehicles that replaced those sold, but the fact remains that the net depreciation charge for the year (after recoupments) was R9,7m lower than in 1993. That, in turn, accounted for all but R2,1m of the R11,8m increase in pre-interest profit, underlining the tough trading conditions experienced in most sectors.

Other aspects of the 1994 year that fit the "rather disappointing" description include the continued and almost universal decline in profitability and asset-management ratios. For example, the trading margin fell for the fourth consecutive year and while this was partly attributable to the motor dealer operation, which has lower margins than the transport sector, the current group trading margin of 15,5% is now only 79% of the 1990 figure.

Similarly, gross return on capital employed (excluding interest-free liabilities) has now declined to 16,5%, uncomfortably close to the group's average cost of debt, while the asset-turn ratio has also continued to drift. The only ratio to buck the trend was the net return on equity, which benefited from a further reduction in the group's average tax rate and advanced to 20,8% (1993: 19,6%).

But it would be wrong to place too much emphasis on these negative aspects. For the

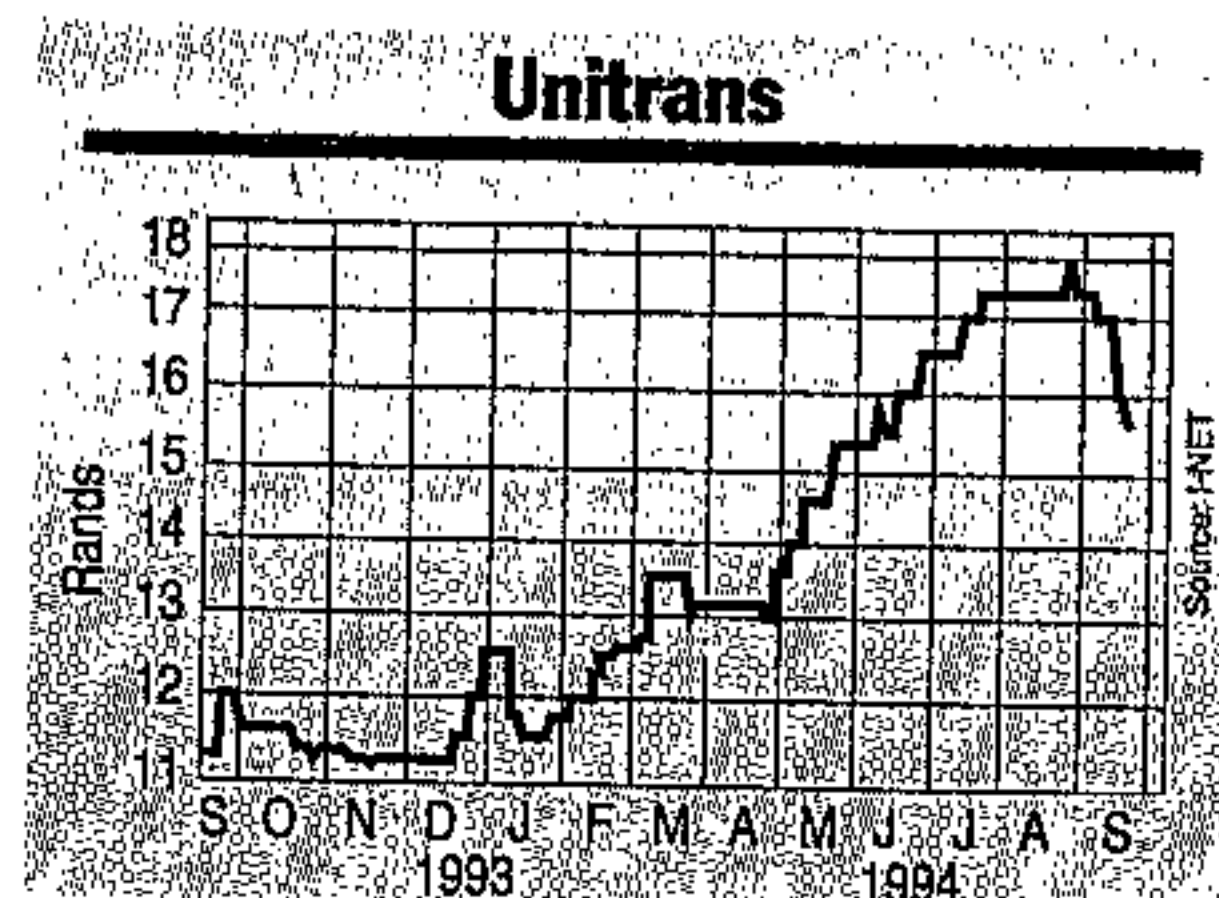
most part, the flat operating results were due to factors beyond the group's control. And, what is more important in the context of the overall results achieved, was the excellent timing of, and benefits derived from, the fleet upgrade programme which Unitrans embarked on a year ago when it signed a R200m contract with Mercedes-Benz for the supply of 400 new truck tractors.

It has always been group policy, as was proved last year, that the fleet has a high resale value. In fact, last year's sales were at prices well above original cost, so not only were depreciation charges on these vehicles fully recouped, but a hefty profit on original book value was also realised.

This pattern is likely to continue during the current year, when the remaining 209 new vehicles are due for delivery. Added to this is that most of the trading setbacks that had a negative impact on last year's results are expected to reverse. These include: Unitrans Reef, where unprofitable contracts have either been terminated or turned to profit; Unitrans Malawi, which is again seeing a more normal trading pattern after having been inhibited by political and economic difficulties in that country; the Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme contract, which is getting back on track after earlier construction difficulties; and Unitrans Sugar, which is looking to some recovery in line with the improved outlook for the new season's sugar crop.

So if current trends are maintained and if nothing else goes wrong over the period, the group looks well placed to at least maintain its current rate of earnings growth for 1995 — except this time the improvement is likely to come more from trading and should, therefore, be perceived to be more sustainable.

The share has had another good run over the past year, rising from 1 250c when the FM reviewed the 1993 annual report to reach a high of 1 850c before backing off to its present 1 600c. This 28% rise, being slightly ahead of earnings and dividend growth, has pared yields slightly but the p:e ratio of 12,8 and the 2,2% dividend yield still offer reasonable relative value if the group performs as expected. *Brian Thompson*



HORTORS *Fun 23/9/94* Back on the trail

It appears to be a case of déjà vu for printing and packaging group Hortors. In July last year the share was favourably

'Make taxis more roadworthy'

By CHRIS BATEMAN

A CALL for more roadworthy tests for taxis was backed yesterday by Western Cape Minister of Roads, Transport and Public Works, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane.

Responding to Mrs Feroze Jacobs, manageress of the vehicle testing station at D F Malan Airport, Mr Ramatlakane agreed the current once-yearly

testing legal requirement was insufficient.

"The simple answer is we need more regular testing, but this must be done collectively... the taxi industry accepts the accident rate is too high," he said.

Mrs Jacobs said the average distance covered by local minibus taxis each month was 8 500km, with the greatest

monthly distance travelled being 22 000km. Insufficient testing meant taxis were becoming less roadworthy.

Statistics released at a provincial road traffic safety awareness launch yesterday revealed that minibuses and motorcycles were top of the list of vehicles involved in fatal or serious accidents.

There were 70 000 recorded

accidents annually in the Western Cape, Mr Ramatlakane said. This cost the province R1,4 billion, a "significant portion" of which was borne by the taxpayer.

Of greatest concern were the annual 800 local pedestrian deaths and 1 200 serious pedestrian injuries, which accounted for 62% of local deaths, 16% above the national average.

CT 28/9/94 (332)

Gold mine back in the black

MICHAEL URQUHART

WEST Rand Consolidated Mines, the gold mine run by the consortium that recently took management control of Randgold, made an attributable profit of R613 000 for the six months to June.

This compared with an attributable R6,6m loss for the same period the previous year.

The company said the gold-related assets of consortium member Aurora Development and Exploration were being evaluated by independent advisers, with a view to their acquisition by West Rand Cons. *B1 Day*

The effect of the acquisition would be to convert West Rand Cons into an active gold mining, development and exploration company. *28/9/94*

The acquisition of Aurora Development and Exploration was expected to be completed in the final quarter of 1994.

West Rand Cons made a working loss of R587 000 for the six months to June.

This compared with a working loss of R9m for the six months to June 1993. *(332 244)*

But a sundry income of R1,2m pulled the company into a before-tax profit of R699 000.

The working loss included a R332 242 provision for a contribution to the Nuclear Fuel Corporation's Environmental Decommissioning Trust Fund.

The company said it did not expect there to be further payments to the trust fund.

Maharaj takes taximen to task

Star 30/9/94

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said he was confident minibus taxi operators would be allowed to run 25 fuel pumps of their own yesterday, but said this would not solve "horrendous" problems in the industry.

Speaking at the launch of the country's first insurance scheme for long-distance taxi passengers, Maharaj urged operators to unite to save the industry from criminal violence and route rivalry.

Taxi operators began lobbying the Department of Mineral and Energy Affairs for their own consumer fuel installations more than a year ago, through the National Economic Forum's liquid fuels task force.

"I think the industry will get the 25 pumps, although I personally believe it does not solve the problems of the industry," Maharaj said.

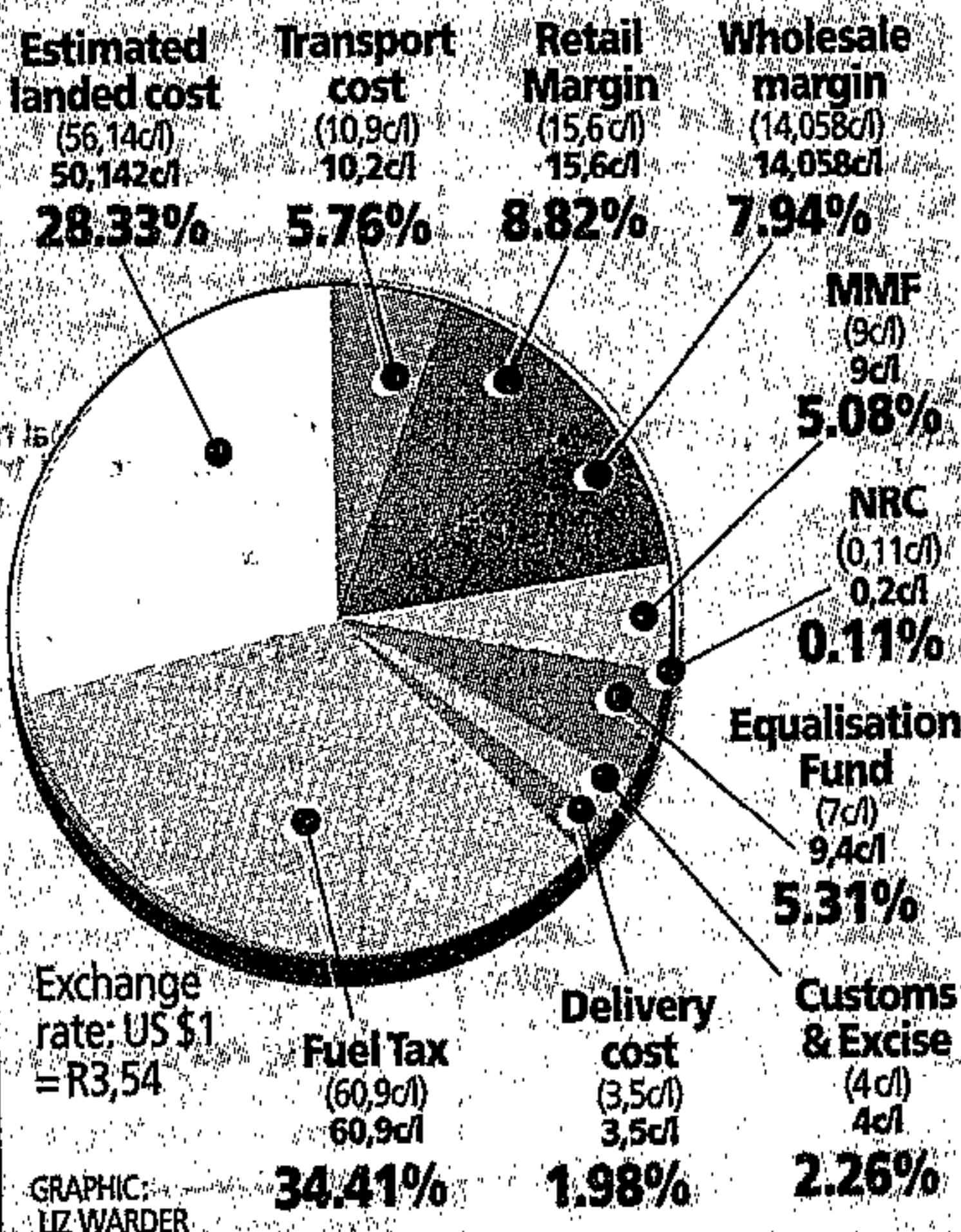
"The reasons for the problems are complex and the effect on commuters is horrendous."

He said he needed to meet all parties involved, but the minibus taxi industry needed a common

Petrol price: 177,0 cents per litre

93 octane, PWV

(Figures in brackets = 1993 prices when petrol was 182,0 cents per litre)



voice if it were to play a meaningful role in formulating and implementing policies.

South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) chairman

Thulani Khubeka criticised this point of view.

"It is useless for our minister to wait for the industry to come together, because if he waits it might break. The best

time for him to help the industry is now."

Boetie Letsoela, co-ordinator of the Organised Taxi Industry, which claims a membership of 100 000 taxi operators, said the Government had a responsibility towards the taxi industry because it absorbed jobless and retrenched workers.

"This industry gives a challenge to the new Government. This industry carried a lot of people during sanctions."

The scheme to cover long-distance taxi commuters is called Accimed Transport and will be underwritten by the Zurich-based Swiss Reinsurance Company, said scheme head Jaap Huisamen.

In his speech he said the plan would cover passengers for medical costs up to R200 000 in private hospitals. In cases of death, R30 000 would be paid to dependants.

Letsoela said Saldta would pay the costs of insuring passengers who would pay nothing. "We are bearing all the costs, because we know it is good for the industry," he said. — Reuter.

'Fuel pumps will not solve taxi industry's problems'

BIDAY 30/9/94

TRANSPORT Minister Mac Maharaj was confident minibus taxi operators would be allowed to run 25 fuel pumps of their own, but said yesterday this would not solve the "horrendous" problems in the industry.

Speaking at the launch of the country's first insurance scheme for long-distance taxi passengers, Maharaj called on operators to unite to save the industry from criminal violence and rivalry over routes.

Taxi operators began lobbying the Mineral and Energy Affairs Department for their own consumer fuel installations more than a year ago. They made their case through the national economic forum's liquid energy fuels task force.

"I think that the industry will get the 25 pumps, although I personally believe it does not solve the problems of the industry," Maharaj said. "The reasons for the problems are complex and the effect on commuters is horrendous."

He needed to meet all players, but the minibus taxi industry needed a common voice to play a meaningful role in formulating and implementing policies.

SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) chairman Thulani Khubeka criticised this point of view.

"It is useless for our Minister to wait for the industry to come together, because if he waits it might break. The best time for him to help the industry is now."

Boetie Letsoela, co-ordinator of the Organised Taxi Industry, which claims 100 000 taxi operators as members, said

government had a responsibility to the taxi industry, because it absorbed unemployed and retrenched workers.

The new insurance scheme to cover long distance taxi commuters is called Acci-med Transport and will be underwritten by Zurich-based Swiss Re Rukz and SA's Global Insurance Company Ltd, a member of the Safilife Group, said Jaap Huisamen, who will head the scheme.

He said the plan would cover passengers for medical costs up to R200 000 in private hospitals. In cases of death, R30 000 would be paid to dependants.

Letsoela said Saldta would pay the costs of insuring passengers. "The insurance will cost the passengers nothing. We are bearing all the costs, because we know it is good for the industry." (332)

Saldta was also planning a medical aid scheme for drivers.

□ A peace accord was signed yesterday by taxi associations in Germiston and Katlehong. Wits Vaal peace committee co-ordinator Meverett Koets said at the signing ceremony the accord signalled an end to years of senseless killing.

The ceremony was attended by taxi operators, traffic officers, policemen and Germiston mayor Sarel Naude. Naude appealed to taxi operators to stick to the agreement.

Taxi operators agreed to share ranks in the Germiston CBD and to allow any taxi operator to take on passengers at the main rank. — Sapa.

BiDay
**R36m offer
from Laser**
31.10.1988

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Road freight group Laser Transport has announced a R36m rights offer to pursue acquisition opportunities and reduce non-property related gearing, the company said on Friday.

Eighty new Laser shares would be issued for every 100 shares held at an issue price of 450c a share. The offer comes on the heels of last year's acquisition of Mainline Carriers and Dolphins' Transport.

The share was untraded at 450c on Friday, off its high of 485c in June. Friday's share price was double that of a year before, in line with the group's rapid earnings increase which, in the interim period to end June, amounted to 40,2c a share (18c). *(332)*

The rights issue was underwritten by Fedlife Capital Fund. Investec Merchant Bank and Metropolitan Life each agreed to take an equity share. "The collective institutional support places Laser in an excellent position to grow," a spokesman for the institutional investors said. *(332)*

The company operates in all sectors of the transport business, from refrigerated transport to machine moving and general freight.

Uniserv continues strong growth trend

31/10/94

SAMANTHA SHARPE

FREIGHT services group United Services Technologies (Uniserv), incorporated in the British Virgin Islands, continued to show growth, with a 27% increase in attributable earnings to R10,77m for the six months to August.

Operating income rose 53% to R15,53m, but was not comparable with the same period last year because of the amount of interest paid. The elimination of the interest effect would have shown a 43% increase in operating income, the group said.

Net interest payments rose to R1,6m compared with net payments of R0,51m in August last year, with prior use of previous tax losses boosting the tax charge 464% to R3,08m.

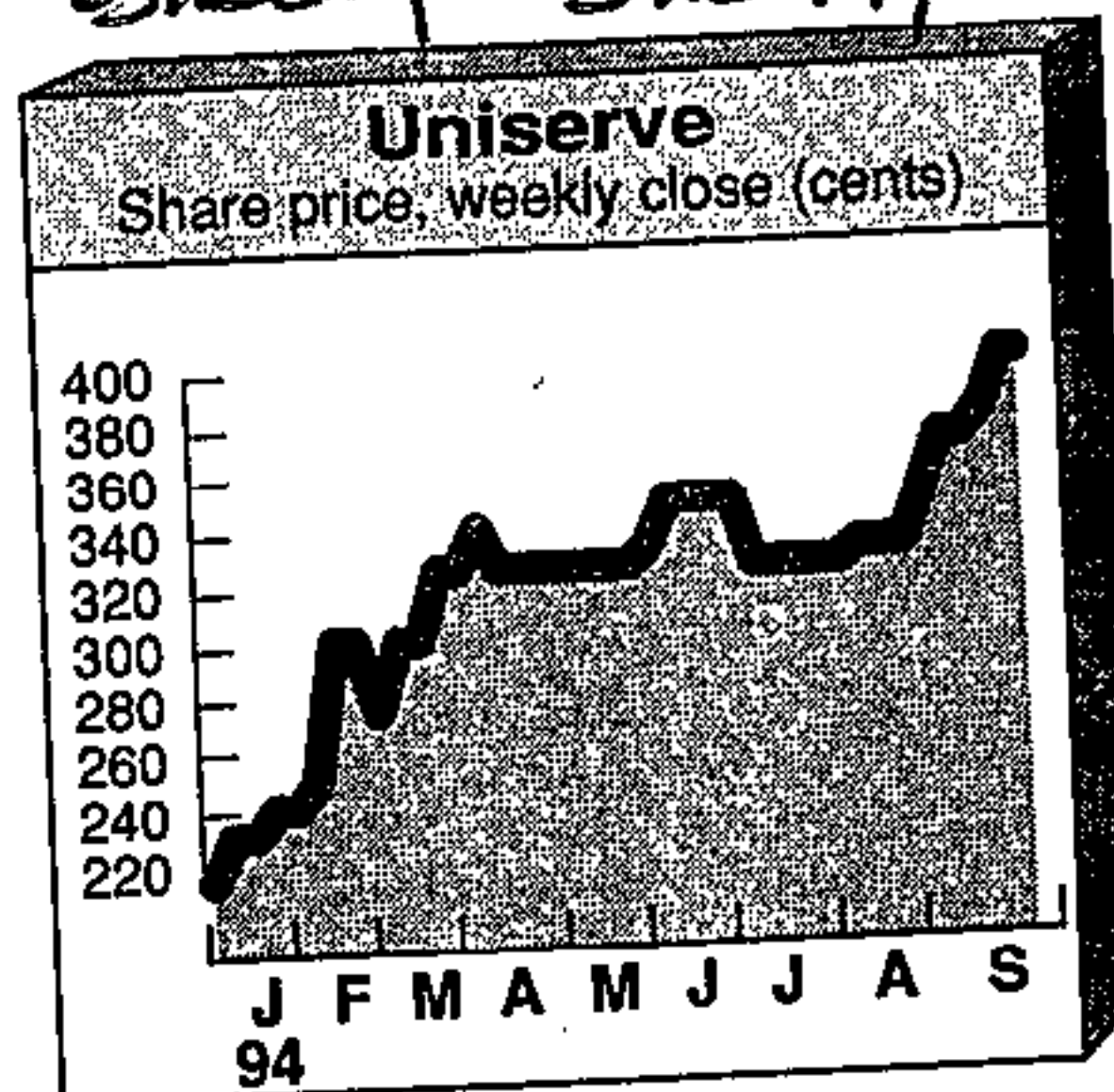
The conversion of a final tranche of the 'B' preference shares in June reduced the preference share dividend payment to R69 000 from a previous R244 000.

The remaining 'A' preference share dividends would be converted early in 1997, the group said.

The healthy increase in earnings translated to earnings of 19,9c a share compared with 17,5c in August last year.

Chairman Tiger Wessels said the six-month results compared favourably with the same period last year. "All divisions experienced trading results," he said.

Interest payments suffered a blow from the conversion of rent payments to an interest expense following the exercise of an



option to acquire the property from which subsidiary Sun Couriers operates.

Wessels said the elimination of this effect would have shown a 43% increase in operating income. (332)

He said the group's performance was expected to maintain its current levels.

Uniserv started to show a dramatic turnaround trend in the six months to August 1993, with a significant improvement in earnings a share to 17,5c (3,1c).

The group reversed its previous attributable loss situation after strong contributions from Sun Couriers, which had been affected by labour problems.

The upturn was continued in the results for the year to February, which showed a 62% increase in earnings to 36,9c a share.

Taxis (332) join in peace bid

Staff Reporter

WARRING taxi organisations say they have signed an historic peace agreement in Pretoria and want the message to reach their members that the taxi violence must cease.

At a Press conference yesterday representatives of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (SALDTA), the Taxi Executive Council (TEC) and the police announced the formation of the SA Police and Long Distance Taxi Association Forum.

Police Brigadier Jac de Vries said the police had brokered the negotiations, but the two groups had been willing partners.

He said this was the first time that the executive members of the various associations within the taxi industry had sat down and resolved to work out their differences in a peaceful manner.

Brigadier De Vries said he was confident the truce declared between the organisations would work.

The Forum's committee would hold their first meeting on October 17.

TAXI-FREE CITY CENTRE

Drivers face arrest

332 CT 14/10/94

By PETER DENNEHY

THE Cape Town City Council has banned minibus taxis from operating in the central city from Monday, October 24.

It has issued a stern warning that taxi drivers who continue operating in Strand Street will face arrest.

By agreement with 12 taxi associations, minibus taxis will be virtually banned from operating anywhere within a new "restricted zone", which takes up almost half the central business district, after the new station deck taxi rank comes into operation next Monday.

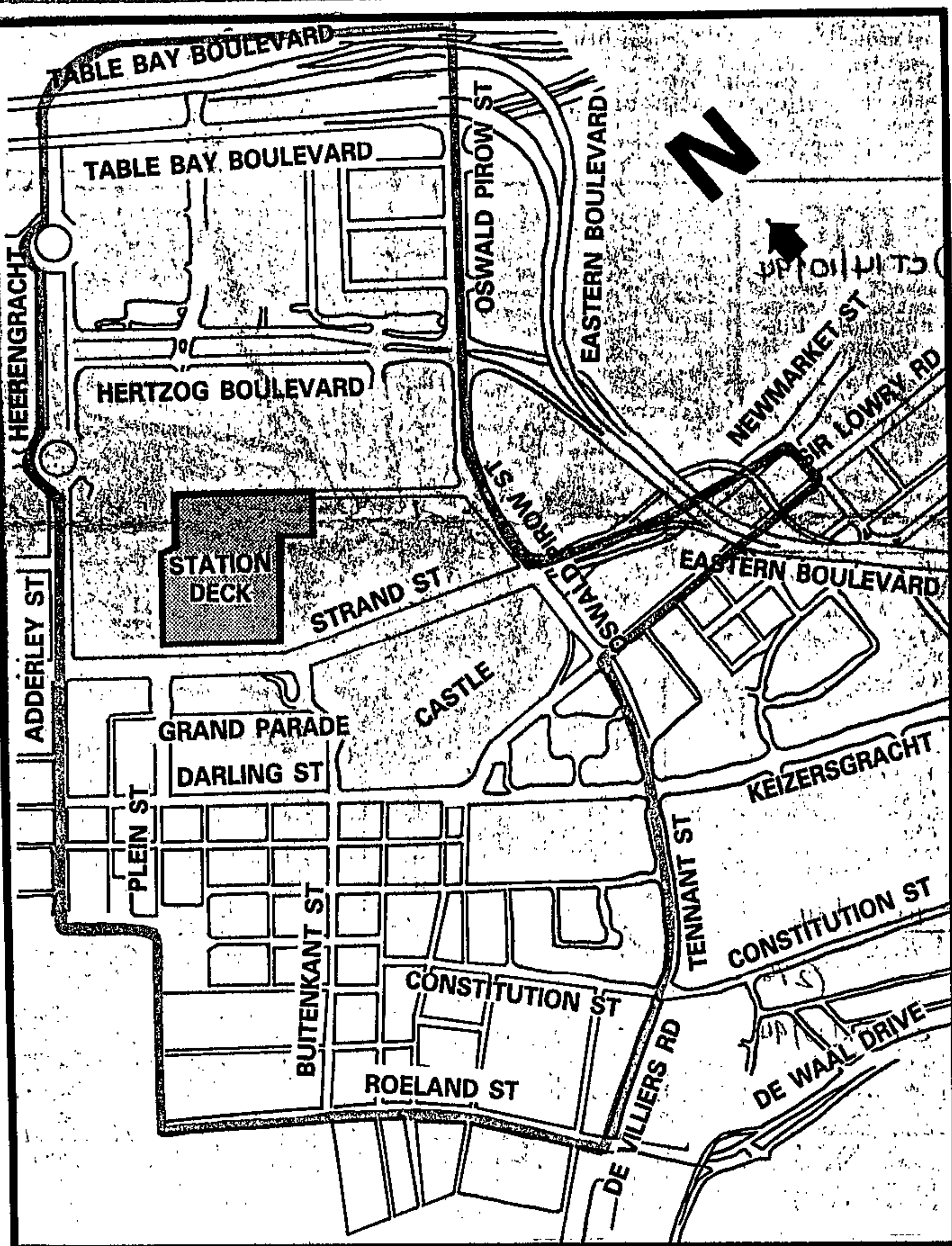
No taxi operating outside the agreement will be tolerated and drivers could face fines of up to R600, deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said yesterday.

The restricted zone is between Roeland Street and Table Bay Boulevard, from Adderley Street to Oswald Pirow and Tennant streets, and has an extension along Strand Street and Sir Lowry Road to Russell Street, beyond the Good Hope Centre.

Mr Frank van der Velde, who chaired the taxi liaison committee that worked out the deal, said yesterday the only exception to the ban would be a few bays given to Peninsula Taxi Association vehicles that serve the city bowl.

Only 20 to 30 vehicles were included in the concession and the bays would not be in Strand Street.

The move from Strand Street to the station deck has been endorsed by the taxi associations of Heldeveld, Bonteheuwel, Park City, Athlone and District, Peninsula, Kenfatta, Manenberg, Mitchells Plain, Atlantis, Mowbray, Wynberg, and Codeta which largely serves the black townships.



NO-STOPPING ZONE . . . Minibus taxis will be banned from stopping inside the demarcated portion of the city centre — except on the new station deck — from Monday October 24. Drivers who continue to operate in Strand Street will face arrest.

Graphic: LESLEY STACEY

Taxi massacre

11 killed, 20 injured as gunmen fire on crowd

CT 17/10/94

By DALE GRANGER
and CHRIS BATEMAN

At least 11 people were massacred and more than 20 seriously injured by gunmen who raked a Khayelitsha Stadium crowd with automatic gunfire after a rally late yesterday.

The horrific attack was an eruption of mounting tensions between a new PAC-aligned taxi group, many of whose members are believed to be among the dead, and the larger Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta).

Police spokesman Lieutenant Ben Theron confirmed the death toll, adding that by early this morning detectives had arrested four men.

Witnesses said a 2,000 strong crowd attending a Sanco local elections rally were leaving the stadium about 5pm when some 15 gunmen opened fire on people in the road outside.

Two men firing AK-47s burst into the stadium as screaming people fled across the field, some trampling others in their panic to escape over a fence.

Witnesses said the two gunmen challenged people who had taken shelter to come out of hiding. A shootout followed both inside and outside the stadium as several people returned fire with handguns.

At least two victims of the roadside battle were shot in their cars. A 15-man team under Major Don Perry will continue combing the area for clues by daylight today after working through the night. Police said the darkness and absence of street-lights had hampered the investigation.

Emergency operations

Police confirmed that the gunmen were armed with AK-47s and R4 automatic rifles as well as 9mm pistols. Three of the injured underwent emergency operations last night. Sources named the protagonists as the newly-formed Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and Codeta. Cata member taxis were seen carrying PAC election posters at the rally. When the shooting stopped, the bodies of five men were carried outside and

placed in a neat row on the pavement. Several people slipped through a police cordon desperately trying to find whether their loved ones had been shot but were sent back by police demanding the area be kept clear.

By 9pm it was still tense with people reluctant to comment on the incident for fear of their lives and some would talk only on condition they remained anonymous.

One witness said those armed with the pistols remained outside the stadium as the two men with AK-47s shot people inside the stadium.

Another said police had collected a "big bag" full of spent cartridges and added that two handgrenades had been found in one vehicle.

"I think Codeta fear that this new taxi association, Cata, will rise up and overpower them," said one witness.

"It is the duty of the police to protect us at these rallies. There were no police here and if they were here this wouldn't have happened," he added.

The township was bracing itself for further taxi-related violence today as leaders of all the main political parties appealed for calm and reason.



MASSACRE... The bodies of four men killed in last night's massacre lie on a pavement outside Khayelitsha Stadium. About 15 gunmen opened fire on people leaving the stadium after a SANCO municipal election rally.

Picture: NIC BOTHMA

Bid to avert 'taxi war'

A CRISIS meeting with the leaders of the warring taxi associations has been called today by Western Province Roads, Transport and Public Works Minister Mr. Leonard Ramatlakane in an attempt to avoid another "taxi war".

He said the Peninsula, "simply cannot afford another taxi war". "I call for maximum restraint by both Codeta and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association — they must contact my office first thing this morning and I will give them the venue for the crisis meeting," he said.

Mr. Ramatlakane said discussions over the two-week-old PAC-alligned Cata had begun in his Peninsula Taxi Forum recently.

ANC provincial secretary Mr. James Ncunin last night appealed for "calm and reason".

He called the shooting a "terrible massacre". (332) CT 17/10/94

Mr. Ramatlakane can be contacted at 483-5336. Regional PAC chairman Dr. Mandla Tshabalala said: "Violence is not the answer" and offered condolences to the bereaved families.

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CAPE TOWN, MONDAY OCTOBER 17 1994

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◆ LATE FINAL

'Arrests imminent' in massacre

AK47/10/94

332

POLICE are following "excellent leads" and expect "imminent arrests" following the Khayelitsha Stadium massacre, says provincial police minister Patrick McKenzie.

Police disclosed they had found seven used AK-47 rounds at the scene, 11 R4 rounds and 30 9mm rounds.

At a press conference today Mr McKenzie said police were going to push for "strong action" against the killers. People could not tolerate incidents of this nature.

His "gut feeling" was there would be further taxi problems and he said he was doing his utmost to facilitate urgent meetings to address the problem. Ten people died and at least 17 were injured when gunmen opened fire on people as they left the stadium about 5pm yesterday after a rally called by the ANC, the PAC and the SA National Civic Organisation to discuss the reconstruction and development programme.

Chris Nissen, ANC leader in the Western Cape, ascribed the massacre to rivalry in a highly polarised taxi industry, which was further bedevilled by pirate operators and a criminal element.

It is believed the violence erupted due to tension between the ANC-aligned Co-deta and the newly formed PAC-aligned Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), but this could not be confirmed.

Neither organisation could be contacted today.

At today's press conference, police liaison chief Raymond Dowd said police were compiling a list of victims but could not release names yet as next of kin had not been told.

Police confident as bloodbath probe moves in to top gear

He also had deployed extra Internal Stability Unit police in recognised trouble spots.

Mr McKenzie admitted receipt of a letter on Friday, except of a letter on Friday, which said the massacre was a result of a conflict between the two taxi companies.

As people fled for their lives, others returned fire, and within minutes at least 10 people lay dead, and more than 17 injured.



GRIEF STRICKEN: A relative of one of the victims is helped by a friend after the bloody attack at the stadium.



THE DEAD: Policemen seal off the area in front of Khayelitsha Stadium and wait for the ambulance men to remove some of the bodies.

Teenage vigil of love ends in heartbreak as bodies arrive at Conradie

Staff Reporter
A MOVING scene played itself out near the trauma unit at Conradie Hospital where a worried Khayelitsha teenager checked each ambulance as it arrived to see whether his shot father was inside.
He anxiously followed the lights of each vehicle from the hospital gates as they approached the trauma unit until they were close enough to identify.
Each time it was an ambulance the worried boy lit up with hope but each time his father was not among the casualties.
Then Metro's Rescue 7 mass ambulance arrived. As the large vehicle reversed closer to the unit's reception area news spread fast that it was the "body ambulance".
The hopeful look in the boy's eyes disappeared and he gazed expressionlessly until the vehicle stopped and the back door swung open.
There were double decker bunks on each side, each with a covered body on it, two on top, two at the bottom, four on each side.
The interior light was dim. Anxious men and women scurried at the door to try to recognise perhaps a jersey or a pair of shoes or even hair showing under the blood-stained blankets.
The boy scanned the bunks quickly and then looked at the floor.

Police 'were warned on Friday of potential for taxi violence'

Staff Reporters
POLICE were warned on Friday of the "extreme" potential for taxi violence this weekend.
This emerged today after city councillor Frank van der Velde, who has been closely involved in mediation within the taxi industry, expressed his concern about police failure to act.
Faxes were sent to provincial police minister Patrick McKenzie, head of community policing General Deon du Toit, the mayor and another police officer by the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee (Umacc).
But police spokesman Raymond Dowd said he could not confirm receipt of the faxes. "We are still looking into whether such a fax was received".
The fax read: "We have been monitoring the potential for violence during the past nine years.
Recent developments in the black taxi

Gunmen waited for us — taxi men

Staff Reporter
GUNMEN were waiting to ambush members of the newly-formed Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association as they left Khayelitsha Stadium, says Caca chairman Simon Halmans.
Mr Halmans said he dived out of a car through a window after the driver was shot dead with an AK-47 at a point-blank range.
"It was clear the gunmen were waiting as we came out of the stadium. Our driver, Alfred Molwana, was hit in the chest and head.
"Another colleague, C Sinka, was also hit.
"The car veered out of control and bumped into two cars along the street. I jumped out of the car through the window.
"As I ran between the cars, the gunmen continued to fire at our members."
Mr Halmans said he hid in a nearby squatter camp until the shooting stopped.
Caca members had attended

Red Cross man hurt in crossfire

Staff Reporter
A SOUTH African Red Cross Society worker was injured in the crossfire at Khayelitsha Stadium, a society spokesman said.
The man, who was on duty at the stadium, was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital late yesterday and treated for slight gunshot wounds before being discharged.

NP condemns killings

PRETORIA — The National Party today condemned "in the strongest terms" the shooting that claimed 10 lives at the Khayelitsha stadium.
A spokesman said: "We call on leaders of the taxi associations, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) to meet urgently to try to resolve tensions through negotiations."
Resolving problems through the barrel of a gun was to nobody's advantage.
"It is a pity that this unfortunate incident happened a day after the national day of safety and security." — Sapa.

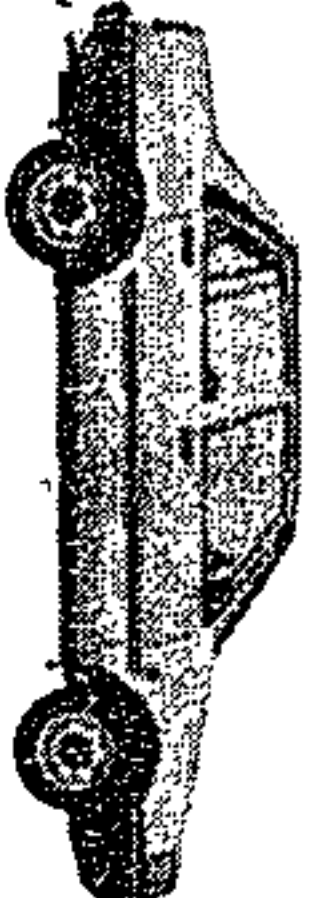
The actions of 'third force'

Staff Reporter
PAN Africanist Congress president Clarence Makwetu has blamed a third force for the Khayelitsha massacre.
And he has denied that the new Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) is affiliated to the PAC.
He said at the stadium where yesterday's shootings took place that the fact that the killers had struck after the meeting showed they had carefully planned the attack.
Normally a conflict was preceded by a quarrel, but in this

In response to the letter he requested an urgent meeting with the Minister of Transport
Reports: JOHAN SCHROENEN, ADELE BALETA, ROGER FRIEDMAN, ANDREA WEISS
scattered, among the shattered glass on the road outside. Most were riddled with bullets from the waist up.
The rally was attended by around 2 000 people.
An injured Cata taxi-driver (To page 2)

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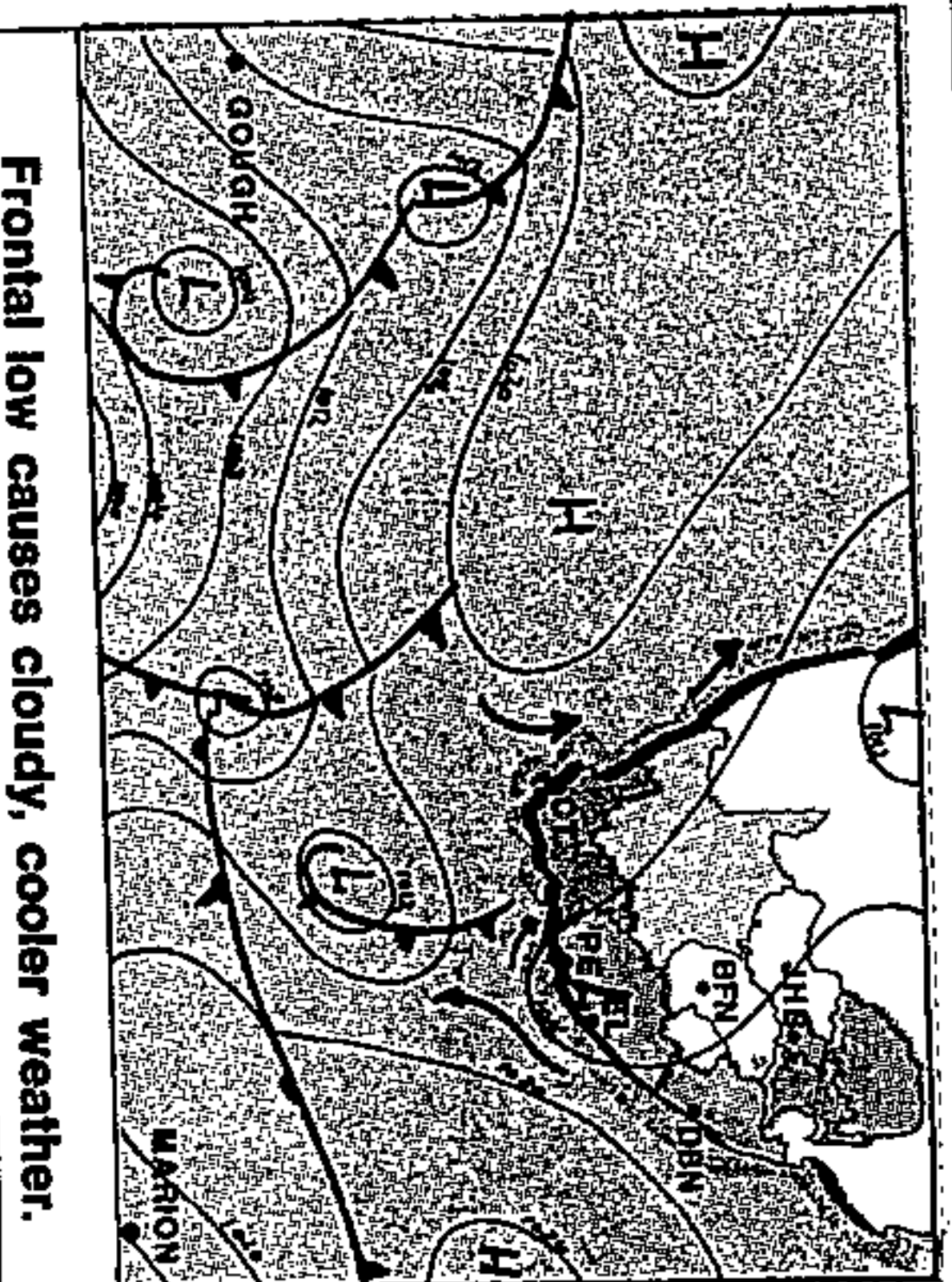


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Fine, warm, wind SW 5 knots. Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, mild, wind S/S 15-20 knots.

Hermanus
Partly cloudy, mild, wind SW 10-15 knots. Tomorrow: Partly cloudy, mild, wind SW 15 knots.

Rain	The tides	The sun
Yesterday: nil Oct total: 0,5mm Oct average: 35,5mm	High water 0156 1406 tomorrow 0228 1437 Low water 0800 2021 tomorrow 0829 2049	Sunset today 1900 Sunrise tomorrow 0601

Air temps	Water temps	The moon
Today 7am 15 deg C Expected max 21 deg C Yesterday 2pm 20 deg C Yesterday min 12,3 deg C Yesterday max 20,3 deg C Tomorrow min 11 deg C Tomorrow max 22 deg C	Sea Point 14 deg C Sea Point pool 19 deg C Muzenbergs 15 deg C Muzenbergs pool 18 deg C Newlands pool 21 deg C Long St pool 25 deg C	● New moon Nov 3 ● Last quarter Oct 27 ● First quarter Nov 10 ○ Full moon Oct 19

Weather data
Sunshine yesterday 6,9 hours Cloud yesterday 8am: eight-eighths 2pm: nil 8pm: nil
Barometer 2pm yesterday: 1 017,7 mb 7am today: 1 018 mb
Humidity 2pm yesterday: 68 percent
Wind 2pm yesterday: NW 14 knots.

Travellers' forecast
Johannesburg Partly cloudy, warm 07 to 26 deg C
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Weather Bureau forecast
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Kommeljé 783 2442
Strand 024 854 7593

Arrests 'imminent' after 10 massacred at stadium

332

Arg 17/10/94

Passenger wounded as

man fires on Nyanga taxi

Staff Reporters

A PASSENGER in a minibus taxi was wounded near Nyanga taxi rank today when a man on foot fired at the vehicle.

Police spokesman Raymond Dowd has expressed fear that yesterday's massacre at Khayelitsha Stadium could prompt a flare-up of the smouldering taxi war, costing more lives.

Colonel Dowd said today's attack in Nyanga about 9.45am was being regarded as an "isolated incident" until a positive link with yesterday's attack could be established. The victim, a man whose name was being withheld, was in a stable condition in hospital.

A special police task force of 20 officers from the violent crimes unit, under the command of Colonel Leonard Knipe, will investigate the massacre.

Colonel Dowd said the internal stability unit patrol in the area had been doubled in number and a police helicopter was helping ground patrols on taxi routes and at ranks today.

Colonel Dowd extended the police's condolences to relatives of the victims.

Station deck rank to go ahead

Municipal Reporter

THE taxi war which has erupted in Khayelitsha is unlikely to affect the opening of the new station deck rank, according to a member of the city council's taxi working group.

Deputy city administrator Alan Dolby said today that the council was going ahead with its plans to open the deck on October 24.

He said the council had become involved in mediating in

a taxi war before the elections — but now that the political dispensation had changed, it was a matter to be dealt with by the ministers of police and transport.

The station deck agreement had been made with all the associations which had been using Strand Street for ranking.

New organisations had been applying for permission to use the facilities and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association could also apply.



TAXI WAR: A soldier, above, passes the body of a man killed yesterday when gunmen opened fire on a crowd leaving Khayelitsha Stadium.

(From page 1)

said: "They came from nowhere. They were all around us, their coats opened like curtains and they lifted their weapons. And then the loud crackle of automatic gunfire started and, almost immediately, the interior of minibuses was red with blood."

A shaken Guguletu taxi-driver, a member of Codelet, said: "After getting out of the stadium, I was parking my minibuses with those of other Codelet members when the shooting suddenly began."

"I couldn't see the gunmen but the shots seemed to come from Cata members in the eastern section of the stadium."

Another driver, speaking at Conradie Hospital where he was treated for a bullet wound, said he had noticed two men standing between houses across the road from the stadium.

"But I did not suspect anything, even after a woman told me that they were hiding AK-47s under their clothes."

"We drove out of the stadium and as we passed the two men shooting started."

"The driver stopped the minibus and ran away. I felt a sharp pain in my shoulder and dived onto the floor where I hid between the seats while the gunfire carried on like in a war."

"The other passenger was badly injured. Blood was streaming from a deep wound in his face."

"He tried to tell me something and then he collapsed and died next to me."

"When the shooting stopped I jumped out of the taxi and ran," said the man.

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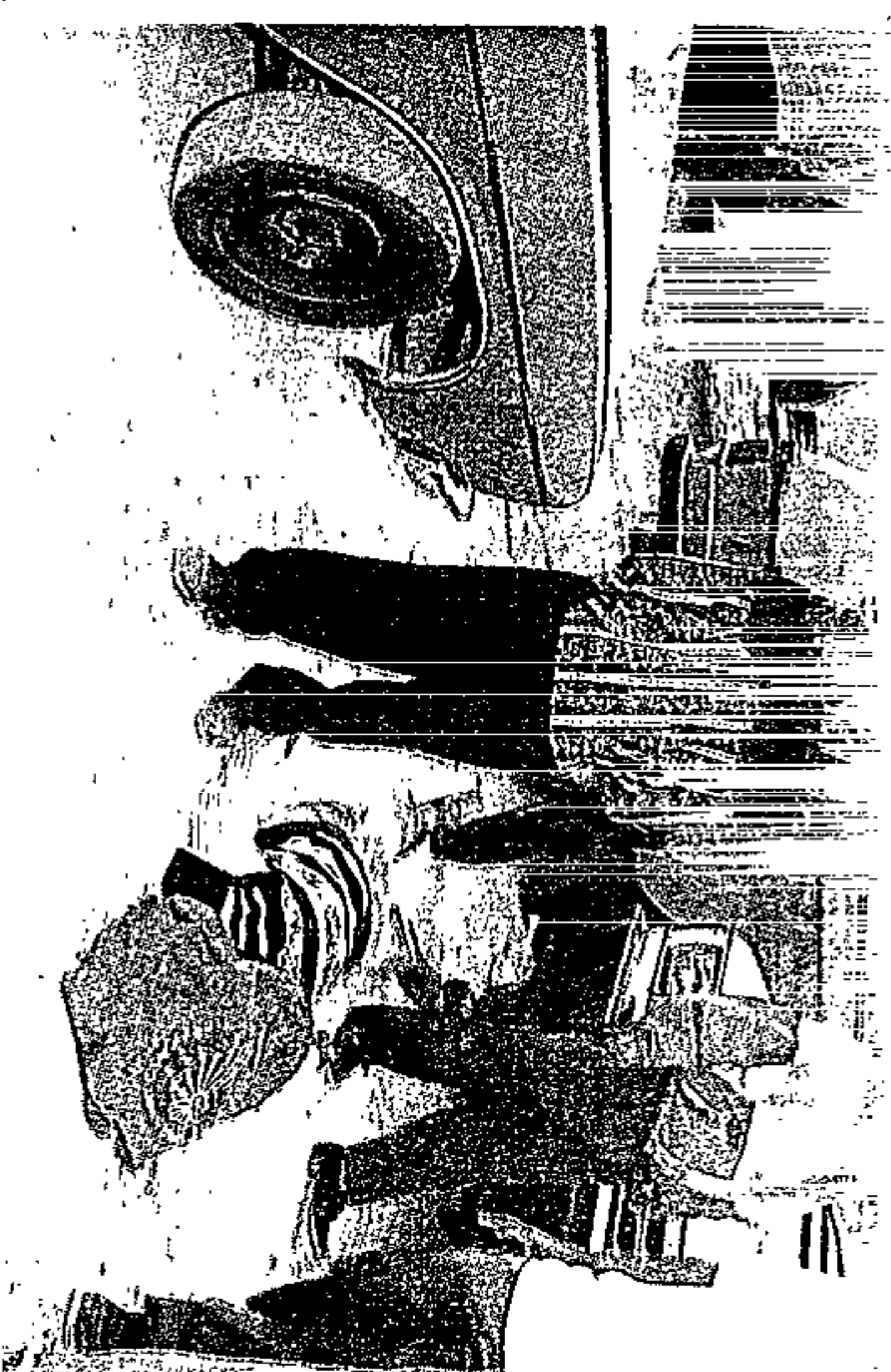
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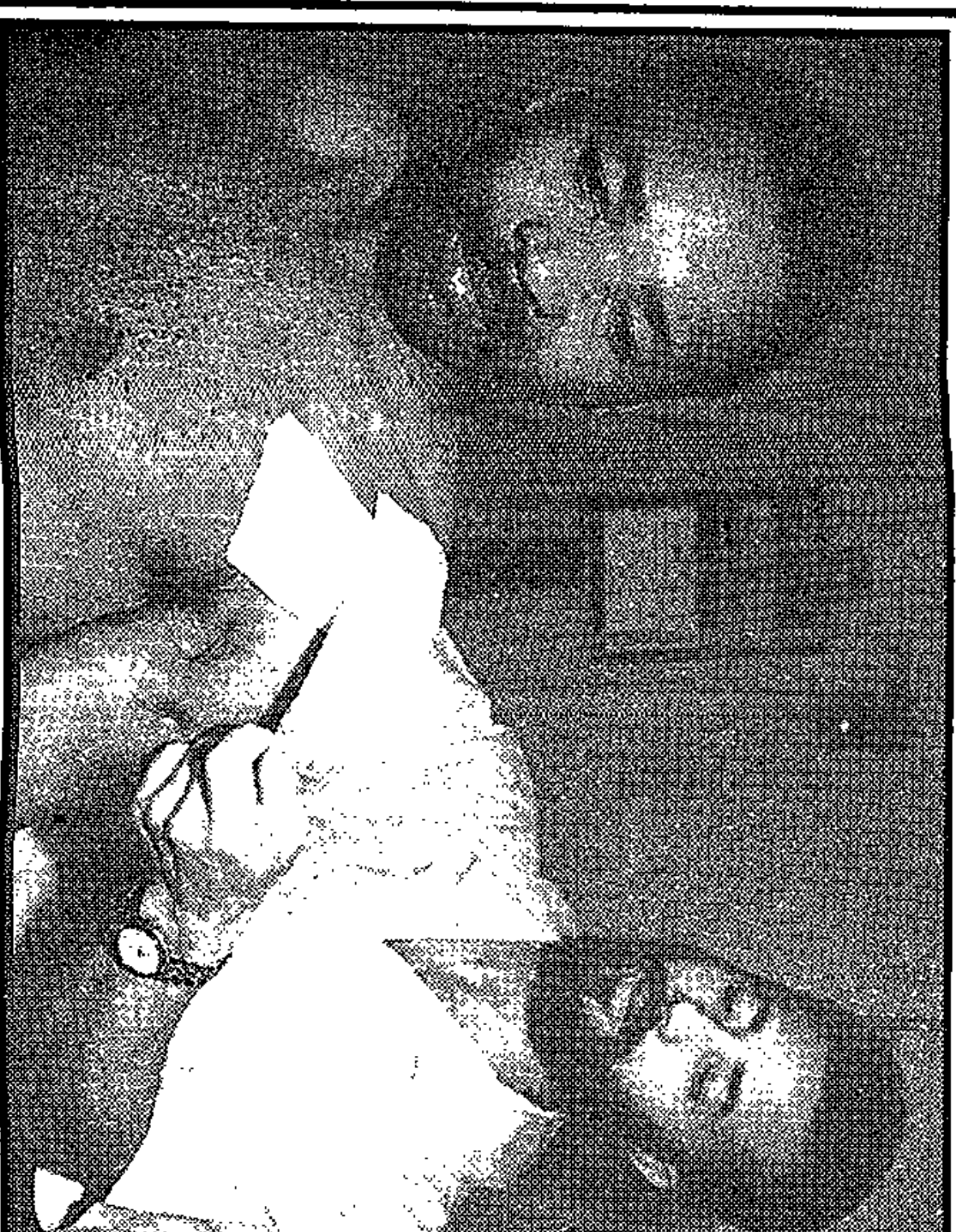
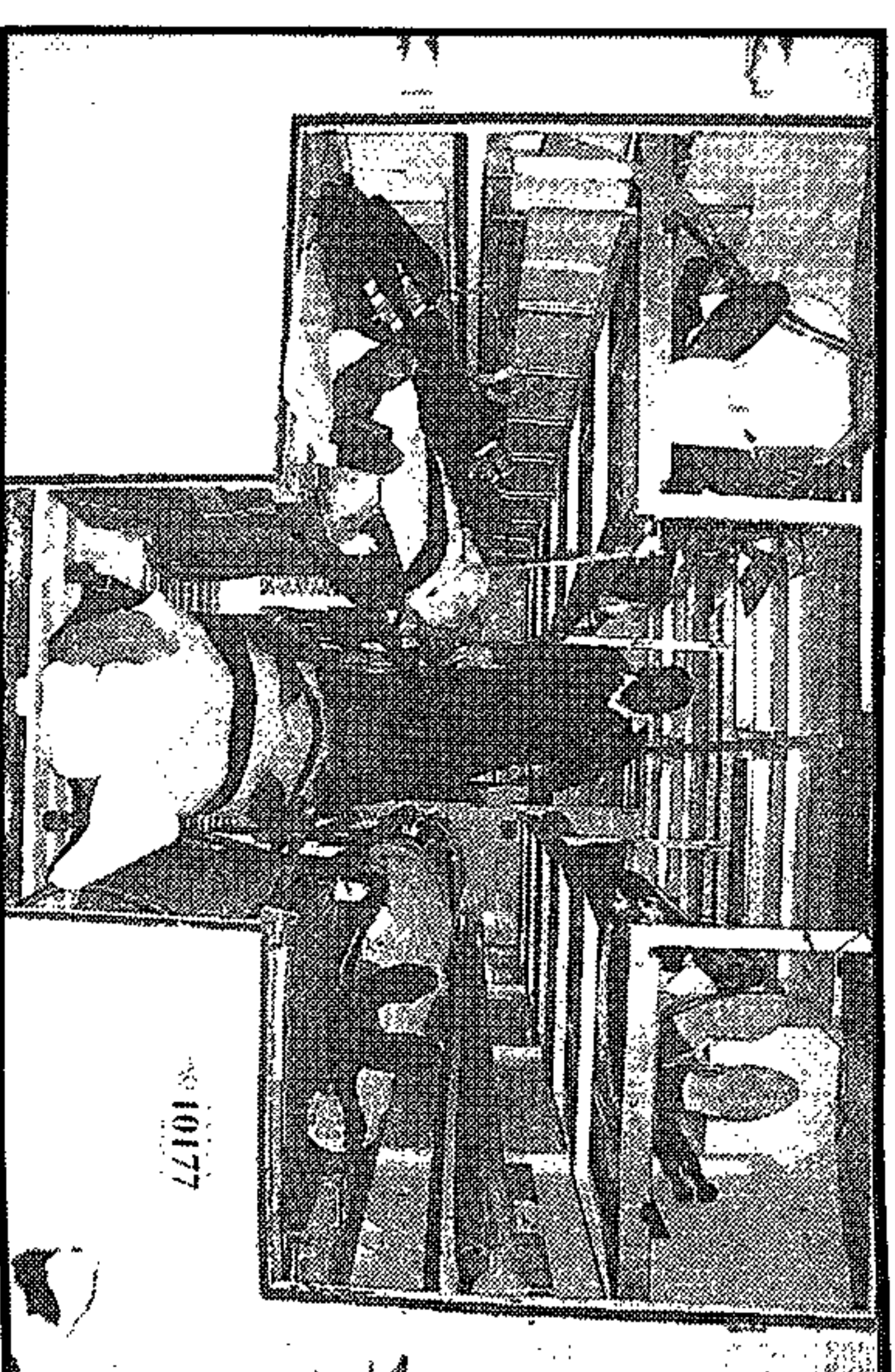


ground at Khayelitsha to Peninsula hospitals. Eleven people with gun shot wounds were taken to Groote Hospital yesterday, a hospital spokesman confirmed. Five were admitted. The other six were treated and discharged. A Conradie Hospital spokesman said six people were treated at the hospital yesterday, three of whom were discharged. One patient is in the intensive care unit and is "stable and fairly satisfactory" and the other two people are in the wards and are stable, the spokesman said. Attempts to contact Codeta and Cata today were unsuccessful.

SHOCKED: Dazed witnesses stand around after the shooting.

■ ■ ■

GRIM LOAD: An ambu-medical with his grim load of 10 bodies in the back of an ambulance at Conradie Hospital where they were certified dead by a doctor.



SHOT BYSTANDER: Freelance photographer, Sydney Gebe, above, of Khayelitsha who was hit by a stray bullet at Khayelitsha Stadium, is treated by Conradie nurse, André Greeff.

Pictures
OBED ZILWA
and
ROY WIGLEY
The Argus

'All must put heads together'

Staff Reporter
EVERYONE involved in the minibus taxi industry must put their heads together to find a solution to continuing strife and tension, says Western Cape African National Congress leader Chris Nissen. He was speaking last night to reporters at Conradie Hospital, where he had gone to support injured people and to be given more details about last night's shooting in Khayelitsha. Mr Nissen said he thought that with the inception of Codeta the problems would have been minimised. "The ANC is going to investigate the incident intensively. "Renewed negotiations are needed to get to the core of the problem," he said. Violent clashes among taxi rivals have cost the lives of more than 100 people in the past 18 months.

Safren poised to benefit from economic recovery

B/DAY 17/10/94

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Safmarine and Rennie Holdings (Safren) should continue to show earnings growth in the year to June 1995 as the R5bn-a-year group would benefit substantially from the economic recovery, executive chairman Buddy Hawton said in the annual review.

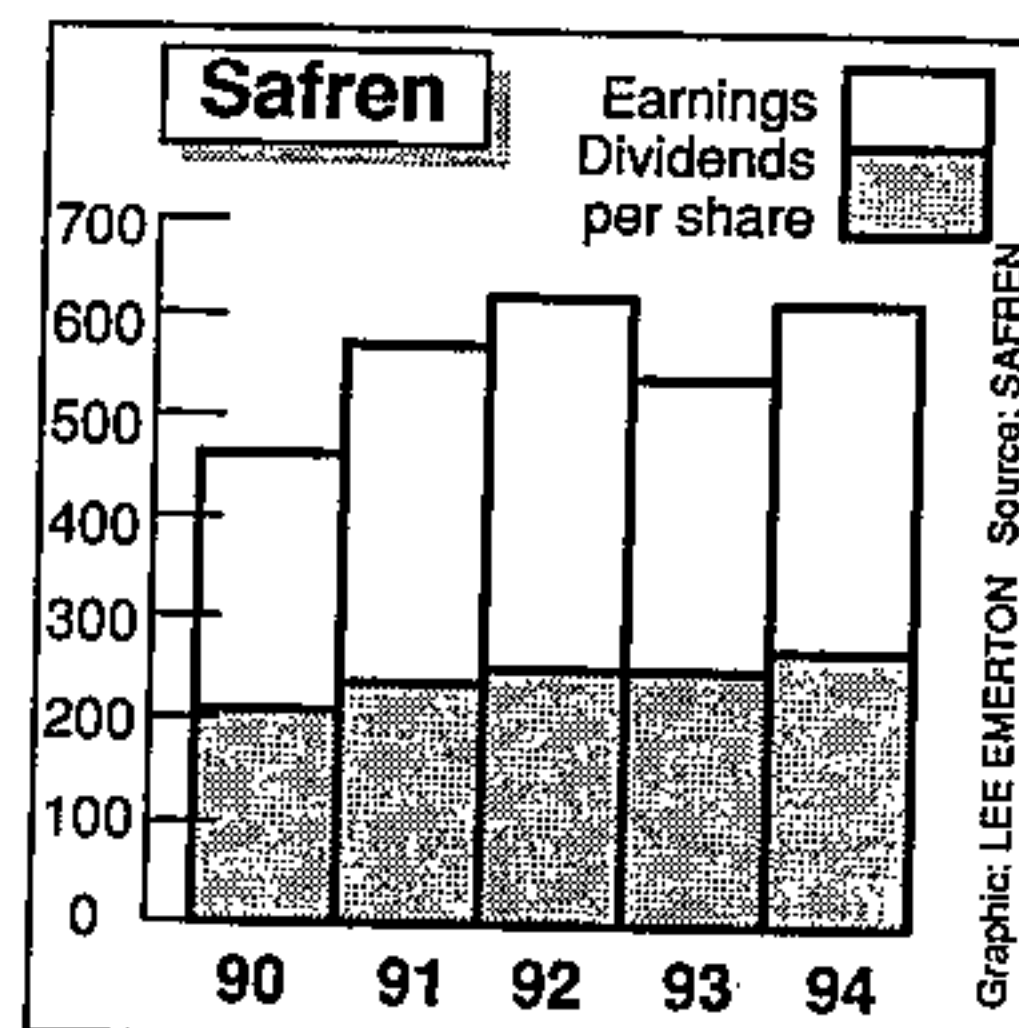
The investment programme undertaken in recent years and proposed development plans enabled Safren to look positively to the future and to the expected increase in international trade as prospects for global markets improved.

The group was also well placed to optimise its network in the sub-continent and profit from a well established infrastructure, which, although developed in a hostile environment, was well able to adapt to the changed circumstances.

Capital expenditure of R372m was authorised for the current financial year, principally to acquire ships and containers and to refurbish resort operations. The expenditure, together with the acquisitions and developments over the past two years, would give the group a broader earnings base, he said.

In the past year Safren's attributable income increased 21% to R158m.

Expectations that SA's economy would continue to grow would have a beneficial effect on Safmarine's liner



services. The Far East berth, characterised by rates erosion, would remain of particular concern, should trade growth not match the increased supply of vessels being placed on this berth.

Little change was reflected in US imports, but steady north-bound trade growth had been achieved by the liner services. The volume of exports to Europe remained disappointing, but market share on that trade increased after the withdrawal of two competitors.

The European trade section was well placed to handle volume increases without adjusting vessel capacity. Inadequate freight rates persisted on the Mediterranean trade, but Safmarine's position stabilised with the introduction of calls to west Africa and market share was improving, with favourable prospects for the current year.

Bulk shipping markets continued to show signs of revival, but these were not expected to be material in the short term. The bulk shipping division was well placed to benefit from a shipping upswing in the second half of the decade.

The economic upturn and the introduction of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, with the resultant lowering of import duties and surcharges, would favour import growth. But in the short term this was expected to be diminished by SA's limited foreign exchange reserves and a weakening currency.

Resorts and casinos operation Kersaf Investments' results were affected by unrest in the Northwest province in the third quarter of the year. The group believed that casino licences should be linked to the establishment of substantial tourism infrastructural developments and that a proliferation of licences would be to the detriment of industry expansion and job creation.

Kersaf's earnings were expected to be acceptable in the current 12-month period, with the changes in the competitive environment for gaming activities expected this year unlikely to materially affect earnings.

The Rennie Group's freight, travel and storage operations had identified substantial expansion opportunities. The group was projecting results for the current year to be higher than those in the year under review.

Five Nyanga ³³² taxi hijacked

CT 18/10/94

Crime Reporter

FIVE vehicles belonging to Codeta group taxi operators were hijacked at Nyanga terminus yesterday afternoon.

The hijackers stripped naked the drivers of the taxis — which were cars, not minibuses — and threw them out of their vehicles, according to Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwayi.

He said the drivers had been told their vehicles would be used in attacks on taxi ranks used by Codeta members.

However, agreement to return the hijacked vehicles was reached at a meeting at the Good Hope Centre last night.

In another violent incident yesterday an unidentified taxi passenger was wounded in the leg when a gunman opened fire from another taxi at the intersection of

Drivers stripped, thrown out

Lansdowne and Stock roads around 9am.

These incidents follow the shooting of 33 people — 10 fatally — in Khayelitsha on Sunday.

The next of kin of the 10 people who were killed had not yet been notified by last night, police said.

They knew the names of five victims, but had not been able to trace their families.

Four men were detained and released after questioning, and by late yesterday no arrests had been made in connection with the massacre.

A police spokesman said AK-47

and R4 assault rifles and 9mm pistols had been used.

Anyone with information about the killings can contact police toll-free at 0800-11-12-13.

• Western Cape Minister of Police, Mr Patrick McKenzie, came under fire last night with allegations that he knew beforehand about the danger of an attack at Khayelitsha stadium.

At a joint press conference the ANC, PAC, SANCO, SACP and the Western Cape United Squatters' Association called for a commission of inquiry into the attack and circumstances leading to the conflict.

"We deplore the fact that the minister (Mr McKenzie) knew beforehand of the imminent danger but failed to act accordingly," they said in a statement.

● Where were the police? — Page 10

Petrol profits to fuel taxi drivers' income

THE taxi industry is on its way to dispensing petrol to members with a government announcement that a subcommittee had been appointed to formulate criteria for the allocation of 25 pumps.

The Mineral and Energy Affairs Department said yesterday the committee would work out details of the taxi petrol installations, which had been requested by the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI).

The committee would work according to directives from a meeting of the taxi installation committee, comprising representatives of the OTI, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and oil companies, the department said in a statement.

The appointment of the committee was the culmination of months of talks between the parties, following a request by the OTI that the taxi industry should be allowed to instal fuel pumps at 25 centrally situated ranks across the coun-

THEO RAWANA

try with a view to alleviating the financial plight of taxi owners. *B1 Day*

The establishment of the committee followed satisfaction in the taxi installation committee that consensus had been achieved, except on the level of participation of individual oil companies, in the supply of 25 taxi installations. *18/10/94*

The taxi and oil industries would try to resolve the outstanding issues on a bilateral basis, the parties agreed.

The taxi installation committee has now concluded its task and the final agreement will be reported to the Office of the Deputy President and the Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister, the statement said. *(332) (18)*

OTI co-ordinator Boetie Letsoela said he saw this as a breakthrough to ensure taxi drivers made a living, as profits from the pumps would benefit members.

Taxi truce

CT 18/10/94

(332)

By PETER DENNEHY

PEACE was brokered among warring taxi factions at a high-level meeting at the Good Hope Centre last night.

This followed a day of violent incidents yesterday and the gunning down of 33 people on Sunday — ten of whom died — which threatened the resurgence of a full-blown taxi war in Cape Town.

Local Minister of Transport Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, who called the peace meeting at the Good Hope Centre, said afterwards that three members of each side — Codeta and Cata — would form a management group "to facilitate the process of bringing unity".

The Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) is a PAC-aligned break-away group from the mainstream Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta), a united body formed after the taxi wars racked Cape Town two years ago.

Mr Ramatlakane said there would also be a mediation process and "we will look at the long-term problems".

Ranks would be monitored in the meantime, and anyone who broke the law at ranks would be apprehended.

Both groups have pledged their commitment to co-operate with the police.

Before the Good Hope Centre meeting, Cata spokesman Mr Steven Williams claimed that Codeta had prevented his members from getting taxi permits.

Applications had to go via the Codeta office, he said.

But Codeta chairman Mr Kidwell Magwayi said there was a committee through which the applications passed, and that Cata members had been represented there before the association broke away about two weeks ago.

Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie yesterday doubled the Peninsula's internal stability division, using members from Paarl, while a detective team of 20, headed by three officers — similar to that which probed the St James massacre — was formed.

Mr McKenzie also revealed that one of the suspects sought in connection with Sunday night's massacre in Khayelitsha is presently on R25 000 bail awaiting trial for another offence.

Mr Magwayi said yesterday that the break-away group were all former Webta (Western Cape Black Taxi Association) members.

The break-away group was small but "militarily powerful", he said.

"Those who don't want to be controlled (by Codeta discipline) take a different route."

Cata spokesman Mr Williams said: "We don't want to take revenge."



LAYING DOWN ARMS . . . Just before they entered the peace meeting at the Good Hope Centre yesterday, members of the two taxi groupings involved in a clash at the weekend were required by police to hand in their handguns. These were returned to them afterwards. The meeting was successful.

Picture: BENNY GOOL

"We don't want to fight. We are willing to compromise and negotiate."

Meanwhile, ANTHONY JOHNSON reports that the ANC has ascribed political motives to the Khayelitsha massacre, saying it was not the result of "a simple taxi war".

TAXIS HIJACKED

See PAGE 2

The preliminary results of an investigation launched by the ANC pointed to political or third force involvement in the killings, the ANC's chief spokesman, Senator Jackson Mthembu, said last night.

Mr Mthembu said the ANC would pass on the findings of its own investigations to the police and urged the community "to do everything in their power to assist the police to unmask the psychopaths involved".

The Democratic Party said the massacre was a

shock, specially to those who had thought that the recent agreement regarding the shifting of the taxi rank to the Cape Town station deck was an indication that the feud between the taxi associations had been resolved.

The PAC's denial of involvement and accusations of a third force "just do not wash", the DP said.

"It is clear that the attack was premeditated and politically motivated."

"The PAC must pledge their full support to the investigation to come clean," the DP said.

PAC president Mr Clarence Makwetu said at a press conference that he condemned the shootings. He said he understood many Cata members were PAC supporters, but they were not officially affiliated to the PAC.

● At the weekend, Codeta lawyers were working on a Supreme Court interdict to restrain Cata members from turning away non-Cata members from Nyanga terminus, tearing off their stickers or putting on different ones, or behaving in a threatening way, said Mr Magwayi.

YOU



Threat of new taxi violence

(332)

ARG 19/10/94

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

SIMMERING tension in the taxi industry after Sunday's massacre in Khayelitsha threatened to erupt into renewed violence today with the regional ministry of transport receiving reports of armed intimidation at the Wynberg rank.

But police say they have received no reports of any such incidents.

Garth Strachan of the department of transport and public works strategic management team said his office received reports of armed intimidation at Wynberg from both Codeta and Cata taxi organisations at midday.

His office made immediate contact with police who told

him they were looking into the matter.

Mr Strachan said police told him they could not station officers at each taxi rank as "they would be sitting ducks" but police assured him they had deployed as much personnel near problem ranks as possible.

Earlier, according to all reports, the ceasefire brokered by regional transport minister Leonard Ramatlakane seemed to be holding, with taxis operating relatively normally and no new reports of violence.

The renewed tension in the industry is the result of a feud between the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and the newly formed Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and erupted into open warfare on Sunday when 10 people were massacred in

the Khayelitsha Stadium.

Police have made no arrests yet.

● The president of Codeta, Kidwell Magwaya, has denied that the occupant of house 791 Wimpy Homes, Crossroads, in which 20-year-old Hlanganile France was murdered on the night of the stadium massacre, was a member of Cata.

He said the occupant, Thembisile Malgas, was in fact a Codeta Mowbray branch chairman who had moved away because his area was a Cata stronghold.

Mr Magwaya said Mr Malgas was one the Codeta officials who had applied for a court interdict recently to restrain Cata members from harassing Codeta members in the Nyanga route.

Taxi rank violence narrowly averted

By CHRIS BATEMAN

QUICK thinking by the police community liaison division and the local Minister of Transport's office narrowly averted renewed violence between the feuding Cata and Codeta taxi associations in Wynberg yesterday.

Local Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane revealed this on the eve of the expected formation of a representative taxi crisis liaison committee today.

Tipped off about a possible attack at the Wynberg taxi rank, the coordinator of the minister's Strategic Management Team, Mr Garth Strachan, immediately contacted community police and the taxi leadership, who rushed to the scene.

Co-operate

Negotiations followed as police stood by and tensions were defused.

Mr Ramatlakane said he had met once with local Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie since Sunday's Khayelitsha massacre.

Asked if he and Mr McKenzie intended meeting to co-ordinate plans for the upcoming funeral of massacre victims, he replied: "Everyone has their part to play and we agreed we need to co-operate in trying to quell this violence".

No meeting had yet been scheduled.

Warning (332) 'was not ignored'

By DAN SIMON
and CHRIS BATEMAN

WESTERN Cape Minister of Safety and Security Mr Patrick McKenzie yesterday rebuffed allegations he had ignored a warning there was a strong likelihood of a renewed outbreak of taxi violence in Khayelitsha last weekend.

And police yesterday said they had received no warning from the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee

(Umac) of impending violence which resulted in the death of 10 people in Khayelitsha on Sunday.

"It is with a feeling of indignation that I have taken note of allegations propagated in the media that I took no cognisance of the fax forwarded to my office by Umac," Mr McKenzie said.

"The fax made no mention of the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) meeting and only refers to the potential for violence during the course of the weekend, without being specific."

In a memo, Umac director Mr Stef Snel said "recent developments" in the black taxi industry had led his organisation to believe there was a renewed potential for an outbreak of a taxi war in the region.

"We are particularly concerned about the potential for violence this coming weekend," Mr Snel said.

Massacre: Police identify shooters

Crime Reporter

POLICE have identified people who fired shots at the Khayelitsha stadium where 10 people were killed at the weekend, but they will not make any arrests until it has been determined who the perpetrators were and who fired in self-defence.

Ballistics tests would be conducted on at least 162 bullet casings of the AK-47, R4 and 9mm weapons found in and around the stadium, police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said.

The meeting at the stadium was organised by the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) and was attended by rival taxi organisations.

He said a recent development which concerned the organisation was the emergence of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association, which was formed in opposition to Codeta.

Another concern was the funerals for three victims of the "simmering taxi violence", which took place at Khayelitsha cemetery last Saturday.

In response to these warnings, Mr McKenzie said, "additional measures" were taken by the internal stability division.

Khayelitsha was a "priority area" for the police because of the continued taxi warfare.

"Additional measures were taken and additional patrols were instituted and activities were monitored. It also deems mentioning that no request was received from Sanco for a police presence at the meeting."

Drivers to give rank 'trial run'

Staff Reporter

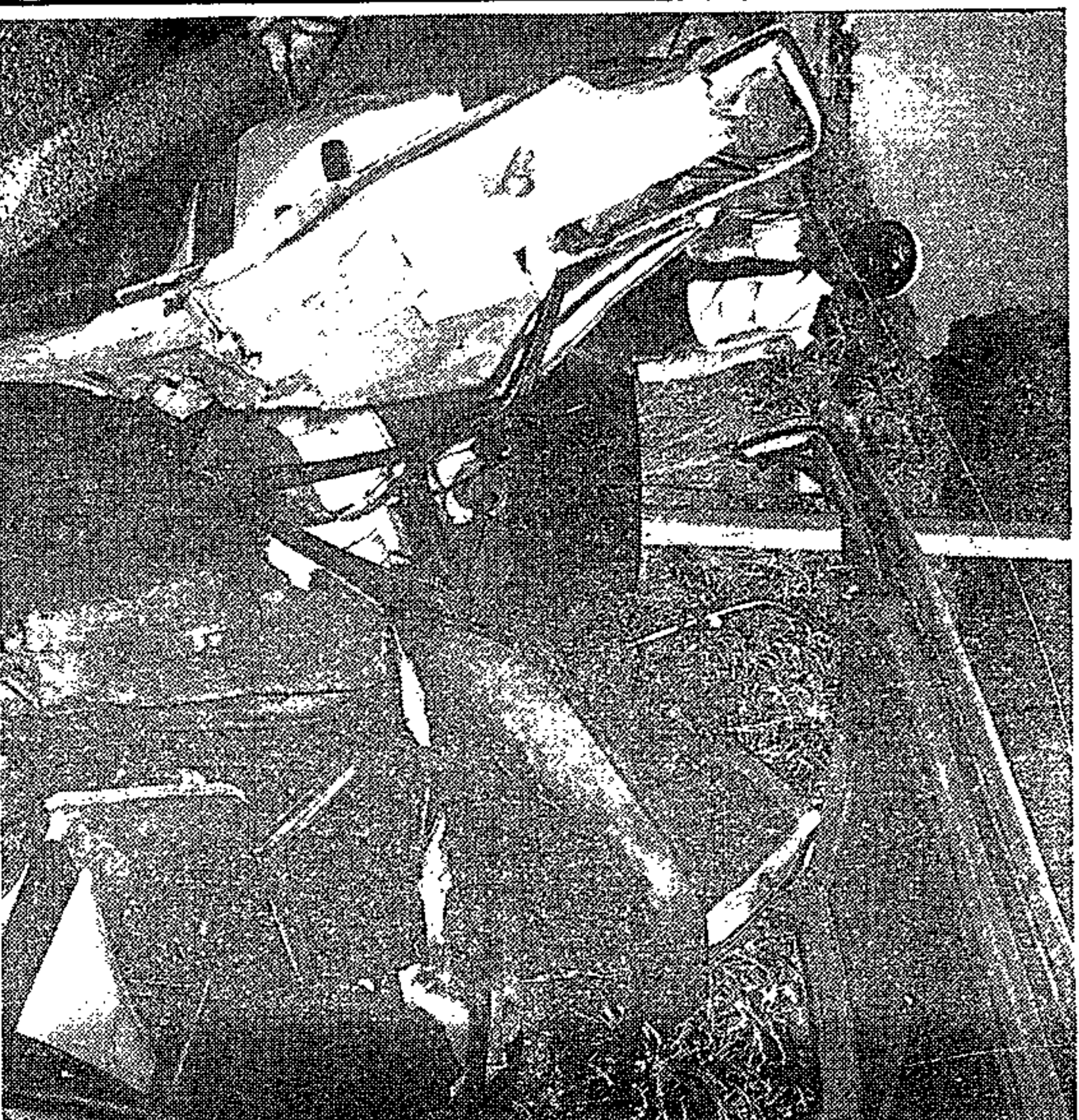
MINIBUS taxi drivers ranking in Strand Street have expressed little enthusiasm for the coming move to the new Cape Town station deck ranking site, saying they will lose commuters to the Golden Arrow bus service.

The drivers said they would rank on the station deck from Monday, but would use the first month as a "trial period" to see how it affected business.

The Cape Town City Council yesterday placed an advertisement in local newspapers giving notice that the Strand Street minibus taxi rank would "permanently close" at midnight on Sunday.

Drivers said they were not happy with the new site, and there were "too many robots" on the designated route.

"We'll lose out on a lot of passengers, as they won't walk up the stairs to the station deck," complained one driver.



GRIM REMINDER: A traffic policeman surveys the scene of yet another taxi carnage, the victims of which will probably face crippling financial problems.

Insufficient insurance on taxis leaving crash victims destitute

HENRI du PLESSIS
Motoring Reporter

MOST victims of minibus taxi collisions are left destitute, facing huge medical bills as drivers steer clear of expensive insurance cover and third party claims take up to 10 years to be paid.

An Argus investigation has disclosed most medical aid schemes refuse to pay medical costs after collisions, leaving victims to claim from the Multi-Lateral Motor Vehicle Accident Fund or from private insurance.

While claims often took years to settle, hospitals and doctors usually wanted their money "yesterday", a medical profession source said.

Insurance industry spokesmen say minibus taxis are rarely insured and taxi operators are unwilling to pay the premiums demanded by insurers who attach great risk to these vehicles.

An exception to this rule is the South African Long Distance Taxi Association, which has re-

cently tied up an insurance plan with a private insurer.

The package agreed upon by SALDTA was based on the fact that passengers were picked up at a pre-determined spot, their names were entered in a registry by so-called marshals and an additional levy was charged to pay for the insurance on a trip-by-trip basis, a spokesman for the insurer said.

"I don't believe insurance companies are overly keen to cover short-distance passengers," the spokesman, a doctor who may not be named, said.

"Firstly how do you keep a record of the passengers, the very people whom you are insuring?"

"On the long distance trips, passenger control is possible."

Trade and Industry Minister Trevor Manuel has stepped up pressure in favour of taxi insurance.

He has proposed legislation that makes cover compulsory —

but which also requires taxis to be fitted with protective bullbars.

"They are already a law unto themselves on the road. How are they going to act if they are all equipped with bullbars?" asked a well-placed taxi industry source who did not want to be named.

In the Western Cape the taxi body, Codeita, has responded to Mr Manuel's proposals by launching negotiations with an insurer for a special package for members' vehicles, said spokeswoman Anna-Marie Logan.

"We want to arrange cheaper premiums for our members, but it will remain voluntary unless Mr Manuel's legislation is passed."

"It is difficult to say how many taxis out there are insured. There are so many pirate taxis and until now the drivers and owners had to go to insurers off their own bat."

A Directorate of Traffic Safety spokesman said: "There is a lot of talking going on at the moment

and I know that there are discussions with the minister about the issue (insurance).

"I don't know how far it has gone, but so far, neither drivers nor owners of minibus taxis are required by law to have insurance for passengers."

Meanwhile, medical costs after an accident can amount to thousands. As most taxi passengers come from underprivileged communities, few can afford medical expenses and do not have personal medical insurance.

The national medical aid administrator Medscheme does not pay accounts when there is a potential claim against a third party, a spokesman said.

"If there is nobody the injured person can claim against, we will settle the accounts. But in traffic collisions there normally is somebody to claim against."

A collision victim had an unlimited claim against the driver of another vehicle which was in-

involved in the smash which injured the victim, said Mr Willem Swanepoel, chief executive officer of the Multi-Lateral Motor Vehicle Accident Fund.

"Against the driver of the vehicle he or she had been travelling in, the victim has a claim limited to R25 000. We believe common law should be applied with regard to further claims."

"It does take long to get third party claims settled — often between five and 10 years. There are many possible hold-ups between the claimant, the lawyer and the claim handler."

"An adult has up to three years from after the accident in which to lodge a claim — a minor has until the age of 21 to claim, and then the three adult years on top of that."

"The fund is unholly bankrupt — we are between R3 billion and R4 billion in the red, but we are able to pay out, because more money is coming in than is going out."

"We are paying out about R1 billion a year."

Taxi leader indicted in ^{CT 22/10/94} 'reign of terror' claims

By EUNICE RIDER (32)

THREE interim interdicts were granted in the Supreme Court yesterday against a township taxi organisation leader and his supporters, preventing him from harassing, attacking and provoking members of rival taxi organisation Codeta (the Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Associations).

The applicants, all Codeta members, claimed in affidavits that Mr Victor Sam, leader of the newly-launched Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association, and its members had been assaulting them, threatening them with firearms, ripping the Codeta identifying stickers off their taxis and ordering them out of areas in which they had been doing business by "conducting a reign of terror" against them.

The first applicant, Mr Howard Dyubeni, said in an affidavit he knew Mr Sam as a gangster from the Big Eights of Nyanga.

He said about two weeks ago Mr Sam and his gang formed Cata and had since embarked on a wide-scale attempt to intimidate, harass and threaten Codeta taxi operators.

Twenty-five other applicants all signed affidavits saying they confirmed Mr Dyubeni's affidavit. They also stated that they had suffered financial loss and were afraid of operating their taxis.

In a second application another Codeta taxi owner, Mr Nowa Jaxa, said a group of men assaulted and robbed him and other Codeta drivers at the Bellville Taxi Rank on Monday.

In a third application Codeta taxi driver, Mr William Mnadayi, said he had been threatened to leave the Mowbray taxi rank on Tuesday by armed Cata members who said they would kill him.

Unless the respondents respond to the interim orders they will be made final on November 14.

Taxis set for move to deck

CT 24/10/94 (332)

Municipal Reporter

TAXI drivers in the city said yesterday they were all set to move peacefully up to the new rank on the Station Deck from today, when the new rank opens and Strand Street closes to taxi operations.

The largest potential problem is that the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) has recently broken away from Codeta, and Cata's members do not have the required council-issued tokens to use in the new rank.

A Cata member who was at the Strand Street rank yesterday, Mr Vonga Kuse, said nobody had approached Cata drivers to explain what was required.

"We were waiting for the council," he said.

Cata taximen had heard that Strand Street was closing to taxis, and they did not want to force matters.

He pointed out that long sections of the Strand Street taxi area had already been cordoned off with drums and tape, and he expected that by this morning the entire length of the street would be closed in this way.

"We will not disregard the cordon. We will go up to the new rank. I don't think there will be any trouble."

There might be a problem if someone tried to turn away from the deck the "more than 100" Cata operators who daily came into town.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said Cata taxis which came into town with passengers would not be turned away from

the deck on the first morning, even if they did not have tokens.

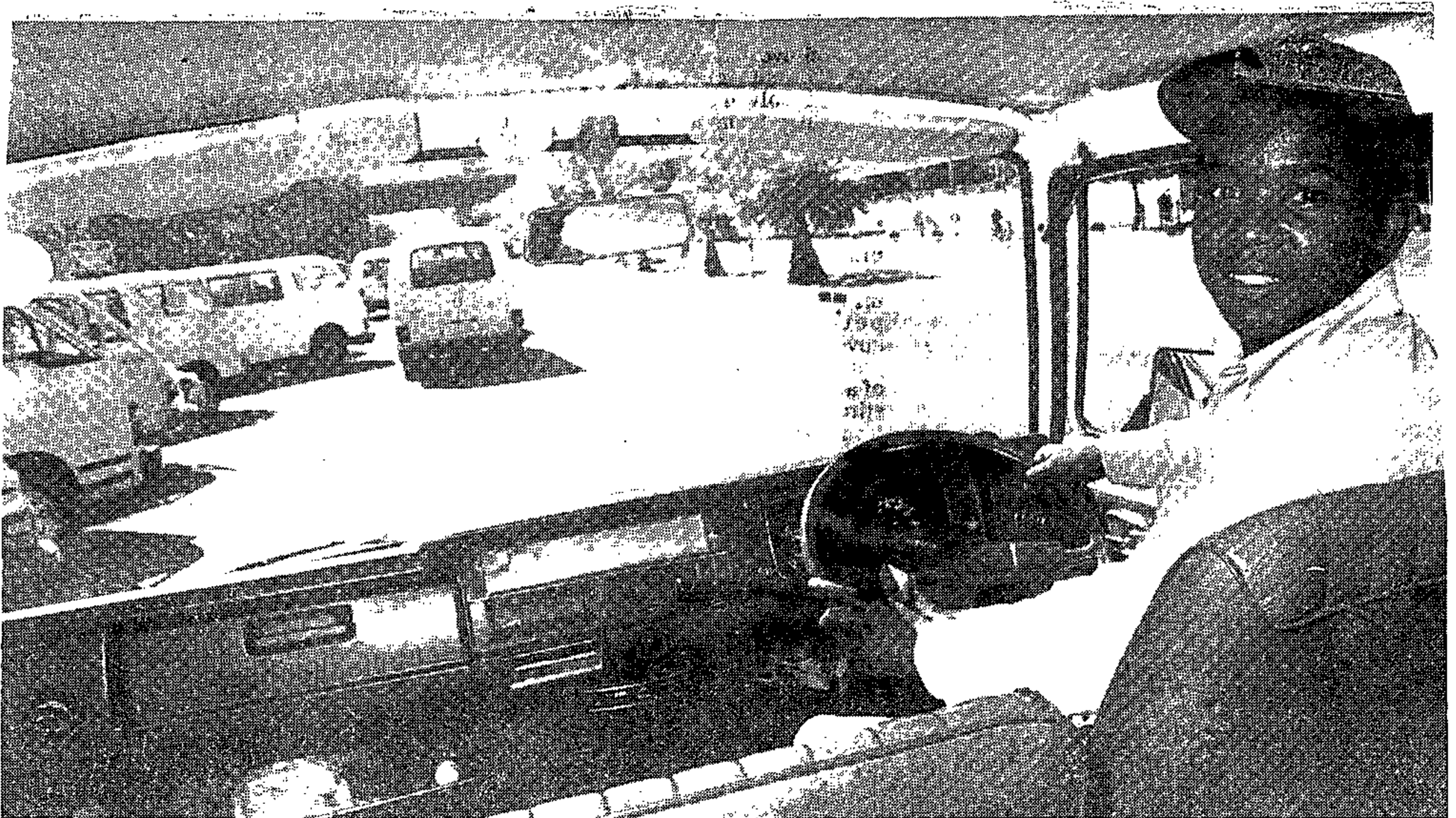
He said that when Cata had not come to him, he had tried to contact Cata through the office of the minister of transport, but this had not worked.

He hoped they would come and talk to him today.

A possible problem which could be discussed was that he understood some Cata drivers may not have road transportation and vehicle fitness permits, which the council did require before handing out tokens.

• Mr Zayne Davids, a driver with the Peninsula Taxi Association which serves Sea Point and Camps Bay, said it would be less convenient to use the deck "but we are going to go".

"We must give it a try," said his colleague Mr Faizel Abrahams.



READY AND WILLING . . . Mr Allswell Kinyana is prepared to move out of Strand Street to the Station Deck taxi rank today — but he does not yet have the required rank token. Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said taxis without tokens would not be turned away today.

Picture: CLIVE SMITH

Switch to station deck taxi rank goes 'without hitches'

□ 35 000 commuters pour into city during peak hours

ARG 24/10/94 (332)

PIETER MALAN
and ANDREA WEISS
Staff Reporters

THE taxi rank switch from Strand Street to the station deck went off without any major hitches during the morning peak hours today as an estimated 35 000 taxi commuters poured into the city.

The city council stationed extra traffic department staff in Strand Street to ensure that the switch got off to a smooth start.

Assistant traffic chief Peter Paine said that everything appeared to have gone according to plan during the peak hours.

If the plan works it will be unique in an otherwise volatile industry which has been characterised by conflict and violence.

Last week 11 people died when tensions between the established taxi association Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and the newly launched Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) flared in Khayelitsha.

Months of negotiation and compromise preceded the move to the station rank, with an agreement between 13 taxi associations having been reached prior to its opening.

The move also marks the end of a chaotic traffic situation in Strand Street which has plagued city motorists for months.

The new station deck taxi rank was a hive of activity this morning as taxis sped in and out of the new undercover area to drop passengers.

Strand Street was relatively deserted for a Monday morning with traffic officers turning away those drivers who either forgot about the new arrangements or tried to take a chance.

Some commuters seemed confused, especially those in transit through the city to other destinations.

David Mantyusi complained that previously he could catch the taxi directly from Macassar to Sea Point.

"Now I can only come into town and then I must catch another taxi to Sea Point."

"From now on I will be going by train from Macassar to the city."



Picture: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus.

THUMBS UP: Atlantis taxi driver Johannes Wildschut gives the thumbs up to the new station deck taxi rank which opened this morning.



Picture: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus.

MEDICAL AID: An injured municipal worker is treated by emergency staff after being struck by a rubber bullet.

Desperate effort to end taxi crisis

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

332

DESPERATE efforts are underway to get the leadership of the feuding Cata and Codeta taxi associations together today to resolve a crisis which has disrupted the opening of the new station deck rank.

ARG 25/10/94

City council administrator Alan Dolby said taxi drivers belonging to the Peninsula Taxi Association, who were afraid to use the deck because of the dispute, had been given "one-off" permission to pick up passengers on the Parade yesterday afternoon only.

This decision was taken at an emergency meeting after drivers blocked Strand Street.

However, he was adamant that Strand Street would not be re-opened to taxis.

Mr Dolby said he was trying to get the Cata and Codeta leadership to sit down together but they appeared to be in hiding.

Today taxis were using the station deck unhindered, but tempers are likely to flare in the afternoon as competition for passengers rises.

Mr Dolby said it was "most disappointing" that Codeta, the group that had been keenest to move to the station deck, was now involved in feuding which was wrecking the situation for everybody.

The management committee of the station deck, which consists of representatives of 13 taxi associations, meets today. After that, the council is hoping a second meeting, between Cata and Codeta, can be arranged.

Meanwhile, Peninsula Taxi Association members claim they have been threatened and are reluctant to use the deck until the Cata/Codeta dispute is resolved.

None of the PTA officials who were supposed to be on duty on the deck yesterday were there because of the threats, further adding to the problems which arose in the afternoon.

● See page 25

Taxi rank chaos

(332) CT 25/10/94

Drivers back in Strand Street

By PETER DENNEHY

THE long-awaited minibus taxi move from Strand Street to the station deck turned ugly yesterday when a road was blockaded and passengers were forced from taxis by disgruntled operators, many of them having been refused loading rights.

This shattered carefully laid council plans for a smooth change. Scores of taxis also returned to the Strand Street rank in an unrelated dispute. The tension on the deck was mainly between the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and break-away PAC-aligned Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) groups. Those who returned to Strand Street were from the Peninsula Taxi Association (PTA), which serves "the central area from Camps Bay to Athlone", according to one source.

A spokesman for PTA operators, Mr Abduraghaman Tofy, said they were not making enough money on the station deck.

"The buses have never been so full. We were wasting our time up there. The other taxis are taking our work as well. We were promised there would be monitors there, but they (the council authorities) have not kept their end of the bargain."

Some PTA members told passengers in at least one vehicle on the station deck to leave the taxi in which they were just driving off. Passengers were also ejected in Darling Street, where police intervened.

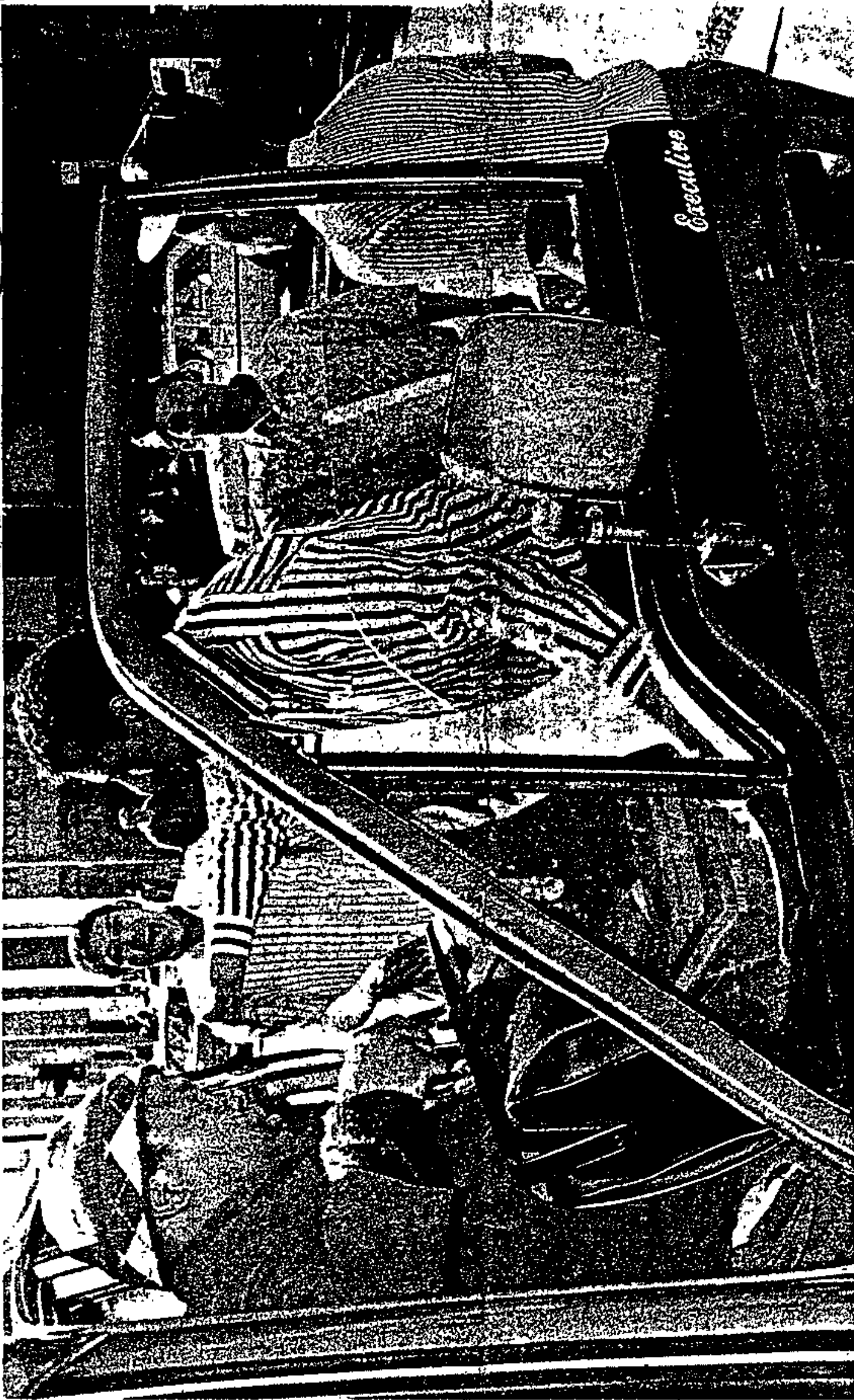
Police at the station deck rank were criticised by Codeta and Cata for "being partial to the other side".

Cata spokesman Mr Maxwell Zolo complained Codeta had chased away Cata taxis at the rank, in front of police.

Taxis run by Cata members then blocked one of the roads to the deck rank, from about noon to nearly 3pm.

Heated discussions with the police followed, while police waited for the City Council and taxi leaders. Cata demanded the new rank be closed as a condition for talks.

Cata taxis tried again later to pick up passengers at the rank. Codeta members asked passengers to alight



DISRUPTED JOURNEY ... A passenger obeys an order to alight from a taxi in the middle of Darling Street. A handful of drivers who were unhappy with the way the new station deck rank was run wanted everyone out of the taxis late yesterday. Many taxi operators were refused loading rights. Picture: BENNY GOOL

From page 1

moments after they boarded.

Asked whether they would allow at least those Cata drivers with permits to use the deck rank, Codeta's Mr David Jezile said they would be allowed if they had the necessary tokens and removed their Cata stickers.

Traffic manager Mr Wouter Smit said late yesterday many of the taxis going to the deck did not display tokens.

He said he had liaised with Codeta and Cata and hoped to get their leaders together today to solve the conflict.

Mr Smit said between 150 and 200 taxis which qualified for tokens, which cost R25 each, had not yet collected theirs.

He said hundreds of tokens had been issued in the past few days.

Asked whether anyone other than the traffic police could turn taxis away, Mr Smit said: "We had hoped the taxi associations would police themselves."

To page 2

Laser's share price 'undervalued'

CAPE TOWN — Laser Transport Holdings' share price was undervalued considering the group's expected earnings for the year to September, Laser chairman Peter Thomas said yesterday. 25/10/94

He was speaking at a meeting to ratify the acquisition in May of R80m-a-year Mainline Carriers and an increase in share capital for a rights issue. (322)

"If we perform as we think we will, either the share price will remain low, signalling a poor rating, or the price will rise substantially," he said. Laser was untraded at 460c yesterday, shy of its 12-month high of 485c on June 20, but nearly double its 240c low in November last year.

A circular to shareholders yesterday showed that Mainline, acquired for R11m,

had been making losses since 1989, mainly due to high interest payments on debt.

"We accepted ... debt levels would not be ideal, but we would otherwise have paid a higher price for the company. The amount we paid came at a 75% discount from the net asset value of R42m."

The R36m rights issue, for which 18-million ordinary shares would be created, would be to reduce debt, increase Laser's equity base and position itself to take advantage of expected growth opportunities.

Thomas said Laser was confident it could turn around Mainline's operations. Rationalisation of management structures had already taken place at Mainline.

EDWARD WEST

Laser set for R36m rights issue

By ARI JACOBSON

TRANSPORT group Laser received the go-ahead for the R36m rights issue at a special shareholders meeting yesterday, which chairman Peter Thomas said would help support the debt inherited from recent acquisitions of commercial carriers Mainline and Intracom.

The meeting sanctioned the increase in authorised shares of Laser and the latest acquisitions.

Thomas said that the rights

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CR25/10/94
issue would target current shareholders but institutional interest was also anticipated.

However Thomas said, after the AGM, that the debt was built into the purchase price, which meant that assets worth R42m had been acquired for R11m.

The effective purchase price was R8,56m but as the circular to members stated "certain claims are likely to increase the ultimate cost to a maximum R11m".

Thomas stressed that the cur-

rent debt of Mainline has not been guaranteed by Laser, although as a 100% subsidiary the assets and liabilities would be consolidated in the Laser balance sheet.

Thomas explained "should Mainline be liquidated tomorrow, we will not be liable for the debt guaranteed by other vendors prior to the purchase".

However he added that "Laser would obviously not have acquired these assets if this was

the expected scenario".

The combined balance sheet of Mainline and Intracom, for the year to June 1993, showed a debt to equity ratio of 62% — while current liabilities overtook current assets to the tune of 2,6:1.

However the feeling among the directors was that these debt figures had vastly improved over the last year brought on by cost-cutting and rationalisation measures.

Uneasy calm at new rank

CT 26/10/94

332

Staff Reporter

AN uneasy calm prevailed at the station deck taxi rank yesterday, after the mass taxi move from the Strand Street rank on Monday resulted in chaos and violence.

However, deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby warned yesterday the situation, mainly caused by a dispute between the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and the breakaway, PAC-aligned Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), which is not party to the station deck agreement, was "still explosive".

He said the enmity between Codeta and Cata remained but efforts were being made for a meeting soon between the sides, as well as with the 12 other associations involved in the station deck agreement.

However, a meeting yesterday between the city council and the 13 associations involved in the agreement was successful and they all reaffirmed their support for the deal, Mr Dolby said.

Traffic officers maintained a strong presence at the deck rank and in Strand Street yesterday, but acting city traffic manager Mr Peter Paine said there had been "no major problems".

Taxi operators and fleamarket stallholders at the new rank also reported that everything was quiet yesterday, but views differed on the new rank.

Some operators complained they wanted to move back to Strand Street, saying the new rank was badly laid out and it attracted fewer commuters.

However, another said the new rank was "100% better" in terms of convenience, was safer and better organised.

A trader mentioned that business on the station deck, which had dwindled over the past five years, seemed to be picking up because of the new rank.

Taxi weapon clampdown

PIETERSBURG. — The Northern Transvaal legislature ordered police yesterday to conduct a "systematic manhunt" to disarm and apprehend all taxi drivers and owners possessing unlicensed firearms.

It said it was disgusted at the growing rate of taxi-related killings there.

This comes in the wake of the deaths of seven people, killed by unknown gunmen on Sunday morning. Five family members were killed at Tshiane and two people at Tooseng village.

Regular roadblocks would be set up and drivers apprehended for using unauthorised routes. — Sapa

Taxi memorial service goes (332) off peacefully

Municipal Reporter

A MEMORIAL service for 11 people who died in a taxi-related shootout in Khayelitsha Stadium was conducted peacefully yesterday, but neither of the taxi organisations involved spoke at the service.

Mr Kidwell Magwayi, chairman of the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codata), said last night that Codeta had not addressed the service in St George's Cathedral "to avoid conflict".

PAC regional chairman Mr Mandla Tshabalala said he understood all but two of the victims were aligned to the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata). Many Cata members are PAC supporters.

At least three Cata taxis brought mourners to the service, attended by well over 100 people.

Mayor Mrs Patricia Kreiner said weapons were the coward's way of solving disputes. "Let us not disappoint the rest of the world. We know how to achieve what we want through peaceful means," she said.

Mr Frank van der Velde, who chairs the Taxi Liaison Committee, announced that a fund was being set up for the bereaved families.

Mr Vuyisa Qunta of Azapo's central committee said his organisation "humbly asks that there be no more spilling of blood and no quest for vengeance".

Mr Tshabalala said his organisation had pledged itself to continue advocating and practising peace.

● At the station deck rank yesterday, taxis were operating smoothly. Peninsula taxis were up on the deck again, out of Strand Street. Cata taxis were not using the rank at all.



MEMORIAL SERVICE . . . From left, Former mayor Mr Frank van der Velde, Mayor Mrs Patricia Kreiner, and Mr Henné Vran Wyk, of the SA National Civic Organisation, during yesterday's memorial service in St George's Cathedral, for 11 people who died in taxi-related violence in Khayelitsha.

Picture: BENNY GOOL

BANK MIDDLETON 2021

New taxi body gains interdict

Supreme Court Reporter

(332)

AG 28/10/94

THE newly formed Cata taxi organisation has been granted a temporary interdict restraining rival Codeta from interfering with Cata's "rights of access" to the recently opened station deck taxi rank.

In terms of the interdict, granted in Cape Town supreme court yesterday, Codeta members also may not assault Cata drivers or incite others to do so.

Cata's vice-chairman, Steven Williams, said in papers he could not pro-

vide his address because harm might come to him if Codeta members found out where he lived.

He said Cata consisted of about 500 drivers who split from Codeta about two months ago.

Serious differences between the two groups resulted in a massacre in Khayelitsha on October 16.

He said Cata had tried to settle disputes with Codeta resulting from access to the new rank.



FRISKED: A protester is searched Photo: Yunus Mohamed

Taxis in 'war zone' again

By Sabata Ngcai and
Alexandra Zavis

CONFLICT between rival taxi associations broke out at Cape Town's new mini-bus taxi rank at the same time as the Khayelitsha Forum was announcing plans for a memorial service for the victims of last week's massacre.

The forum, comprising representatives of the ANC, PAC, Cosatu and South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), was formed to maintain the peace after the shootings at Khayelitsha Stadium in which 10 people were killed and 23 injured.

But the opening of the new taxi rank on the station upper deck proved the catalyst for simmering discontent among members of the Convention of Democratic Taxi

Associations (Codeta) and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata).

A Cata spokesperson, Mr Lawrence Stoffie, complained that Codeta had chased away Cata drivers from the rank in front of the police, who did nothing.

Cata taxis then blocked the entrance to the rank for almost three hours.

The police intervened to get traffic flowing again, and heated discussions followed between them and Cata members while all waited for the leaders of the taxi associations to arrive.

Stoffie demanded that Codeta also be prevented from working while they talked.

"They are calling a meeting while Codeta is operating at the expense of Cata taxis. That is

unfair," he said.

When police refused to allow them to block the exit again, Cata members tried to load passengers, but were prevented by Codeta.

Codeta's Mr David Jezile complained that Cata members did not have the tokens that permitted them to use the rank, but Stoffie insisted that some did.

Sanco organised a meeting between the two associations at Cosatu head office on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the Khayelitsha Forum announced that a trust fund to assist the families of the deceased and injured has been set up.

Forum member, Alderman Frank van der Velde, said: "We appeal to the people of Cape Town to open their hearts as they did after the St James massacre."

4th luxury bus crash this year

CT. 29/10/94

332

Staff Reporter

THE luxury bus crash on the N2 near Riversdale that killed eight and injured 30 people on Thursday night is the fourth major accident involving luxury busses this year.

A total of 27 people have died and 72 have been injured in these accidents.

Intercape spokesman Mr Marius Roux said yesterday that Thursday's crash was the first fatal accident in 25 years involving one of his company's coaches.

"We are investigating the road surface at the site, as we've heard there have been three other accidents there."

"All pre-departure maintenance procedures were carried out and the journey went smoothly until the accident."

"As far as we can tell at this stage, all safe driving prescrip-

A total of 27 people were killed

tions were adhered to and there were no mechanical problems.

"In consideration of the driver, we are unable to comment further on the circumstances."

Mr Roux said the company extended its condolences to the families of the deceased and hoped for the speedy recovery of the injured passengers.

"We will assist all involved to the best of our abilities."

Intercape managing director Mr Johan Ferreira was on the scene three hours after the accident, visited the injured in

Riversdale Hospital and helped to notify their families.

Riversdale police station commander Lieutenant Wim Dreyer said yesterday there had not been any other serious accidents at the site of the crash.

"We still don't know the cause, but we think a tyre may have burst, causing the driver to lose control," he said.

The bus was travelling from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth when the accident occurred about a kilometre outside Riversdale.

The impact ripped the roof off the vehicle.

The names of seven of the dead have been released: Miss L S Papier of Strand, Mr A Andradé of Hout Bay, Miss E C Jacobs of Riversdale, Dr E J Jammie of Plettenberg Bay, Mrs D S du Plessis of Somerset West, Ms R P Nyakurimwa of Zimbabwe and Miss S D O'Reilly of Somerset West.

Taximen try to leave new rank

Staff Reporter

MINIBUS taxis yesterday made a bid to return to Strand Street, following the shootout on Saturday morning at the new station deck taxi rank where they were moved less than a week ago.

However, traffic officials ordered the protesting taxi operators back to the station deck and blocked off Strand Street with drums.

Ten people were wounded on the station deck about 11.45am on Saturday when members of Codeta and the breakaway Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) exchanged gunfire.

Drivers from a range of associations yesterday unanimously blamed Cata for "starting the violence".

Police spokesman Captain John

(332)
Sterrenberg said yesterday police had seized five 9mm pistols and a .38 special revolver. No arrests had been made.

CT 31/10/94

Western Cape Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie ordered police to step up patrols in the area and conduct random searches of taxis for firearms.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said yesterday the violence flared up after Cata, which is not part of the station deck agreement between 12 taxi groups and the Cape Town City Council, moved onto the station deck on Saturday morning.

City traffic manager Mr Wouter Smit said police and traffic officers would be out in force to maintain peace at the station deck today.

Reef taxi violence scares commuters

JOHANNESBURG. — Increased taxi violence in the Johannesburg area is causing panic among commuters and police fear a full-scale war, a police spokesman said today.

Three people were killed in taxi-related violence at the weekend and two suspects were arrested at the scene of one attack.

"The increase in taxi-related violence in

the Johannesburg area has also panicked commuters using minibus taxis as a means of transport.

"The violence causes tension within the whole taxi industry," said police spokesman Eugene Opperman.

"Their clients are also becoming increasingly afraid and fed up with the current situation of violence. — Reuter

ARG 31/10/94

Taxis operating smoothly from deck

Staff Reporter

TAXIS were operating at the station deck rank today, and barrels were still in place in Strand Street to prevent taxis from returning there.

In spite of graffiti on the walls telling drivers to "move to (the) old rank", the taxi business ran smoothly on the deck.

Yesterday taxis tried to return to Strand Street after Saturday's shootout at the deck rank in which 10 people were wounded.

Codeta chairman Kidwell Magwayi said today that his organisation was using the station deck rank and was not considering moving back to Strand Street.



Picture: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus.

TAXI WAR: Two policemen mark shell casings after a group of gunmen fired into a crowd of taxi drivers and commuters at rush hour in Mowbray. See pages 2 and 3.

Two arrested after shooting as taxi groups meet again

ARC 1/11/94
ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

A FRAGILE peace has been brokered between warring taxi organisations Cata and Codeta, but meetings today will tell whether it has a chance of succeeding.

And police arrested two men after yesterday's shootings at the Mowbray taxi rank in which two men were killed and four injured.

The shootings happened at rush hour when about four gunmen jumped out of a taxi at the rank and opened fire indiscriminately.

A police spokesman said the suspects would appear in court in Wynberg today or tomorrow.

Among the points agreed during peace negotiations is that Cata will cover its stickers while using the station deck rank in Cape Town to reduce tension among operators.

Deputy city administrator Alan Dolby said the leadership of the associations sat down together for the first time yesterday. He said the Mowbray incident was not

necessarily linked to the meeting late yesterday because it took time for information to be passed on to grassroots.

"Among the points discussed yesterday were a ceasefire and tolerance," he said.

He was adamant that Strand Street would not reopen to taxis because any division of passengers would provide further fuel for the conflict.

"I have sympathy for the other associations which are threatened by the gangster-like behaviour of the two warring factions. But it's not the venue that is the problem, it's about whether Cata and Codeta can operate together at any rank."

In terms of the new agreement, which will be conveyed to members today, 28 taxis which have Local Road Transportation Board permits will be allowed rank tokens for the station deck immediately.

The remaining 50 Cata operators who do not have board permits will not be allowed to use the station deck — but this issue must form part of the discussions which continue today.

● See pages 2 and 3.

Truce as taxi men agree on Station Deck

ARL 11/11/94 (332)

□ Police keep eye on Mowbray hot spot

JENNY VIAL and
JOE ARANES
Staff Reporters

THE Mowbray taxi rank was quiet early today after last night's shooting that left two people dead and another two injured.

Under the watchful eyes of police, both Codeta and Cata taxis dropped customers off as usual. A police van was parked at the rank.

Two men were killed and three injured at rush hour yesterday when about four gunmen jumped out of a taxi at the rank and opened fire.

A taxi in Durban Road was hit and witnesses said commuters and taxi drivers scattered after the shootings.

One of the dead men, hit in the head, had run about 10m from the rank before collapsing; two taxi drivers fled along Strubens Road and a resident there said a taxi driver had

collapsed in her garden.

Both men were taken to Groote Schuur Hospital.

Witnesses said the shooting happened so fast it was difficult to pinpoint what had happened.

A Durban Road resident said he was in his garden just after 5pm when he heard automatic gunfire.

"I rushed inside to warn my daughters," he said.

Police arrived and cordoned off the area.

A taxi with Cata stickers, its windscreen cracked, stood abandoned at the rank.

At the time of the shooting, rivals Cata and Codeta were at a meeting agreeing to work to resolve differences.

Association executives and their legal representatives met police, traffic officials and mediators from the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) at the Civic Centre.

The move to the Station

Deck rank from Strand Street was negotiated by Codeta and the council before some members left Codeta to form Cata about a month ago.

On Saturday 10 people were injured when gunmen opened fire allegedly after Codeta refused Cata taxis access.

Yesterday, spokesmen for both refused to comment, but CCR mediator Larry Joseph said he was happy at progress in the two-hour talks.

"This is the first time the groups has met since trouble began.

"Both sides agreed to permit the other to disagree.

"They agreed both parties would use the deck today."

They are to set up a working group, which will meet today, to try to end the strife.

Traffic chief Wouter Smit said:

"They agreed both would drop off commuters only on the station deck."

Taxi groups 'like Mafia'

332

2/11/94

By ANTHONY JOHNSON
TAXI associations had developed a "Mafia-like character" and had no qualms about using murderous "hit squads" to strengthen their power bases, according to a secret SA Police Services briefing document.

In some instances, members of the security forces were involved "as individuals" in taxi wars, the document states.

The 10-page document was submitted yesterday to the Parliamentary Committee on Safety and Security.

CATA, CODETA CALL FOR CEASEFIRE

See PAGE 5

It says taxi groups "frequently strengthen their power bases by using armed units (hit squads) who have no qualms about using violence and committing murder. The possession of illegal firearms is also rife in the industry."

The report was presented by Criminal Investigation chief Major-General Johan le Roux.

It listed the causes of the conflict as the failure of apartheid laws to provide for effective transport facilities, an absence of business skills of members, the "absence of transparency in the system of issuing permits", a lack of law enforcement, inadequate facilities, intolerance and power struggles.

Many involved in the taxi industry were illiterate and came from a part of society in which violence was a common means to an end.

The report suggested as possible solutions shared responsibility by the industry, consistent law enforcement, an efficient legal system, an effective and transparent permit system, and coordinated decision-making.

ARG. 2/11/94
**Taxi peace holding —
but some take train**

JOHN YELD
Staff Reporter

THE ceasefire brokered between the warring Cata and Codeta taxi associations appeared to be holding early today as a steady stream of taxis took commuters to the new rank on the Cape Town station deck.

But the rank was not operating at capacity and many commuters appeared to be waiting to see whether the peace would hold.

Cape Town traffic officials monitored the situation discreetly and a police van was parked on the deck.

"It seems to be okay, but it's a bit quiet," a traffic official said.

"It seems as though a lot of people are still waiting to see and have come into town by train."

Contrary to the ceasefire

agreement that association identification emblems would be plastered over with stickers, at least one Cata taxi had its emblem prominently displayed, but other taxi operators nearby appeared unconcerned.

Codeta driver Prince Yekiso said taxis were delivering commuters from the city's African townships as normal, but that it was "very quiet".

Soegbodien Abvaje of the Peninsula Taxi Association, who drives the Heideveld-Athlone-city route, said the situation appeared normal.

"It's just about right, the number of people who are coming in," he said.

A police spokesman said no taxi incidents had been reported over the weekend.

"We hope the peace lasts," he said.

McKenzie threatens to close 'hot-spot' minibus taxi ranks

ARG 2/11/94

332

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

PROVINCIAL Minister of Police Patrick McKenzie has threatened to close taxi ranks which are trouble spots in the rivalry between operators of rival taxi groups Codeta and Cata.

Mr McKenzie gave the warning after visiting the Mowbray rank, scene of Monday's fatal shooting.

Two men were killed and four were injured at rush hour when gunmen jumped out of a taxi at the rank and opened fire indiscriminately.

Mr McKenzie said the taxi feud was not really a police problem but they were getting involved to help normalise the situation.

"I am deeply concerned about the situation and although we don't have enough policemen to be everywhere all the time, we have identified where the problem areas are and will concentrate our energy there.

"We will randomly stop and search taxis for firearms on these routes and I will speak to the national minister, Sydney Mufamadi, about making it illegal for people, whether they are drivers or passengers, to carry licensed guns in taxis as is the case with trains and aircraft.

"If certain ranks continue to be hot-spots and the lives of people are endangered there, I will close the ranks until the taxi associations

abide by the agreements and decisions they have made."

Mr McKenzie said it was time national Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj worked out initiatives to solve the problem.

"He cannot be so silent while people are being shot and killed in the transport industry."

He said local authorities had to look for ways to control entry and exit points at taxi ranks.

"They must install booms or gates at the ranks which will make it almost impossible for other vehicles to enter the area and very difficult for troublemakers to flee after a shooting.

"But I'm also very concerned that the continuing fighting between the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations could ruin the city's chances of hosting the Olympic Games.

"We have a realistic chance and cannot afford this type of image in our taxi industry, especially if they are going to be the people who will be transporting thousands of tourists.

"We can't let two rival organisations deprive the whole city and country of hosting the (Olympic) games. I appeal to them to get their house in order."

Crime anarchy

CT 2/11/94

Taxi groups

'like Mafía'

By ANTHONY JOHNSON

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By ANTHONY JOHNSON
Political Correspondent

SOUTH Africa's top police generals warned yesterday that the country was heading for "anarchy and chaos" unless the demoralised police force was given more money in their fight against spiralling crime.

The generals painted a grim picture

to the Parliamentary Committee on Safety and Security of an "understaffed, overworked, over-stressed, underpaid and sometimes unappreciated" police force battling against the odds to contain increasingly violent and sophisticated crime syndicates.

The head of the SAP Crime Investigation Service, Maj-General Johan le Roux, and Witwatersrand regional commissioner, Lieut-General Koos Galitz, told parliamentarians that a major rethink on crime prevention was necessary if the country hoped to avoid sliding into a state of anarchy.

Gen Le Roux said the tolerance towards crimes of violence, based on the assumption that it is an inherent feature of a society undergoing far-reaching political change, "has long been exceeded".

Serious crime had increased by 42% in the first eight months of this year, with only the murder rate down as a result of lower levels of political violence.

Murders decreased from 12 092 to 11 919 but the total number of cases of serious crime rose from 1 176 999 to 1 227 047 during the first eight months

of 1994 compared with the same period last year.

Among the shock figures released yesterday include:

- A jump during this eight-month period of cases of rape (16 511 to 19 225), common assault (89 615 to 96 781), housebreaking (49 082 to 52 866) and vehicle theft (49 276 to 62 500).

- A dramatic decline in the number of persons being found guilty of crime in the past four years while the incidence of crime had rocketed. In the first nine months of this year, 130 771 suspects were found guilty but 215 765

had been found not guilty — the first time this trend had materialised.

- More suspected murderers (1 014 to 1 136), rapists (1 139 to 1 192) and armed robbers (1 147 to 1 374) jumped bail this year than in 1993.

- More than 278 crime syndicates were active in South Africa and were increasingly extending their activities to the drug trade on a national and international scale.

"Smuggling networks are so well established, not only in the southern African region, but worldwide, that the same routes are often used for drugs such as cocaine, Mandrax, dagga, LSD and heroin as well as to smuggle weapons, cars, ivory, currency and gemstones."

- In 1993 the SAP destroyed about R1 000 million worth of drugs, only 15% of their estimated value to South Africa's narcotics trade.

McBRIDE 'SIDED WITH DEFENCE UNITS'

'POLICE WARN OF 'CHAOS AND ANARCHY' DEATH PENALTY'

CALL FOR ISU TO BE SENT TO EAST RAND

See PAGE 2

- Large quantities of illegal weapons continued to flow into South Africa, mostly from Mozambique, and during the first eight months of 1994, 11 403 firearms were confiscated as opposed to 8 427 in the same period in 1993.

- Police members were being killed, simply for their firearms. In the first eight months of 1994, there were 1 005 attacks on policemen resulting in 192 deaths.

- Vehicle hijacking has soared with 7 067 passenger vehicles — with a value of R307m — hijacked compared with 4 569 in the same period last year.



ARRESTED ... Police arrested an American couple in Diep River yesterday after negotiating with the heavily-armed man inside a locked house for four hours. Here the man, with long blond hair, is hustled into a police car.

Illustration: BENNY GOOL

Rival taxi groups fail to agree

TALKS between rival taxi associations Codeta and Cata continued yesterday in the Civic Centre, but again no agreement on the use of the station deck was reached. (332)

Mr Frans Goetzee, who represented Codeta, said the talks would continue, but maybe not today. ET 3/11/94

"At least the two associations are still talking," he said. There were still many issues to be resolved.

Mr J C Louw, who represented Cata at the talks, said the main issue was that Codeta operators were still not allowing Cata operators who displayed their own stickers on their vehicles, to use the station deck taxi rank to pick up passengers.

The rival associations, the Congress for Democratic Taxi Associations and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association, however, have agreed to a ceasefire.

Both parties said they were against the further loss of life. — Staff Reporter, Sapa

W Cape ministers in taxi war of words

WESTERN CAPE Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane and Police Services Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie are embroiled in a public slanging match over Cape Town's taxi war.

It started when ANC member Mr Ramatlakane, whose provincial office adjoins that of NP member Mr McKenzie's, described the latter's recent statement on problems in the taxi industry as "ill-considered, uninformed and dangerous".

Threats to close down some ranks would only

exacerbate an already difficult situation, Mr Ramatlakane said, adding that another remark — that the problem was not one of policing — was "irresponsible".

"The fact is that the taxi ranks are not adequately policed," Mr Ramatlakane said. "Vehicles have not been sufficiently frequently searched for weapons. In at least one incident in the recent past there were no police stationed at a major rank."

He said Mr McKenzie "should know that the problems are a result of decades of apartheid

negligence which cannot be wished away overnight.

Mr McKenzie hit back yesterday, saying it was unfortunate that Mr Ramatlakane was using a situation in which people had lost their lives, to score political points.

Commenting on Mr Ramatlakane's remarks about the historical origins of the taxi industry, Mr McKenzie said the ANC had been in power since April and had not changed the industry, but worsened the situation instead.

If his government was too weak to deliver on the promises it had made, it should at least "be man enough" to admit it was too weak to govern, Mr McKenzie said.

● The ANC yesterday condemned "intimidation" from people threatening disruptions unless suspects arrested recently in taxi violence were released. **CT 4/11/94**

The ANC Western Cape said the arrests were "long overdue" and "no one must be intimidated" by the threats.

NEWS FEATURE No short-term answer to taxi problems • Taxi owners

332

Plan to end taxi violence

A SOLUTION

Bid to find an alternative to the bloodshed in the taxi industry:

By Tyrone August

THE Department of Transport has embarked on a systematic process to end the constant flare-up of violence in the taxi industry once and for all.

"We cannot postpone a structural approach," says Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj. "That has been the major weakness of the problems we inherited."

"In the absence of a systematic process, we are just putting out fires. I see the urgency, but this should not deflect us from an inclusive process."

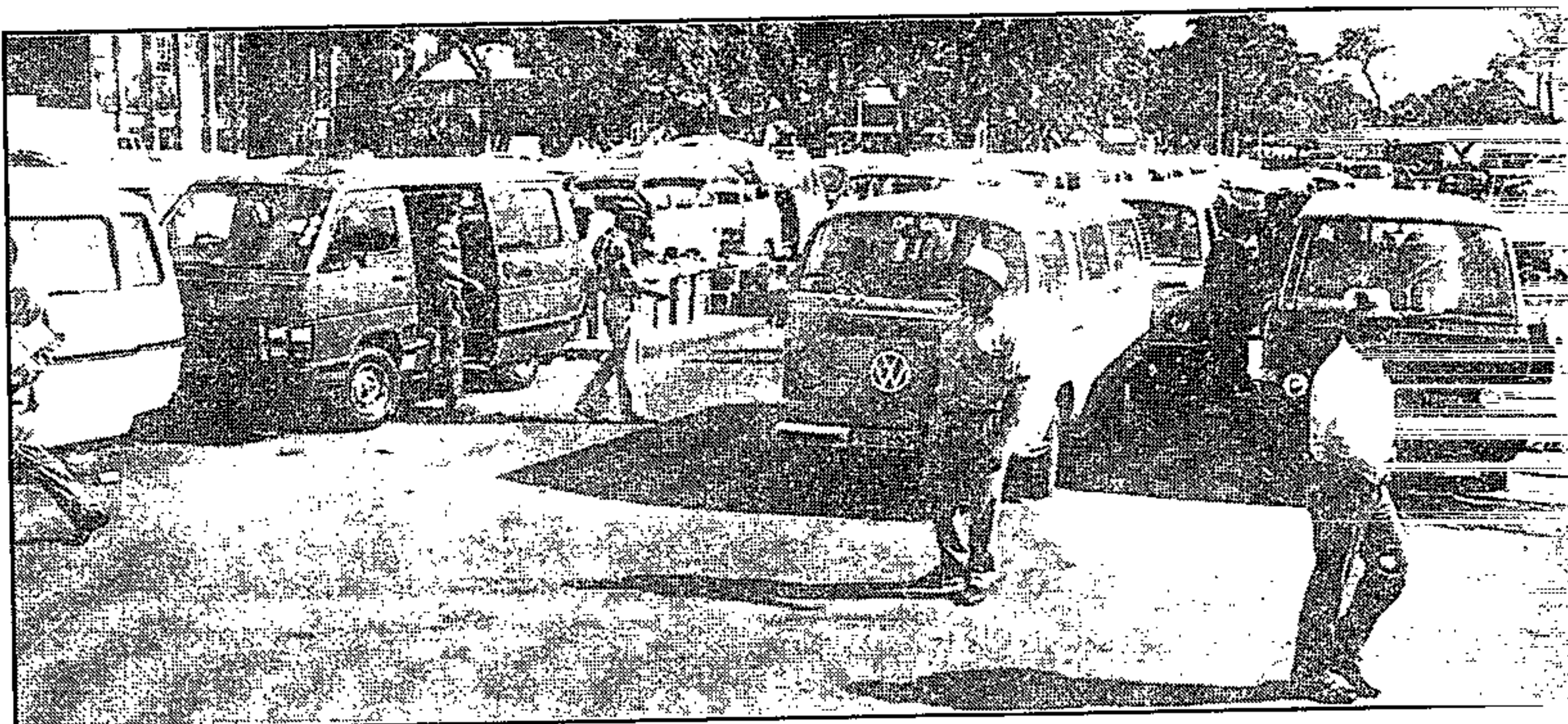
The structural problems he refers to include those that flow from regulations, such as the over-supply of taxi permits, different by-laws and no uniform decisions by transport boards.

As a result, Maharaj's vision includes the provincial transport MECs as a key part of the solution. "I have raised this with the MECs of all the provinces," says Maharaj.

"All my efforts are to encourage MECs to engage with the immediate problem, but not to be deflected from a systematic process."

So far, the process Maharaj initiated is on track. After his discussions with the MECs, a joint team was established to draw up proposals on the taxi industry. Another meeting between Maharaj and the MECs will be held before the end of November to take the process a step further.

"One of the objectives we set for this



PLAN OF ACTION ... Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj has initiated a systematic plan to end violence in the taxi industry.

process is the long-term sustainability of the industry in the context that it is part of the public passenger transport system," he says.

"Secondly, to ensure a safer and more disciplined industry and to formalise the industry so that we have proper channels of communication."

These channels, according to Maharaj, should include taxi authorities, passengers and other interest groups, as well as channels within the taxi industry.

He said the "multiplicity of authorities" in the industry was problematic. There are more than 480 taxi associations throughout the country.

"We need a stable structure to negotiate with," says Maharaj. "This is an important component of our approach."

Another objective is what Maharaj describes as "the capacity-building of the industry".

Maharaj believes it is important to provide this kind of assistance: "The industry has been a flagship of pride for black empowerment. Whatever its problems, we have to enhance its capacity."

In developing forms of assistance to build this capacity, Maharaj stresses this should involve both the Government

and the private sector.

But, he stressed, simply handing out money was not the answer: "A solution that says, just give us money, is no solution".

Maharaj recognises that this approach is time-consuming, but is convinced it is the only effective solution.

"I'm aware of the sentiment that the Department is dragging its feet," he says. "But the moment you try to get into the immediate problem, it spills over into the structural problems."

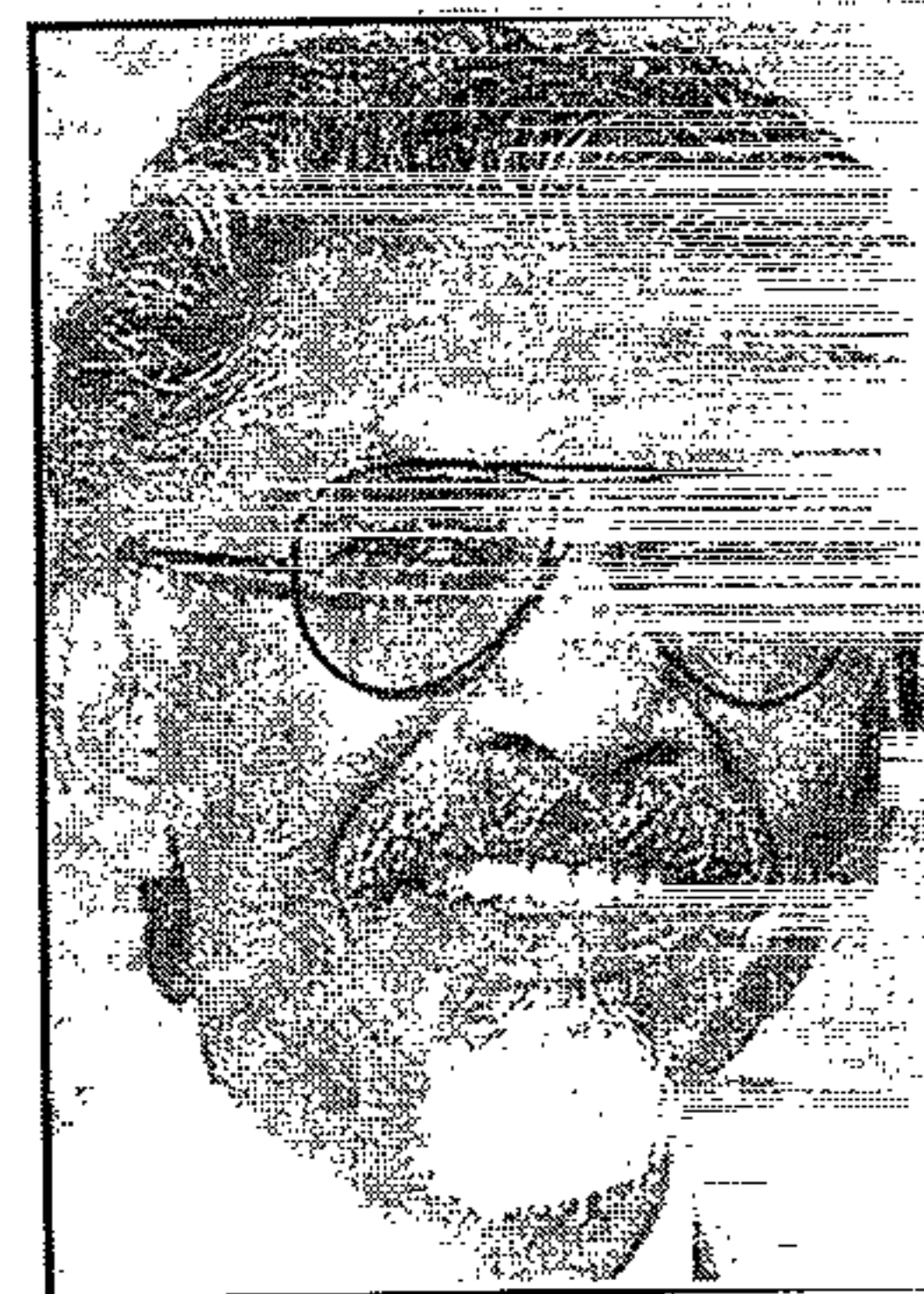
"Without putting in place correct processes, so that we have a stable and sustainable mechanism, any *ad hoc* stability will disappear again."

However, Maharaj agrees that there is a role for the departments of safety and security in combating taxi violence: "The immediate causes are being dealt with by the provinces."

"There is a great danger that the element of lawlessness will embed itself further. It is in the interests of some to keep perpetrating violence because they benefit from lawlessness."

Instead, he adds, there should be the ethos of resolving problems through dialogue in the taxi industry.

Maharaj is scathing about taxi vio-



Mac Maharaj

lence, saying the department of safety and security must take "firm measures" to end it. But, he stresses, the industry's structural problems cannot be ignored.

"It is important to set in motion processes to address these problems," says Maharaj. "We cannot address these problems profitably outside this process."

Sowetan

4/11/94

332

...s face hardship

Crucial taxi meeting

By Joshua Raboroko

REPRESENTATIVES of the Johannesburg City Council, police and the minibus taxi industry are to meet soon to discuss the four-point agreement reached after protesting taxi drivers blockaded the city's streets last year.

Although no date has been decided for the meeting, the forum will come as a result of the "cordial spirit" in which the parties to the agreement promised to meet from time to time to discuss matters of common interest.

The chief of the Johannesburg Traffic Department, Mr Eric Hill, said yesterday that it was important for all the parties to adhere to the agreement, which entailed that:

- All taxi owners would be required to ensure that their vehicles were roadworthy and that their ownership was valid;

- Traffic officials would not randomly ticket drivers picking up commuters;

- The taxi union and the city council demarcate specific loading zones or stopping bays in the city centre; and

- A forum of taxi drivers, the city council and taxi owners' associations be established to devise an educational programme to guarantee the safety of commuters and road users.

The agreement was reached after taximen's street blockades were banned by police.

Hill said traffic officers had continued "to ticket" those minibus taxis that violated the rules of the road, and those whose vehicles were not roadworthy and had invalid ownership.

to rise to 130c for financial 1995. From a high of R23 three months ago, the share has fallen to 1750c. If the analyst's expectation is met, Tencor's prospective p/e is 13,5. That is low for a quality stock with substantial recovery potential, despite Geis uncertainties.

Gerald Hirshon

against the dollar. However, unless clarity about export incentives is received soon, uncertainties may negate potential benefits. Local industry is expected to improve and Tencor's SA-based divisions should enhance results accordingly.

One analyst is bullishly calling for EPS

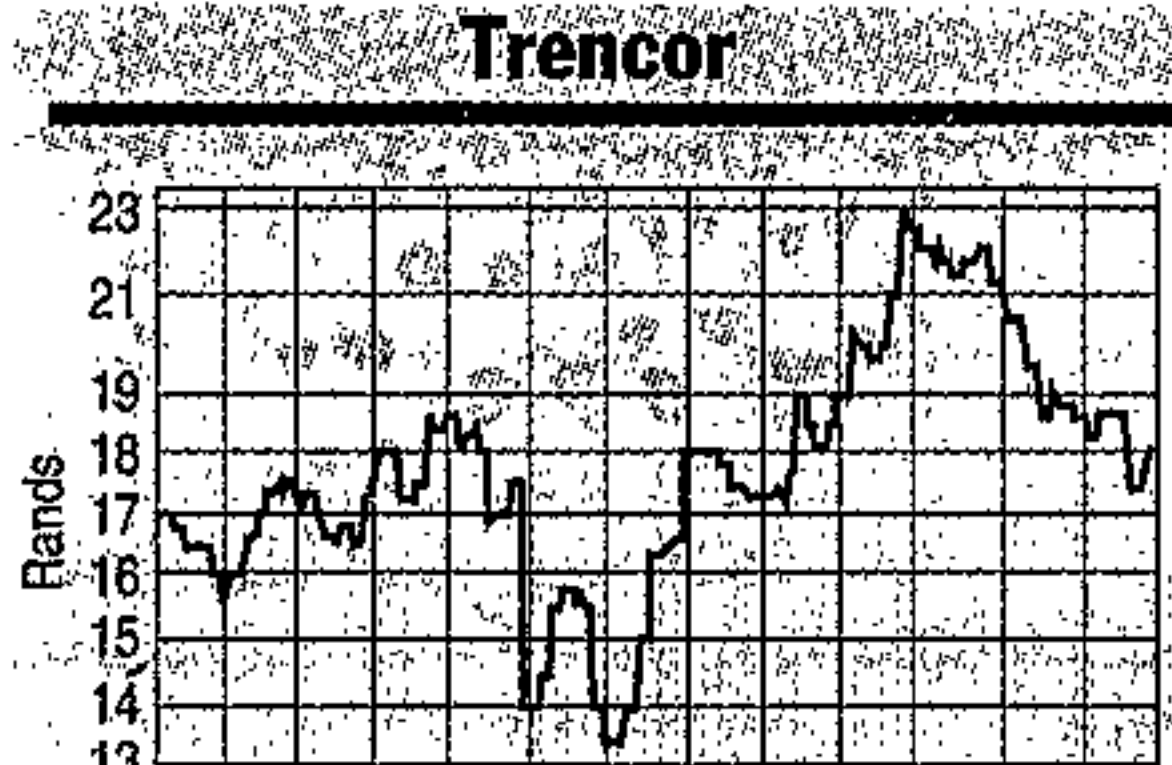
strengthen. W&A is expected to approach break-even in the second half of 1994.

In summary, better conditions in the container leasing market — by far the biggest contributor to Tencor's earnings — could boost returns from this division, especially if the rand declines further

TRENCOR *Fm 4/11/94* Recovery potential

Not for nothing has transparency become a business buzz word. Stakeholders of all descriptions are these days demanding to see precisely what is happening to their investment in any sphere of its activities if they care to look.

It's refreshing, therefore, that after years of playing hide and seek with its overseas activities, Tencor is no longer inhibited by the possibility of having sanctions imposed on it by the international community, and is freely discussing and



Activities: Makes and leases freight containers; transport, trading and exports of other commodities.

Control: Mobile 47,3%.

Chairman: N I Jowell.

Capital structure: 145m ords. Market capitalisation: R2,54bn.

Share market: Price: 1750c. Yields: 1,4% on dividend; 5,4% on earnings; p/e ratio, 18,6; cover, 3,8. 12-month high, 2300c; low, 1350c. Trading volume last quarter, 2m shares.

Year to June 30	'91	'92	'93	'94
ST debt (Rm)	83,0	39,5	45,9	35,4
LT debt (Rm)	3,5	3,4	3,4	2,6
Debt:equity ratio	0,3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shareholders' interest ..	0,46	0,74	0,74	0,72
Int & leasing cover ...	9,5	25,5	16,0	n/a
Return on cap (%) ...	27,1	17,7	18,2	16,2
Turnover (Rm)	829	998	1138	854
Pre-int profit (Rm)	147	175	235	209
Pre-int margin (%) ...	17,8	17,6	19,3	24,4
Earnings (c)	734,8	905	112,5	94,2
Dividends (c)	160	95	24,5	24,5
Tangible NAV (c)	2171	3052	409	422

¹ Shares subdivided 10:1.

disclosing most details about its overseas activities. Regrettably, it still refuses to disclose segmental information on geographical and industry bases, claiming it would be "seriously prejudicial to the interests of the group." Nevertheless, more details than ever are revealed in the annual report. It becomes easier to appreciate, for instance, why "finance, leasing and other activities" has overtaken other divisions so swiftly. These activities are wrapped around Tencor's container ventures. While Henred-Fruehauf in SA makes tank and special freight container products for export, the US-based Textainer, in which Tencor holds 44%-50%, is a major player in international container leasing.

Prime-Source Holdings in California, held 40% by Tencor, specialises in a niche market in the intermodal container leasing business. Both are critical to Tencor's export marketing strategy. Both import, buy and lease Henred-Fruehauf's containers from SA. It was largely through them that container leasing and other associated activities generated 67,9% (1993: 55,9%) of Tencor's 1994 attributable income.

Over the past two years of stagnant international trade, the container leasing business suffered a significant drop in leasing rates and usage. Instead of expanding by an expected 8% in 1993 the lessor fleet grew by only 3%.



Jowell

Hardest hit was Textainer's division, which operates in the loan syndication business and which raises funds in the US from investors, then buys containers and manages them on behalf of investors. Even so, divisional attributable income — helped by the depreciation of the rand — rose by about 6,4% to R93m.

Star performer Henred-Fruehauf lifted attributable earnings by 17% to R25,6m. Export momentum of containers remained strong but financial results were restrained by flat local demand for trailers.

Trading operations, automotive parts, commodities and transport equipment produced attributable income of R34,5m, 7% better than a year ago. The annual report is short on details about this division's progress.

Contribution from transport, motor trade and tyres slumped from R14,7m in 1993 to R3m in 1994. Tariffs in the truck load services were disappointing but it was Crosscape Express that pulled the contribution down because of industrial action, operational problems, low tariffs and managerial problems. Remedial action has been taken to stem losses.

W&A's attributable loss in Tencor's accounts was R19,2m; it reduced group income to R136,8m. Tencor chairman Neil Jowell continues to emphasise the quality of W&A's businesses, pointing out the conglomerate produced 1993 operating profit of R145m before the cost of its debt and tax reduced this to a loss of R156m before extraordinary items of R474m.

Prospects for Tencor's 1995 year look healthier. Container fleet usage is growing and the first indications of increases in

rates are evident. Prime-Source's customer base has more than doubled on last year. A brighter global trade and economic picture is raising expectations. In the manufacturing division, the order book is almost full for the year, reports Jowell, and if the local economy improves Henred-Fruehauf should have another good year. The transport divisions' prospects are encouraging, as are those of the trading division if world trade continues to

DEFINITIONS

Total shareholders' funds: The total of ordinary, minority and irredeemable preference shares plus all capital convertible into equity, less intangibles and adjusted for the market and/or directors' valuation of investments.

Agreement reached on transport council

EMPLOYERS and organised labour have reached an agreement on the formation of a national industrial council for the road transport industry which industry sources describe as an important step in self-regulation.

The agreement would also serve as an effective collective bargaining forum to address matters of mutual concern.

The agreement, reached on Monday after six weeks of intensive negotiation, flowed from protests against poor working conditions by truck drivers who earlier this year blockaded several roads, including the Mooi Rivier toll plaza on the N1.

The Road Freight Association (RFA) said parties had agreed that there was a need for an industrial

ERICA JANKOWITZ

council to institutionalise policy concerning road freight as more than 80% of all tonnage conveyed in SA was carried on trucks.

The seven unions and four employers' organisations signed a constitution for the council and would apply to the industrial registrar for its registration. The Cosatu-aligned Transport and General Workers' Union was one of the parties, as was the Turning Wheel Workers' Union, which instigated the blockades.

"This agreement firmly lays the basis for a new policy framework in which the road freight industry is to function in terms of industrial relations, education and training, and

restructuring the industry," the RFA said.

An industrial training board would be established to discuss the accreditation and development of training for road transport workers.

Meanwhile, the Turning Wheel Workers' Union called for a ban on all overtime in the transport industry from today, Sapa reports.

In a message to its members the union said the ban would begin at 5pm and that there would be no working on Saturdays, Sundays or public holidays.

The ban would remain in force until further notice.

The ban applied to lorry drivers and their assistants as well as workshop and all other personnel, the union said.

Urgent bid to avoid an all-out taxi war

ALL 9/11/94

332

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

IN an urgent bid to avoid an all-out taxi war, the regional transport ministry has approached Neil Roussouw, former Goldstone commissioner and Cape attorney-general, to act as mediator between feuding Cata and Codeta.

After a day of high tension on the station deck and in Nyanga between the rival groups yesterday, Cata pulled all its taxis off the road today.

A Cata spokesman said Codeta drivers had attacked Cata at the Nyanga rank after a meeting in Khayelitsha late yesterday. A driver had been shot and injured and a taxi damaged.

Police say they found no evidence of the alleged attack when they visited Nyanga.

Yesterday Codeta withdrew all its taxis from the station deck be-

cause of the presence of Cata vehicles.

Sounding an ominous warning, the Cata spokesman said his organisation's leaders had tried to keep members under control but the members were losing patience.

"We are prepared to negotiate and compromise and don't want any further loss of lives — but our people are going to lose their tempers now," he warned.

A spokesman for Codeta was unavailable today, but chairman Kidwell Magwayi has said Codeta is not prepared to operate side-by-side with Cata.

Garth Strachan, of transport minister Leonard Ramatlakane's office, said he had approached Mr Roussouw late last night in an urgent bid for peace.

"Mr Roussouw has agreed. Now I'm trying to get Cata and Codeta to agree."

Deputy city administrator Alan

Dolby said the need to get peace talks going had become urgent.

For the past two weeks, since the Khayelitsha Stadium taxi massacre, Mr Dolby has worked flat out trying to broker peace.

Yesterday "at the end of his tether" and after a brief trip to witness the tension at the station deck rank, Mr Dolby faxed Mr Ramatlakane's office and requested the intervention of politicians "at the highest level" to avoid further blood-letting.

He said he hoped the appointment of Mr Roussouw would be acceptable to both parties and would "do the trick".

● Mr Roussouw has experience of Cape taxi problems, having run the investigation into the industry for the Goldstone Commission in the early 1990s.

● Police said there were no reports of violence during the morning rush-hour today, but they were monitoring the situation closely.

Govt asked to help solve taxi feud

CT. 9/11/94 (332)

By JACKIE CAMERON
Crime Reporter

THE City Council late yesterday urgently appealed for government intervention in the taxi crisis after warring taxi groups Codeta and Cata refused to meet to end the on-going taxi-related violence.

This followed a tense stand-off between the two groups at the station deck taxi rank yesterday.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby told the Cape Times last night that an attempt to get Cata and Codeta officials to the negotiating table yesterday had failed.

He said: "I faxed a letter to regional Minister of Transport Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, telling him there was little more the City Council can do about the taxi violence. This is affecting drivers affiliated to other associations as well as commuters in all areas."

Mr Dolby said that the breaking away of former Webta members from Codeta — who now call themselves Cata — was at the heart of the conflict.

The permit issues and fights about taxis bearing the rival's logo were symptoms of a massive power struggle.

"Wherever one of the groups is in the majority at a rank, members of the

other group are forced away," Mr Dolby said.

At least 200 Codeta taxi drivers withdrew from the loading bays at the station deck taxi rank around lunch-time when about 50 Cata taxi drivers arrived after being absent from the deck for several weeks.

After a five-minute blockade, Codeta taxi drivers gathered at the entrance to the rank while Cata drivers clustered together on the opposite side of the road in a stand-off which lasted at least two hours.

Peninsula Taxi Association (PTA) members, who operate on the Mitchells Plain/town routes, said that they feared for their lives and moved to Strand Street after several heated arguments with Codeta and Cata taxi drivers.

The PTA drivers said they would return to the old Strand Street rank until Codeta and Cata drivers made peace, reports EUNICE RIDER.

Traffic police yesterday fined two of the taxis parked at Strand Street R30 each, but stopped after some traffic officers refused to do so, saying the taxi drivers were "right" to work from Strand Street.

Senior traffic officers refused to confirm this.



PROTEST BLOCKADE . . . About 40 taxis parked in the road outside Parliament yesterday. The action ended peacefully when two national ministers agreed to meet Codeta leaders. Picture: BENNY GOOL

Blockade over Station Deck safety

Staff Reporters
MINIBUS taxi operators are eagerly awaiting government reaction to their demand — reinforced by a disruptive taxi blockade outside Parliament yesterday — for more police protection to combat continuing violence in the industry.

Nearly 400 Codeta (Congress for a Democratic Taxi Association) taxi operators were last night considering whether to return to the Station Deck taxi rank today after their leaders took their demands to the highest levels.

Government spokesman were not available for comment.

Mr Reggie Malimba, an executive member of Codeta, reported back to taxi men outside the Good Hope Centre that he and three other representatives had succeeded in pushing for an immediate meeting with National Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj and National Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi.

More than 40 Codeta taxis blocked Roeland Street, outside Parliament, to demand the meeting.

Asked to move the taxis, Mr Malimba asked bystanders: "What is the problem? We are blocking people from getting on with their lives? What about us? We can't even sleep in our houses any more. We want you to share in the pain."

Codeta drivers, who are based largely in Khayelitsha, say they are no longer able to operate at either the Nyanga or the Bellville ranks, which Cata has taken over.

"They can't have it all ways. Our demand is for the total removal of Cata from our ranks."

Codeta regards the Station Deck as its rank.

Mr Malimba stressed that there were no problems in Codeta over the proposed appointment of former Cape attorney-general Mr Neil Rossouw as mediator between Codeta and Cata.

A Cata leader, who asked not to be named for his own safety, said he had no problem with Mr Rossouw either. He said if more police went to the deck today, Cata might try to operate there again.

□ Taxi chaos as new violence hits townships

Are. 10/11/94

332 Commuters stranded

**ROGER FRIEDMAN
and PAT CANDIDO**
Staff Reporters

COMMUTER chaos reigned in the townships today as simmering tension in the taxi industry threatened to erupt into full-scale war.

Several incidents of taxi-related violence were reported to police yesterday, including the shooting of a pedestrian in Lansdowne Road.

There were also unconfirmed reports that the torching of shacks in Langa and Crossroads was taxi-related.

And taxi drivers from Cape Town are being blamed for an outbreak of taxi violence in Port Elizabeth yesterday.

Police have appealed to the rival Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) to settle their differences urgently before more innocent people are killed or hurt.

Almost no Codeta and Cata taxis were running to town today, and the traffic department reported that "virtually no township taxis" were operating from the station deck.

Codeta drivers, who blockaded parliament with their vehicles yesterday, agreed to mediation by former Goldstone commissioner Niel Roussouw but vowed not to compromise on their refusal to operate alongside Cata on the station deck.

"One taxi, one organisation," summed up their position.

Cata chairman Simon Halmans has appealed to Codeta to cease the violence.

"As leaders of the organisations we need to sit down and talk. They must tell their members to leave the weapons because the weapons are not only affecting us, but the whole community."

Mr Halmans was confident that mediation by Mr Roussouw could bear fruit.

A spokesman for Codeta said members of the association had lost hundreds of thousands of rands in lost income in the past three weeks since the Khayelitsha massacre, which marked the beginning of the latest taxi trouble.

In Site C, Khayelitsha, Codeta taxis were ferrying commuters from near the deserted taxi rank to bus stops and stations.

Minibus driver threatens woman

Staff Reporter

A MINIBUS taxi driver barred the road in front of a Kensington woman in peak afternoon traffic, shouted abuse at her and threatened her with a revolver while shocked onlookers watched.

The woman's husband — who asked not to be named — said yesterday his wife was driving home from work when the taxi driver tried to "intimidate" her on the off-ramp to Settlers Way in Observatory.

The man forced his taxi in front of

her car, blocked her and then got out of the van and swore at her.

He then took out a revolver and threatened in abusive language to "blow" her "away". He pulled the trigger, but no shot went off.

The woman was so shocked that she did not take the taxi's registration number, but several commuters "got out of their cars to ask if she was OK".

The man said his wife was going to lay a charge with the police. The traffic police had been informed of the incident.

Taxis in chaos: Commuters stranded

6/10/14 From page 1 B2

A spokesman for Metro Rail said they had detected about a 10 percent increase in passengers today but extra trains were unnecessary at this stage, while the Golden Arrow Bus Service said they had laid on additional buses today.

Incidents of violence reported yesterday included:

- Shots were fired at a taxi in Lansdowne Road, injuring pedestrian Thandike Killeman, 27, in the arm and damaging a passing vehicle.

- Shots were fired in Khayelitsha at 8 am but there were no reports of injuries or damage.

- The driver of a car, Letsu Mabote, was shot from a moving taxi in Pama Road, Nyanga, injuring him in the thigh.

- There was a drive-by shooting in Khayelitsha which hit Wiseman Soko in the buttocks and damaged a station wagon.



Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

BURNT OUT: Shack dwellers walk through their burnt out homes. Police have opened arson dockets after 27 houses in Langa and Crossroads were torched.

- There were drive-by shootings from taxis in Nyanga about midday.

Further possible taxi-related incidents included shots being fired at a moving vehicle on the N2, forcing the brief closure of the freeway at 7.35 pm, and two outbreaks of shack fires in Langa and Crossroads.

In the N2 incident, two men

were seriously injured when their car came under fire near Crossroads. Nyanisile Ellen, 42, was struck in the chest and Lubabalo Mgxongwana, 39, in an arm and leg.

- Taxi drivers from Cape Town are being blamed for a taxi war which erupted in Port Elizabeth's Main Street during peak-hour traffic yesterday.

A member of the Port Elizabeth Black Taxi Association said there was a strong suspicion that the violence had been caused by "intimidators" from Cape Town who had "come to stir up trouble".

Taxi drivers armed with guns, sticks, knives and kerries brought traffic to a halt as they attacked each other.

AKB. 11/11/94

Township taxis off roads for second day

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

230

TOWNSHIP commuters had another anxious morning rush hour as taxis stayed off the roads for the second day today.

Mediation between the feuding Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations began yesterday and resumes today under the guidance of former attorney-general Niel Rossouw.

Golden Arrow has laid on extra buses to help ferry thousands to work, while Metro Rail is running at almost peak capacity.

Khayelitsha police spokesman Meshack Mesane said the situation was "very tense" and no taxis were operating. But it had been "very calm" overnight.

Nteke Kakudi of the Guguletu police also reported a

complete absence of taxis. Nyanga police said the taxi rank was quiet and no incidents were reported overnight.

A Codeta official said yesterday that drivers were scared to operate and were awaiting the outcome of mediation.

Mr Rossouw said: "We got to know the situation yesterday but it is a continuing process."

He said he was hoping for a quick breakthrough, but there was still some ground to cover.

● A taxi which stopped to drop off passengers in Modderdam Road yesterday came under fire from a red car with four occupants. Driver Stanley Sopuyisa was struck in the side and was taken to Tygerberg Hospital in a serious condition. His condition remained serious today. No passengers were injured.

Activities: Operates mass transport services.

Control: Carleo Enterprises (52,5%).

Chairman: A Carleo. MD: E M R L Oldham.

Capital structure: 26,4m ord. Market capitalisation: R92,4m.

Share market: Price: 350c. Yields: 10,9% on dividend; 19,0% on earnings; p:e ratio, 5,3; cover, 1,7. 12-month high, 430c; low, 290c. Trading volume last quarter, 219 190 shares.

Year to June 30	'91	'92	'93	'94
ST debt (Rm)	4,6	—	—	20,4
Debt:equity ratio	(0,10)	(0,19)	(0,10)	(0,12)
Shareholders' interest	0,58	0,56	0,61	0,54
Return on cap (%)	(3,8)	10,3	8,3	9,2
Turnover (Rm)	360	398	424	480
Pre-int profit (Rm)	(7,4)	23,3	19,0	24,0
Pre-int margin (%)	(2,1)	5,8	4,5	5,0
Earnings (c)	(13,7)	53,2	77,2	66,4
Dividends (c)	30	30	40	38
Tangible NAV (c)	431	476	527	534

number of buses in the operational fleet was reduced by a further 82 (3,5%) to 2 276, giving a 5% improvement in passengers carried per bus. With total distance travelled unchanged at 89m km, the average distance which each bus travelled increased by 3,6%, also helping to keep unit operating costs under control.

Better asset usage was probably one of the main reasons why the 1994 operating margin widened to 5% (after falling in 1992), giving a 26% gain in operating profit on revenue up only 13%. Gross cash flow remained strong, despite a 14% decline in attributable earnings. The latter was due to lower interest receipts and a higher effective tax rate, but cash flow advanced by 24% from R26,7m to R33,1m — beneficial in offsetting a substantially higher funding requirement which has nevertheless weakened the balance sheet.

The main cause of concern as regards the balance sheet is that this once cash-rich group ended the 1994 year with net borrowings of R18m. In relation to total assets of R262m this is peanuts. Even so, over the past two years cash requirements have exceeded cash flow by R41m, resulting in the 1992 cash holdings of R23m being replaced by an overdraft. This at a time when gross return on capital employed (excluding interest-free liabilities) is only 12,6%. So while absolute borrowings are insignificant, the trend is not, especially when interest rates will probably rise.

The turnaround reflects a marked swing in working capital requirements. Two years ago, this requirement was negative, with creditor finance covering both stock and

debtors by almost R17m. By 1993 this source of funds had shrunk to under R3m. The latest balance sheet shows net working capital as a R33m cost: so Putco has had to provide almost R50m in working capital since 1992, R36m last year alone.

The main problem here was that at the 1994 year-end Putco was owed almost R43m by the State in subsidies, up from R21m at June 30 1993. There is no question that the money will be forthcoming, as the formula for the subsidy had been agreed with the Department of Transport. But if the 1994 situation is an indication that payments are being delayed, this is bad news for shareholders as interest income has been an important contributor to profit. In 1993, for example, more than 30% of pre-tax profit came from interest receipts, and even in 1994, when interest earned fell from R8,9m to R3,4m, it provided a useful 12% contribution.

That underlines chairman Albino Carleo's contention in his annual review that clarity on the role of second- and third-tier government responsibility towards the transport needs of commuters is urgently required, and the related point that the future of companies such as Putco remains unpredictable (not to say precarious) until the issue of passenger subsidies is permanently resolved.

That may be why the market has remained lukewarm towards the share. Contrary to conditions elsewhere in the industrial sectors, the share price has shown little net change over the past year. Its yields — 10,9% on dividends and 19% on earnings — remain substantially out of line with market averages.

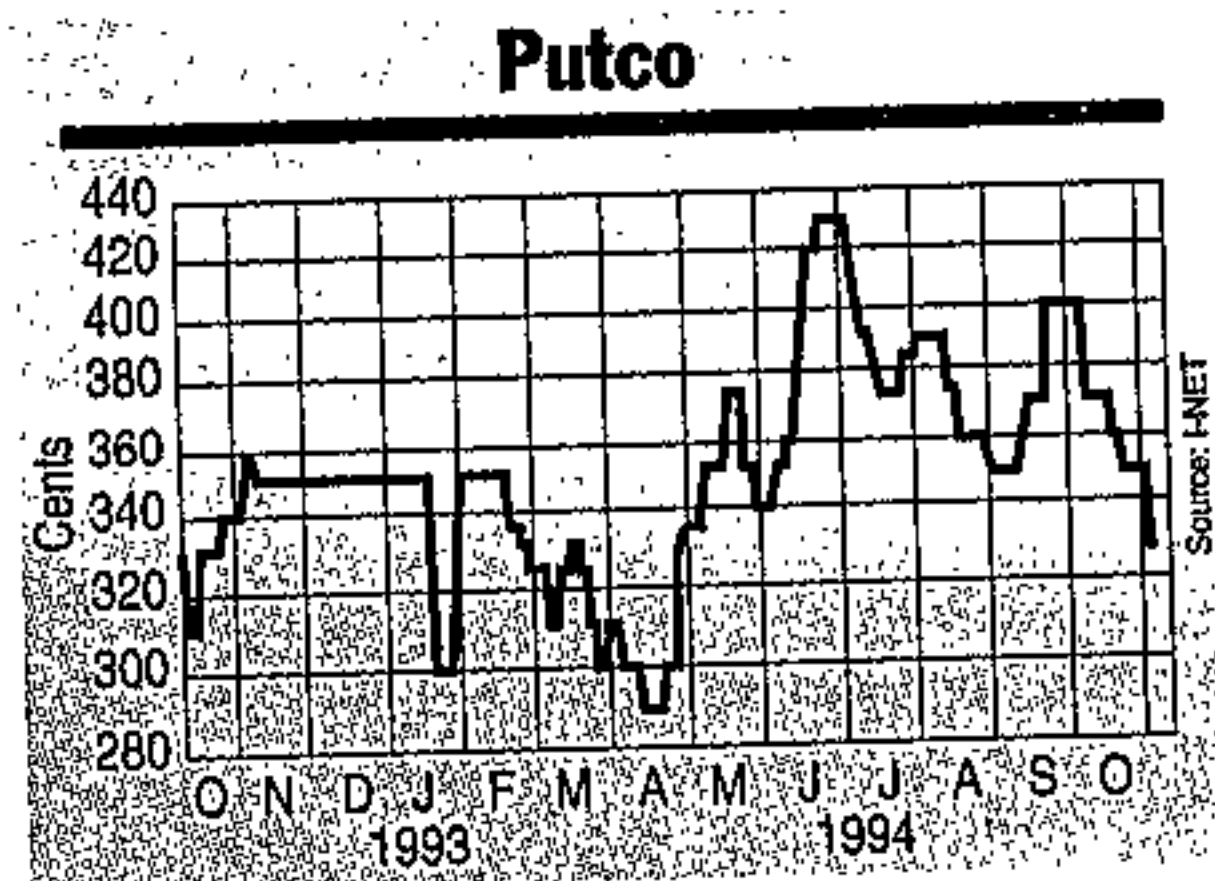
Brian Thompson

PUTCO *Em 11/11/94* Still some clouds

Operationally, the 1994 financial year was quite encouraging. But the overall picture was marred by the re-emergence of some cloud — whether storm, or not, remains to be seen — on the financial front (332)

To deal with the positive aspects first: for the first time in more than a decade the group succeeded in stopping the rot in terms of loss of passenger support. The total 82m passengers carried last year was marginally higher than 1993's 81m which, while hardly a recovery, offers some hope that a base has finally been established for growth. However, the 1994 passenger tally still represented only 21% of the 397m carried in 1982, Putco's peak year.

Stabilisation of the passenger load enabled modest improvements in asset usage, also for the first time in over a decade. The



Weekend Argus

COMMENT

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ARG. 12/13/11/94 (330)

Cleaning up the taxi industry

LAWS which applied in the days of "pirate taxis" were horrendous. With stringent limitations on licences for black operations, little heed was paid to the principle of supply and demand.

As a result, most taxis plying between the townships and the cities were pirate, yet were a vital part of the informal transport structure.

When deregulation came to the taxi industry some years ago, it was expected that there would be a certain amount of imbalance, too many carriers chasing too few clients, before market forces took over. The present crisis in the industry is mainly about that. Rivalry between minibus factions certainly exists and fuels much of the violence, such as the recent shootout in Wynberg.

But the attempt by municipal authorities to try to bring order to the situation — for example, with the Cape Town city council's attempts to end the congestion in Strand Street — has fuelled the discontent and frustration among operators. That order, however, must be brought.

Rules must be instituted to protect the public, as well as preventing a further slide towards anarchy. The taxi operators cannot continue to be a law unto themselves. And if the solution means re-regulation, then so be it.

Above all, the minibus taxi industry must be more open to inspection. There is a suggestion now that traffic officers are often fearful of stopping taxis because they know the drivers, and sometimes their passengers, carry firearms. Only the law itself can overcome that fear, by doing what it needs to do; by removing guns from taxis.

Huge expenses incurred by labour unrest at SA ports

IAN SHIFFMAN

Shipping Correspondent

ARG. 14-20/11/94

(332)

LABOUR problems at major South African ports have caused shipowners to incur huge expenses, forcing one Taiwan-based shipping line to consider cutting out future calls at South African ports.

Strikes and go-slows in Durban and Cape Town have upset sailing schedules of all the major shipping lines, with delays causing shipowners millions of rands.

Importers, especially in the Reef area, are complaining bitterly that they will not receive their containers in time for the Christmas trade, as thousands of containers are backed up in the depots.

David Yang, chairman of Nantai Line which has been operating a container ship service between the Far East and South Africa for 12 years, told Weekend Argus that if strikes and labour problems persist, Nantai would seriously re-evaluate South African ports.

He said the line did not anticipate the huge losses caused by the strikes and go-slows — each day's delay cost a ship between R52 500 and R87 500.

"Fuel costs also increase when a vessel is forced to speed and make up lost time. All this does not include additional expense spent on pacifying customers when alternate routing is forced on us," he said.

Asabosa has been approached by Yang to try to mediate between the port authorities and the labour forces, to seek a permanent resolve to the labour problems.

Shipowners and agents in Cape Town are also frustrated by the expensive delay of ships due to strikes and go-slows.

Larry du Toit of Seacal Shipping, local agents for Indian Ocean Lines, said the Freyburg was continually plagued by labour problems when she called to work cargo recently.

The vessel should have completed the loading of 10 000 tons of cement and general cargo in six days. The ship eventually sailed after 16 days.

In another incident this week the MACS multi-purpose ship Blue Master had to sail from Cape Town with a near-full cargo when fighting broke out between workers from two stevedoring companies, preventing the Cape Town-destined cargo from being discharged.

Workers from the one company demanded to do the full unloading, causing fighting with stevedores from an opposition company.

Owners and agents have convened a meeting next week at which these and other matters will be discussed, following which they will make representation to Portnet on addressing a number of problems.

Cata hits back at ANC men

Staff Reporters
THE Cape Taxi Association (Cata) yesterday hit out at ANC politicians Mr Frank van der Velde and Mr Jan van Eck for criticising the release on bail of alleged triple killer, Cata leader Mr Victor Sam.

In weekend reports Mr Van Eck said the repeated release of Mr Sam was an "outrageous act that virtually guarantees a miscarriage of justice".

In a statement co-signed yesterday by Cata chairman Mr Steven Williams and Mr Sam, they said Mr Van der Velde's attempts at arbitration of the taxi-conflict had been "tarnished" and he had totally discredited himself in the eyes of many who previously believed he might be able to assist in the peace process.

If bail had been denied to Mr Sam, not only would justice have suffered, but the flames of violence could further have threatened to engulf the Peninsula, they said.

New book was written in jail

Staff Reporter
POPULAR trade unionist and former detainee Mr Brian Williams will launch his second book of poetry — written while he was in detention — this week.

Scattered Reflections will be launched at UCT on Wednesday by educationist and new South African ambassador to the US, Mr Franklin Sonn.

Mr Williams won the Kwanzaa award in the United States in 1991 for his first collection, The Wounded Spear Rises.

Siberian tiger kills keeper

LONDON. — A Siberian tiger killed a keeper at a British zoo in front of two horrified visitors yesterday, police and zoo officials said.

Mr Trevor Smith, 33, was about to clean the tiger enclosure at the Howletts zoo park in Bekebourne, southern England, when a male tiger pounced on him and bit his neck.

It was the third time since the 1980s that a keeper had been killed by tigers at the zoo, owned by British millionaire Mr John Aspinall.

— Sapa-Reuter

Taxi crisis: Govt acts

CT 16/11/94

(332)

Staff Reporters

THE government is drawing up a bold nationwide plan to counter taxi violence.

Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj yesterday announced the formation of a Taxi Task Force to investigate taxi wars, traffic collisions, an integrated passenger transport policy, illegal operators, the needs of passengers, lack of facilities and the system of issuing public driving permits.

Legitimate and representative structures in the taxi industry at local, provincial and central level would also be established.

"We have one of two choices: Either we try to resolve the problem by a heavy-handed jackboot approach, or we go for an inclusive process which addresses the problem systematically and locks all the participants into a solution."

He added there was "a large impatience" in the community about the lack of action to deal with violence.

All taxi industry bodies would be consulted on the proposal for a taxi task team and representative industry structures.

In the PWV yesterday taxi associations and the provincial legislature signed a historic declaration of intent to bring peace to the violence-plagued industry and restructure it to provide an efficient, viable business.

In what was said to be the first agreement of its kind in the SA taxi industry, PWV

Transport Minister Mr Olaus van Zyl and the Safety and Security Minister and leaders of major taxi associations in the province committed themselves to work together for the betterment of the industry.

In the Peninsula police warned that drive-by shootings could be a new tactic of feuding taxi operators.

This follows several drive-by attacks on taxi drivers in Khayelitsha.

Police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said police were compiling a detailed report for local Minister of Transport Mr Leonard Ramatlakane about the taxi war and that proposals for legislation for certain taxi routes would probably be made.

He said police could, at most, keep a lid on taxi violence.

The cause of the violence was that there were "too many taxis for too few commuters" and "certain people were not prepared to accept the concept of free trade".

● More than 100 Old Crossroads women marched on the Wale Street headquarters of the Western Cape legislature yesterday, demanding an end to the taxi war and equal bail treatment of warring offenders. The dancing, chanting crowd briefly held up traffic in Wale Street until Mr Ramatlakane came down to talk to them and ushered a delegation into his office for 30 minutes.

Spokeswoman Miss Queen Shugu said the taxi war left them with no viable transport. An 18-month-old boy was killed by a stray bullet a week ago and there were constant surprise



TAXI PEACE DEMO . . . Women of Crossroads marched yesterday on the Wale Street Cape Provincial building housing the Western Cape regional government to support demands to end the taxi war and for equal court treatment of warring offenders.

Picture: STEWART COLMAN

attacks on their community.

Most of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) members live in Old Crossroads but the women said they were equally upset with the opposition Codeta members, some of whom also lived among them.

"We have no fighting be-

tween local residents — it's always outsiders from either side that come in and make the attacks," another protester, Miss Sylvia Mkumbuzi, said.

The women claimed bail for Codeta members was generally in the R200 to R500 range while Cata's ranged between R2 000 and R20 000.

THE

QUALITY

DUE TO

Special team to end taxi wars

CLIVE SAWYER and
ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporters

THE government has responded to growing impatience for action to end minibus taxi wars by setting up a special taxi task team.

The decision came as 40 Crossroads women demonstrated outside parliament and the provincial parliament in Wale Street to demand a speedy resolution of the taxi war between Codeta and Cata.

"We are tired of what is happening here in Crossroads," the women said in a memorandum handed to representatives of the safety and security and transport ministries.

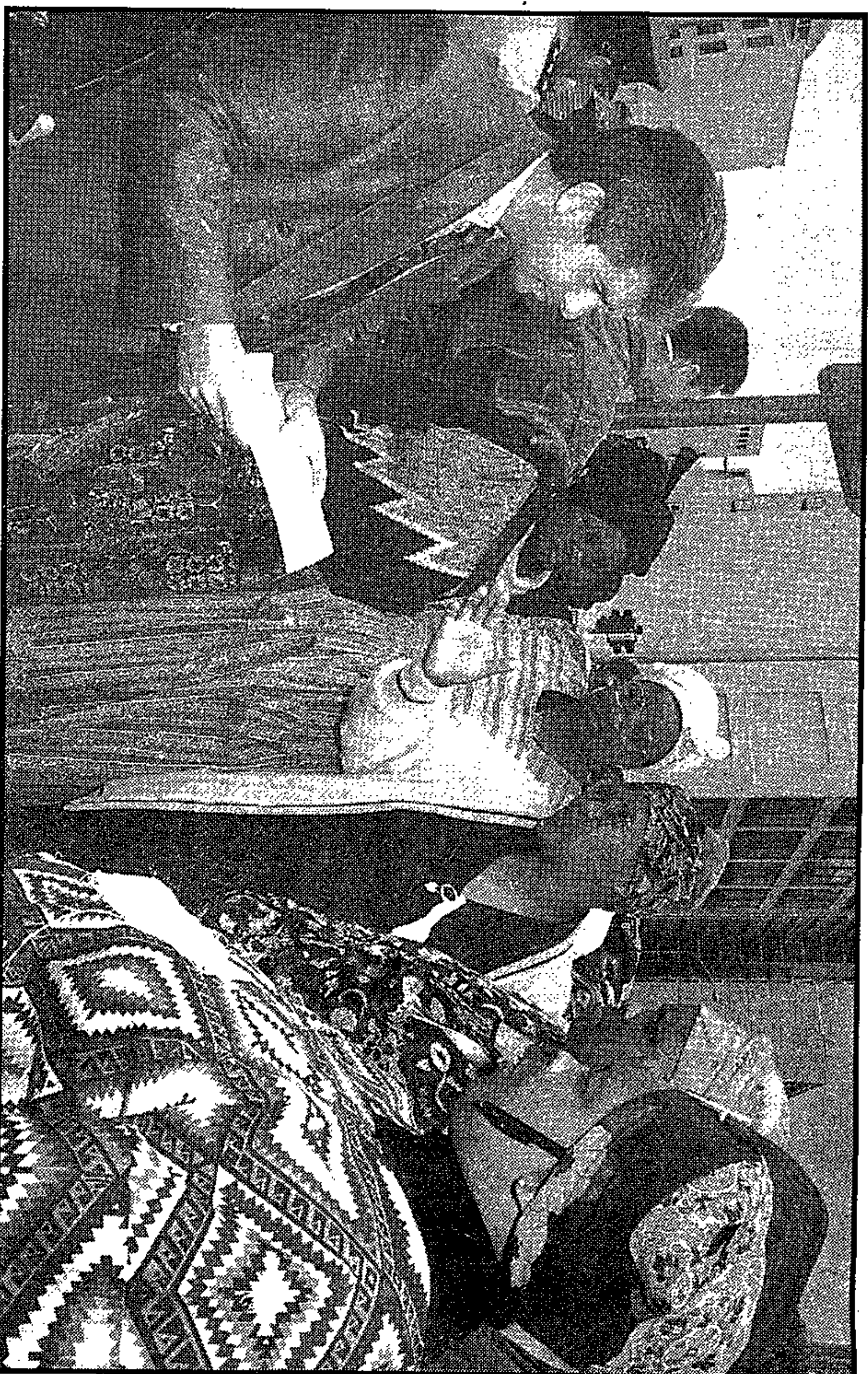
"The people of Crossroads are tired of these killings. They are suffering with transport," the women said.

The task team will recommend solutions to a ministers' council for transport, made up of Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and his nine provincial counterparts.

The task team will investigate taxi wars, poor driving standards, illegal operators, lack of facilities and financial pressure on the industry.

The bewildering mass of taxi associations, constantly being formed and fragmenting, will be asked to elect representatives.

The process is not aimed at creating new taxi associations.



GOT IT: Ben Eybers of the Ministry of Transport receives a memorandum from Crossroads women outside parliament demanding an end to the taxi war.

Structures will be created at national, provincial and local level to be official communication links between the industry and authorities.

Special attention will be paid to the system of public driving permits.

While there are 70 000 vehicles on the road with legal permits, unofficial estimates are that there are 40 000 taxis operating without permits.

Mr Maharaj said it might have seemed to take the government a long time to respond

to problems in the industry, which threatened to unleash problems throughout society.

The government wanted to approach the problem by creating a process in which everyone could participate, rather than a heavy-handed approach out of keeping with the spirit of the new era.

Mr Maharaj said he was perplexed that commuters had not spoken up.

"I have travelled in taxis and I cannot understand why 12 commuters cannot stand up

and speak, that the driver is driving too fast and violating traffic rules."

● Crossroads women said the granting of bail to accused people further fuelled the "civil war".

Cayla is believed to have strong links with Crossroads squatter strongman Jeffrey Nongwe and the settlement has become a virtual no-go zone for Codeta taxis.

"Codeta members are getting smaller bails whereas Cata

members are getting bigger bails," the women said.

"We thought that if you committed a crime you had to be arrested.

"Codeta members are getting R200 bail whereas Cata members are getting between R2 000 and R4 000 ... the reason for this we do not know.

"We need peace and stability in our township. Our aim of doing this march is to call the police together with the Minister of Justice to come up with a solution."

Picture: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus

2 die in taxi rank ambush

Gunfire scatters Mowbray crowd

By DALE GRANGER

TAXI violence erupted again late yesterday when a heavily armed gang burst out of minibusses at Mowbray taxi rank during the rush hour and sprayed the area with bullets — killing two men and wounding four others.

And fears of an escalating taxi war between the rival Codeta and Cata groups were realised late last night when shooting erupted on the corner of Elsleben and Lansdowne Roads in Nyanga.

Two taxi drivers — a Cata man wounded in the buttocks and a Codeta member wounded in the chest and stomach — were rushed to Groote Schuur Hospital, where they were in a stable condition last night.

Describing the Mowbray shootings, Codeta taxi drivers said hundreds of screaming passengers and drivers fled in all directions as the gunmen, alleged Cata members, burst out of three taxis and ran through the rank firing indiscriminately.

The attack came just hours after the warring Codeta and Cata factions had met for the first time at the Civic Centre for peace talks.

The bloody conflict between the groups has already left 13 people dead and 36 wounded in the last two weeks.

Drivers and witnesses said the attackers arrived in three minibusses.

One driver, identified only as "Mandla", was shot in the head and died next to mobile toilets 10 metres from where a taxi with Cata stickers on its doors was abandoned after the shooting.

A second man died in hospital.

Codeta drivers identified two of the wounded only as "Dan", who was shot in the back, and "Ngqiki", who was wounded in the stomach.

Both men were rushed to Groote Schuur Hospital by ambulance.

Fears of revenge attacks and an escalation of violence between the two factions grew

last night when about 30 angry Codeta drivers left the Mowbray rank in a procession.

One driver said: "We are going to the Khayelitsha rank to have a meeting about this."

A schoolboy, Rushdie Meyer, 13, who was fixing his bicycle 50m from the rank, said he threw himself on the ground as two of the gunmen fled the scene metres from him.

"There was no warning. It all happened very fast. They just jumped out and started shooting. People were screaming and running in all directions," he said.

"A man shouted at me to lie on the ground, and three of them armed with handguns ran right past me. I was scared and thought they were going to kill me too."

"I saw one man with a big gun wearing a balaclava running past the railway line. One of them ran across the road into someone's house and the police went in after him, got him and came out with his gun."

A policeman later emerged carrying a balaclava, but police spokesman Captain John Sterrenberg was unable to confirm eyewitness reports that an AK-47 or an R4 had been used in the attack.

He said several men had been detained for questioning.

Ms Maria Meyer, a Red Cross Hospital nurse, who lives nearby, said she treated the wounds of a man who had been shot through both legs.

With no Cata drivers to be seen, Codeta drivers were unanimous in blaming Cata for the latest killings.

Meanwhile, PETER DENNEHY reports that Codeta and Cata top leadership met for the first time in the Civic Centre yesterday afternoon.

Deputy city administrator Mr Alan Dolby said afterwards that Codeta was sticking to its Friday offer to let Cata use Codeta ranks on the deck only if Cata operators remove or cover up their association's stickers.

Cata will accept this only if Codeta drivers also have to cover up their own stickers. This is not acceptable to Codeta.

Another meeting has been scheduled for today.



SLAIN . . . A policeman looks for clues at Mowbray taxi rank last night beside the body of a Codeta man, identified as "Mandla". He was shot when a gang leapt from minibusses and ran amok. Picture: STEWART COLMAN

Illegal taxi operators major challenge for Govt

■ BY GLENDA DANIELS

Attempts to resolve serious problems in the minibus taxi industry have become a high priority on the Government's agenda, but it faces a major challenge in the 40 000 illegal operators who have a free

run of South African roads.

The Government, contrary to reports and rumours, is not about to freeze the issuing of taxi permits (332)

Deputy Director of Administration of Road Transportation Piet Geringer told the Star yesterday that requests

for a moratorium were turned down after legal advice was sought.

Problems in the industry include taxi wars, traffic problems, passenger safety and driver permits.

To solve these problems, the Government has begun a

process to bring the key players to a table to negotiate.

On Tuesday PWV local government officials and major rival taxi associations signed a declaration of intent to try and resolve the strife the industry has come to be associated with.

Taxi factions agree to unite under new body

By CHRIS BATEMAN

THE Peninsula's warring taxi factions are to unite after electing a new controlling body — and have sworn themselves to a peace pact. ET 19/11/94

And the army is to move into the taxi ranks to control "rogue elements".

The taxis of Cata and Codeta will roll again this morning after a three-hour negotiating session yesterday, the culmination of months of hard bargaining brokered by former attorney-general Mr Niel Rossouw.

Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane yesterday won a commitment from the leaders of both sides that "nobody will be victimised".

Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie is to call in internal stability division reinforcements to patrol taxi routes. (332)

A combined committee with three members each from police and the protagonists is to be led by Mr Rossouw with his co-mediator Mr Larry Joseph of UCT's Centre for Conflict Resolution.

● Taxi-owner Mr Aaron Mhlangu of the SA Long Distance Taxi Drivers' Association was shot dead in an ambush near Hammanskraal yesterday.

● Seven Zimbabweans were injured on Thursday when three taxis came under fire on the Messina-Louis Trichardt Road, Sapa reports.

332

ET 22/11/94

Taxi shootout

4 shot in Claremont rank battle

By WILLEM STEENKAMP

RUSH-HOUR commuters scattered at the Claremont taxi rank yesterday afternoon when warring minibus taxi drivers fired wildly at each other in what a policeman caught in the crossfire called "a hillbilly mountain feud".

The gunbattle came three days after the conclusion of a peace pact between the rival Codeta and Cata taxi factions, and on the eve of the signing of a declaration of intent by the two groups today.

A spokesman for local Safety and Security Minister Mr Patrick MacKenzie said he was determined the signing of the peace declaration, which includes an immediate ceasefire, would go ahead.

Scores of spent cartridge cases littered the scene after the 4.20pm shootout, in which at least four people — one of them a vagrant — were hurt and nine cars and taxis damaged.

Two bullets penetrated windows in an office block at the Atrium, which was sealed off by security guards when the shooting began.

Large numbers of police, called by Claremont policemen Captain Mario Laubscher and Warrant Officer Jan Smit, arrived on the scene almost immediately after the shooting started and scared off a group of gunmen believed to belong to Cata.

Capt Laubscher said he and WO Smit had gone to the rank following rumours of intimidation of Codeta members by Cata members.

While they were speaking to a Codeta member they spotted a group of about 30 men moving "purposefully" between parked vehicles towards about 15 Codeta members standing 20m away.

Capt Laubscher, who admitted to feeling "powerless" during the shootout, said shots began to ring out around them and he and WO Smit took cover.

"It sounded like a hillbilly mountain feud."

They called for assistance.

"It felt like an eternity, but it was probably only a minute," he said, before reinforcements arrived.

The Cata group got into taxis and fled.

Mrs Tozzy Siboto, of Rondebosch, whose car was damaged, said she was "thankful" she had not been there. "When is it going to stop. It's terrible. If they want to shoot, they must do it elsewhere."

TVBC's costly army promotions

Sowetan 18/11/94
(101) (254)

By Ismail Lagardien
Political Correspondent

THERE was a flurry of promotions in the armies of the former TBVC states shortly before the elections.

Minister of Defence Mr Joe Modise confirmed in Parliament that 2 252 promotions were effected in the former armies of Bophuthatswana, Venda, Transkei and Ciskei and that "the most obvious" cost implication for the new government was salaries.

After the integration of the armed forces in South Africa, the Ministry of Defence will have to pay these people salaries "according

to pay scales associated with their higher ranks", Modise said.

"All the financial implications will only become known after stock-taking and audit of all inventories and accounts of the former TBVC defence forces by the (South African) National Defence Force has been completed by March 1995," Modise said.

The financial implications under the present financial year's estimates are R1 173 457 a month or R11 734 570 for the period between the election and the end of February 1995.

Most of the promotions were made in the Transkei (1 657), with other areas being: Ciskei (411) Bophuthatswana (34) and Venda (150).

ARB. 22/11/94

Hail of bullets set back hopes of end to Cape taxi war

330

**ROGER FRIEDMAN and
JOSEPH ARANES**
Staff Reporters

TODAY'S formal signing of a peace accord by the warring township taxi operators will probably not go ahead, according to the regional transport ministry.

After a quiet weekend and early rush hour yesterday, the ceasefire brokered between Cata and Codeta on Friday was shattered in a hail of bullets at the Claremont taxi rank.

A Cata driver and a vagrant were injured and scores of vehicles were damaged as train and bus commuters fled for their lives about 5.30pm.

Regional police minister Patrick McKenzie said he hoped yesterday's incident would not jeopardise the signing of the peace accord today. He encouraged taxi operators to stand by their leaders, who agreed on Friday to an immediate ceasefire and to start unification talks.

But Garth Strachan of transport minister Leonard Ramatlakane's office said there was "not much point" in signing a declara-

tion of intent in the absence of goodwill and of mechanisms to ensure peace.

Going ahead with the signing would undermine all parties involved, he said.

Mr Ramatlakane was to meet former attorney-general and taxi mediator Niel Rossouw early today to discuss the way forward.

It was hoped that the technical liaison committee — set up on Friday and made up of police and the two warring parties — could meet today to discuss yesterday's developments.

"But the signing of the accord is in doubt now," said Mr Strachan.

Yesterday's chaos erupted at the Claremont taxi rank when gunmen opened fire during peak hour.

A witness, who refused to be named, said he was disgusted that months after the new government was in place innocent people still faced random violence.

The Claremont man said he was alighting from a train when he heard gunshots.

"Bullets were flying all over

the place and everybody was screaming and running in all directions.

"One of the bullets just missed my leg as I pushed an old woman back into the train."

He said he saw a man running around with a handgun firing at people and he heard commuters shouting that a man had been shot.

"I did not see anyone being shot and saw no policemen at the rank either.

"The police promised they would patrol and search taxis for weapons, but it seems these were empty promises.

"The government must close this taxi rank as you cannot have this type of violence in a built-up business area like this. Too many innocent people are caught in crossfire.

"It was a disgrace."

According to police, Cata driver David Kelele of Site B, Khayelitsha, was struck in a hand as he sat in his taxi. Victor Boy, of no fixed address, was hit in a leg. Fourteen vehicles were damaged.

Maharaj backs talks on taxi war crisis

ARG. 24/11/94

□ Minister wants responsibility to be shared

332

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

NATIONAL transport minister Mac Maharaj has backed talks between his Western Cape counterpart, Leonard Ramatlakane, and the taxi industry as being in line with initiatives to stabilise it.

"Such discussions are crucial in lending impetus to our process, as it is only through accepting shared responsibility for the problems and jointly seeking solutions, that the ideal

of a stable taxi industry will be attainable."

Mr Maharaj last week announced a joint central and provincial government scheme to end the crisis in the taxi industry.

The initiative includes the appointment of a panel of experts to probe problems in the industry, and ways to set up representative and legitimate structures.

These measures would be implemented only after extensive consultation with the taxi industry and other stake hold-

ers, Mr Maharaj said.

Significant progress had been made already in presenting the proposals to taxi associations, owners, operators and drivers throughout the country for their comment.

Central and provincial departments of transport were putting their weight behind this extensive communication campaign and the feedback was carefully monitored.

Existing liaison forums at local and provincial levels had a crucial role in the process.

□ Police warn they will 'come down hard'

ROGER FRIEDMAN, Staff Reporter

THE peace accord signed by the warring Codeta and Cata taxi groups lies in tatters today with Cata leader Steven Williams saying he has pulled out of the process.

Police liaison chief Raymond Dowd warned today that police would "come down hard" if there was any continuation of violence in the troubled taxi industry.

Outside the Mitchell's Plain Magistrate's Court last night after fellow Cata leader Victor Sam appeared for an urgent bail application, Mr Williams said "the peace is over".

"I signed the peace accord yesterday and the same day my driver was shot in my kombi in Khayelitsha and now the kombi has been hijacked.

"I'm going to step down from the peace committee (set up by regional transport minister Leonard Ramatlakane and regional police minister Patrick McKenzie on Friday).

"There is no use building a wall with your left hand if you are carrying a four-pound hammer to break it down in your right."

Mr Williams — who is appearing in the Supreme Court with Mr Sam on two counts of murder and 16 of attempted murder — said the arrest of Mr Sam during a court recess had infuriated the Cata rank and file.

"I will try to keep the peace ... I already did so at the Supreme Court where the members were very, very crazy.

"Thank God I can still control them but I don't know for how much longer," Mr Williams said.

In the court corridor, a Cata executive member who asked not to be named said there was no point in making peace if the police "carried on" arresting his members.

"We have signed for peace ... now we should forget about the past," he said.

Meanwhile, head of the police violent crimes unit Leonard Knipe is to be called before Mr Justice Kuhn today to explain Mr Sam's controversial arrest yesterday during the lunch adjournment.

Judge Kuhn returned to court after lunch to find his accused had been arrested and taken to Bellville South.

Colonel Dowd said today it appeared that Mr Sam's arrest had been botched by the investigating officer, Karel Rossouw, who was at the court to arrest Mr Sam after the day's proceedings.

Sergeant Rossouw told the Mitchell's Plain court last night it had been impossible to arrest Mr Sam at his Nongwe's Place home in Crossroads as police came under fire when they attempted to confiscate the taxi allegedly used in the crime.

Colonel Dowd said that regardless of the peace accord, perpetrators of past crimes could not expect to be overlooked or forgiven by the police.

"If there's any continuing violence we are going to come down hard on them," he promised.

● A Codeta driver was shot in the thigh about 7:45pm last night by a gunman who fired a single shot from a moving taxi.

Yesterday, police confiscated a Cata taxi which had allegedly been used in a shooting in Green Point squatter camp, Khayelitsha on Tuesday. The owner was questioned and released.

Newly-signed taxi peace accord reduced to shreds

ARC

24/11/94

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CT 24/11/94 (332)

PORT ELIZABETH. — The police, traffic department and road transportation department here formed a taxi unit to concentrate on problems surrounding the taxi industry.

Spokesman for the unit, Sergeant Joe Slingers, said the formation of the unit, which will start work tomorrow morning, had been "wholeheartedly supported" by taxi associations.

The move comes after weeks of simmering tension between rival taxi associations, exacerbated by conflict over the presence of "sweeper" taxis — those that are not members of taxi associations.

The sweepers, who cruise for pas-

sengers rather than operate from organised taxi ranks, have been accused of poaching passengers from the ranks and of fuelling taxi violence.

Two weeks ago Main Street was turned into a war zone as taxi drivers battled each other near the Pier 14 shopping centre, a fight allegedly caused by a "sweeper" poaching passengers waiting at a rank outside the shopping centre.

Members of the unit will check taxis' permits and roadworthy certificates, conduct searches for illegal weapons, stop "sweepers" from causing traffic obstructions and address problems such as reckless driving and muggings at taxi ranks.

TAXI WARS

Beyond democracy

Fun 25/11/94

Gangsterism must be dealt with as a law and order issue

332

The minibus taxi industry is choking on violence, corruption and the culture of illegality that helped it shrug off State suppression in the Seventies and Eighties.

Police say more than 240 incidents of murder, assault and attempted murder linked to the taxis have been reported this year in the Transvaal, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal — 30% up on last year and more than three times the 1991 count.

The Goldstone Commission found several causes of the violence:

- The apartheid government's failure to offer transport to informal settlements and a rapidly urbanising black population;
- The absence of business skills among many operators;
- Red tape and high costs of the permit system, encouraging pirate operators;
- Unfair competition from State-subsidised bus and train services;
- Inflation and economic decline that raised running costs and heightened tensions among competing taxi groups;
- Secrecy by permit authorities, raising suspicions of corruption and bias;
- Weak law enforcement; and
- Poor ranks in towns and cities.

Mafia-style taxi bosses suspected of orchestrating the violence are wealthy enough to hire the best legal aid, says police Capt Paul Fourie of the Johannesburg-based Riot & Violence Investigation Unit.

Fourie says he has heard of taxi bosses paying up to R70 000 for assassins to kill rivals. Some taxi operators run a dozen or more minibuses, using paid drivers. One owner of 15 taxis confided to a Johannesburg transport official recently that he cleared R60 000 a month.

A major problem in combating taxi crime, says Fourie, is keeping track of individuals and associations as they split in disputes and form rival groupings.

There are said to be more than 400 taxi associations, many of them affiliated to larger groupings or "mother organisations" such as the SA Black Taxi Association (Sabta), the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta), the National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) and the Federation of Long Distance Taxi Operators (Feldta). No-one seems to know how many associations are combined.

Sabta, which covers about 60% of the market, and several of the other large taxi associations have come together to form the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) to negotiate with government for the industry. But thousands of smaller taxi operators reject the OTI, suspecting it of wanting to feather the nest for big-timers. A gulf exists between top management and the grass

roots. Perhaps the most disgruntled group are the drivers, most of whom are paid measly wages (some say R600 a month) and drive under commission arrangements that make them cram in passengers.

Violence, meanwhile, has become ingrained in the organisational structure of the industry. To understand why, one needs to understand how the business works.

An aspirant operator must obtain a certificate of fitness for the vehicle and a R25 operator's permit from the Department of Transport. But first he must have an assigned route. This is where the associations come in as they control the routes.

A new operator may have to pay an association R3 000 or more to join the route network. If accepted, the association will map out his route and he will not be allowed to carry passengers outside of it. If he cannot get a route, the transport board will not issue the permit. Once he has a route, though, he must ask his local city council for a rank assignation. Without it, his application could be refused — and appeals are costly.

That's the theory. In practice, thousands of taxi operators simply ignore the government red tape, pay route money to the asso-

ciated the taxi industry in the late Eighties. "Government never deregulated; it simply abrogated," says business consultant Roger Oxlee, who has spent two years negotiating peace contracts between rival taxi associations in Midrand.

A parliamentary White Paper outlining deregulation of the transport industry was tabled in 1987. The programme was completed for road freight and rail last year but never implemented for taxis because of protests from taxi and bus operators.

Road Transport deputy director Piet Geringer says the Department of Transport has 70 000 minibus taxi permits on record. He estimates that an extra 40 000 taxis are operating illegally. That does not include the former TBVC states, which may account for another 20 000 taxis.

Illiteracy and ignorance of business principles are other big problems. Business consultant Vladis Servas says a third of all taxis bought on loan schemes end up being repossessed. In cities like Pretoria and Johannesburg small armies of "pavement scribes" have arisen, charging up to R500 to fill out forms for illiterate taxi applicants. The Department of Transport has now installed helpers in all of its offices to complete the forms for free.

The PWV has the largest taxi concentration in SA, with about 40% of the market. Some officials estimate that up to 10 000 minibus taxis course through greater Johannesburg each weekday. The council provides free ranks and has converted an underground parking garage near the city centre into a holding area for taxis.

"You won't see a traffic cop come near them, let alone ticket them — they're all too scared," says a member of the city's metropolitan planning division.

Like most people involved with the taxi industry, he argues against deregulation: "If the taxi industry was not regulated, this country would see the biggest outbreak of violence in its history — bigger even than the political violence because this is about money, big money."

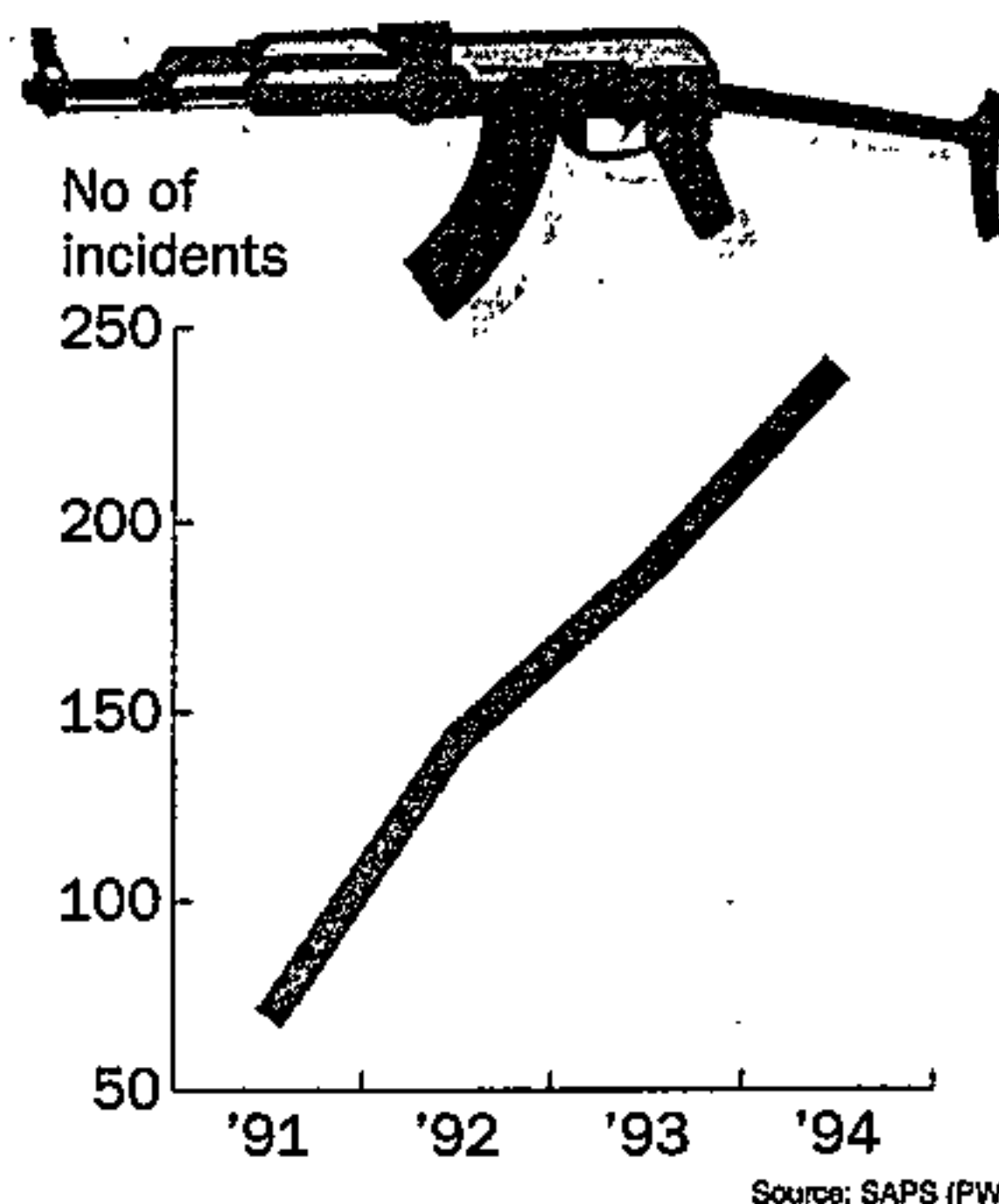
Johannesburg's council is so anxious to avoid violence that it will not allow rival associations to share a taxi rank. The ranks are run by queue marshals, employed by the associations, and teams of marshals in "squad" cars monitor the traffic flow and ensure that pirates don't move in.

The squad men wield a lot of power. When leaders of an association in Ivory Park, north of Johannesburg, fired squad men recently, the men asked counterparts in Alexandra, Johannesburg and Randburg to "freeze out" Ivory Park taxis.

Law enforcement must be boosted ur-

TAXI WARS

Murders, assaults and attempted murders



ciation and start operating illegally. The practice is so widespread that the industry has developed its own "customary laws" for illicit operations. For example, associations distinguish between "illegal" taxis (which are allowed to run specified routes) and "pirates" (which are not).

The control structure, rickety as it is, puts paid to the myth that government dereg-

LEADING ARTICLES

gently. Existing police deployments are woefully inadequate and underpaid. Officers on the taxi beat invariably have to cope with other, nontaxi violence and riots and are already over-extended.

In some areas, taxi men accuse the police of passing weapons to hit men or taking sides in disputes. The Goldstone Commission found cases where policemen were operating taxis and in some areas, such as Alexandra township, ex-policemen head taxi associations.

A solution could be to establish special provincial police task forces. Analysts and taxi leaders argue, though, that law enforcement is not enough; they want a comprehensive approach.

"We want a subsidy just like the buses and trains get or we want their subsidies abolished," says Nafto vice-chairman Simon Mathysen. "There is no way in the world you can solve the shooting problem in the taxi industry until the government makes it fair for all."

Department of Transport officials say the ultimate solution is to formalise the industry which, coincidentally, is something the Organised Taxi Industry supports as it could probably bring subsidies. But this is not the way to go. Whatever solution is tried, the use of taxpayers' money should not be an option.

"We have two choices," says Transport

Minister Mac Maharaj. "Either we try to resolve the problem using a heavy-handed jackboot approach or we go for an inclusive process which addresses the problem systematically and locks all the participants into a solution."

So far, he has had little success. Maharaj says the taxi bosses are not representative of the industry at grass roots. He plans to break the taxi boss monopoly by holding elections in the industry next April to set up a negotiating forum to deal with government. He also intends to establish a national task team in January comprising transport specialists and government leaders to address issues such as taxi wars, collisions, illegal operators, permits and passenger needs.

The taxi bosses see the elections as a threat and privately say they will never let them go ahead, raising the prospect of more violence. When Maharaj met Organised Taxi Industry leaders to present his proposals recently, the taxi men walked out before he had read halfway through his discussion paper, saying he was being prescriptive. And how could Maharaj's proposals deal with the pirate problem?

PWV MEC for Transport Olaus van Zyl,



Maharaj

(332)

meanwhile, is out to woo the bosses. Amid much fanfare in Sandton last week, he and Safety & Security MEC Jessie Duarte got hundreds of taxi men to sign a declaration of intent to end the violence and work together. Where Maharaj has taken a bottom-up approach, Van Zyl has concentrated on the top structure. He dangles promises of subsidies and emphasises that provinces, not central government, will administer public transport. The industry is interested but non-committal.

"We want to set up a structure through which the associations can communicate with government," says Van Zyl. If that means electing a body, and if the industry agrees, he says he will support the plan.

"The associations will have to restructure anyway," he says, referring to dissension among members. "If they don't, they will not be able to continue operating."

Throwing money at the taxi problem may be tempting; it would also be futile. The fact that certain taxi ranks have become no-go areas for traffic police should be sufficient humiliation for government. Above all, the challenge is one of law and order.

Special court for taxi-war crimes urged

ARG
25/11/94
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□ Lack of staff the problem, says A-G

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

LENGTHY delays in getting criminal trials to court are exacerbating the taxi war in the Cape, says top detective Leonard Knipe.

Delays of up to two years meant witnesses disappeared and forgot details of the cases. And intimidation also took its toll, he said.

Only a special court, geared to hear taxi-related cases quickly, could start to address the spiralling problem in the Cape, said Colonel Knipe, head of the violent crimes unit.

But Attorney-General Frank Kahn said although he supported the concept, he lacked staff to run a special court.

The present waiting period for trials in the Supreme Court was "well over a year", he said.

Colonel Knipe said: "Justice is just taking too long to happen. Victims of

the violence are not seeing justice being done. They are shot at and then they wait two years for trial.

"I believe if we could get a special court to try taxi-related crime expeditiously we might begin to solve the problems."

Colonel Knipe held preliminary discussions with Mr Kahn on the practicalities of setting up a special court yesterday.

Mr Kahn said he would hold further talks with Colonel Knipe and other relevant parties in the next few days.

"My difficulty, however, is a lack of staff.

"The difficulties encountered by the police were the same difficulties raised in my annual report to parliament earlier this year, and they still persist," Mr Kahn said.

"I will make every effort to facilitate Colonel Knipe's request ... a court to give taxi murders special attention is a good concept."

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reports for the 7 000-mile voyage to Sydney, Australia, showed Taylor in ninth



Picture: OBED ZILWA, The Argus.

TAXI KILLING: Ambulance workers remove the body of an Eyethu taxi driver who was shot dead in Lansdowne Road Extension, Khayelitsha.

Taxi rivals called to talks

Staff Reporters

CAPE Town's rival taxi groups are to be summoned to an urgent meeting by taxi mediator Niel Rossouw today to discuss the bloody developments over the weekend which left four people dead.

Mr Rossouw, a former Cape attorney-general who chairs the taxi technical committee made up of police and rival taxi bodies Codeta and Cata, said today nobody was under any illusion that lasting peace was an easy goal.

The technical committee forms part of the peace initiative brokered by regional Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and Safety and Security Minister Patrick McKenzie.

"We must go on, there is no other way of dealing with this," said Mr Rossouw.

On Friday, in spite of Cata deputy chairman Steven Williams saying Cata had pulled out of the technical commit-

tee, "we had a very positive meeting", Mr Rossouw said.

The two sides also held informal talks over the weekend.

Meanwhile, Karel Rossouw, the detective who arrested Cata strongman Victor Sam on murder charges in the Supreme Court during the lunch recess on Wednesday, is to be brought before Mr Justice Kuhn today to explain his actions.

Mr Sam was one of the murder accused appearing in Judge Kuhn's court and the judge was forced to postpone proceedings for the afternoon.

Mr Sam's bail application arising from the arrest continues later today.

Meanwhile Fanie Bower, the Internal Stability Unit's regional planner, says the taxi war is being fanned by a small "cancerous" criminal element intent on destabilising the industry.

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ARG 23/11/94

Taxi killing: Witness 'too scared' to testify

ARL 29/11/94

(332)

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

A WITNESS for Cata leader Victor Sam in his bail application, who is also Mr Sam's co-accused in a Supreme Court double murder case, was too scared to testify at the bail hearing in the Mitchell's Plain magistrate's court.

Counsel for Mr Sam, William King, read a message from Mr Steven Williams to the court in which he (Mr Williams) said he did not want to come to court because he feared for his life.

The message had been left with a prosecutor at the court.

Magistrate Ben Julius then postponed the hearing for the fifth time until tomorrow.

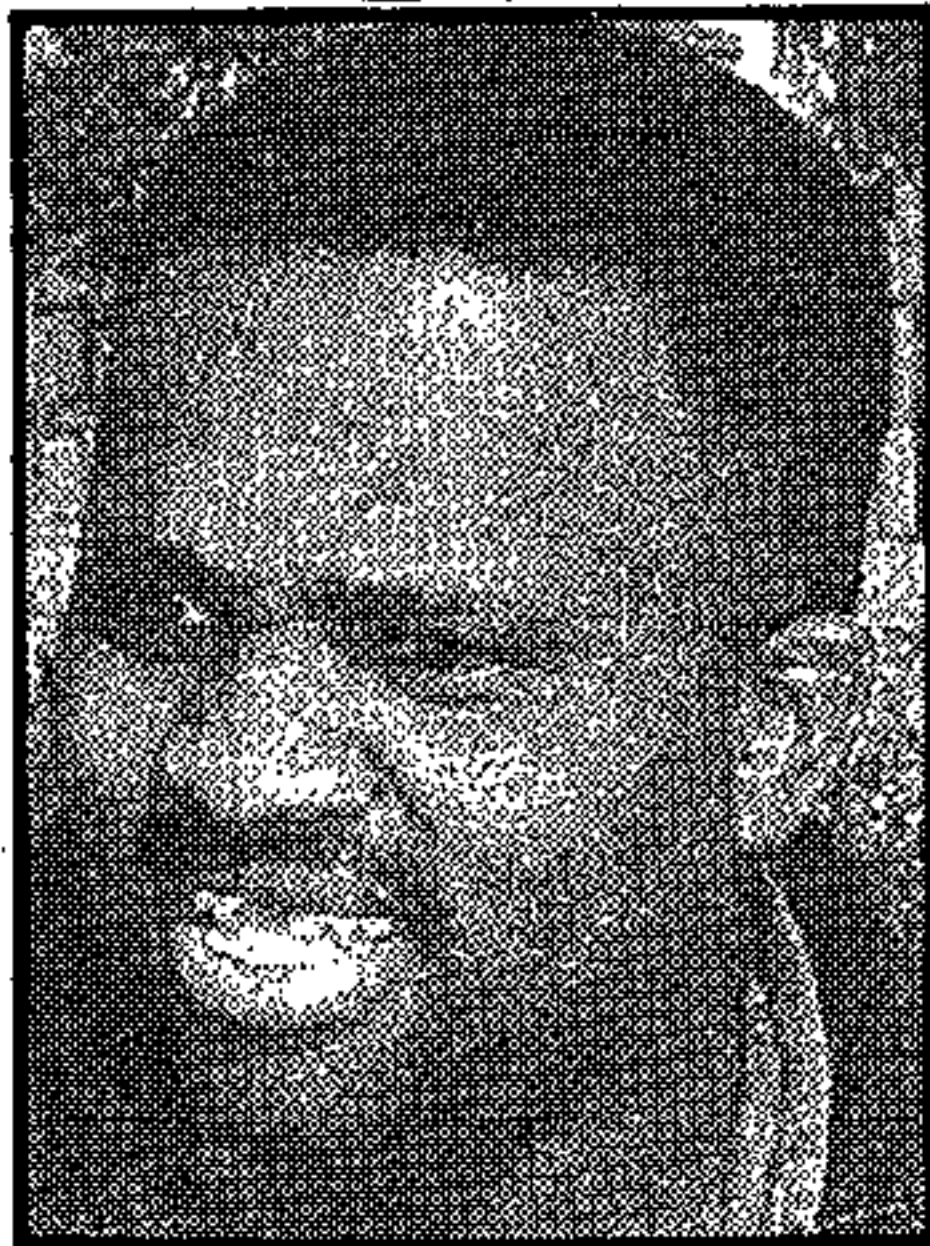
Earlier another witness for Mr Sam, Goodman Ntshidi, said there was another "Mr Small" working as a driver for the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata). Mr Sam's nickname is "Small" or "Small Boy".

On Sunday state witness and policeman Karel Rossouw told the court he arrested Mr Sam after an eyewitness told him "Small" had killed a man in Guguletu.

Mr Ntshidi told the court he did not know Mr Small's full name but had known him since 1986.

"Mr Small was the chairman of Cata's driver and on Sunday and last week drove my taxi."

Under cross-examination he said he never heard of Mr Small being involved in any of the taxi-related violence. "He was never involved in any taxi violence and I never once saw him commit a violent act although I know he was assaulted."



Victor Sam

Asked by prosecutor Mark Wakefield to tell the court what started last Sunday night's taxi shooting, Mr Ntshidi said the trouble started while he and other Cata members were at court.

"Steven Williams got a telephone call from Cata people in Khayelitsha informing him that our taxis were being robbed there."

"When we got there, I saw people shooting. Cata never started or committed any violence against Codeta."

When asked by Mr Wakefield if he heard Mr Sam threaten press photographers, who were taking pictures of him being led back to the cells, Mr Ntshidi said he had not.

"I only heard Mr Sam tell them they had no right to take his picture."

Mr Sam was arrested on Wednesday during a lunch recess at the Supreme Court where he was appearing on murder charges.

Mr King is instructed by William Booth.

Four

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die in
ET 28/11/94
attacks

on taxis

Staff Reporter

FOUR people — two taxi drivers and two passengers — died in three separate shooting incidents in the Peninsula last night.

Seven passengers were wounded.

In one incident two passengers were killed and four injured when shots were fired at two rival taxis travelling one behind the other in Lansdowne Road, Old Crossroads.

Police spokeswoman Sergeant Virna Louw said a Codeta taxi and a Cata taxi, both carrying passengers, were fired at from an undetermined position.

Victims

A passenger in each taxi was killed. Four people in the Codeta taxi, including an off-duty Khayelitsha policeman, were wounded.

None of the victims has yet been identified.

In NY1, Guguletu, a Codeta driver was killed when shots fired from houses hit him in the head about 9.00pm.

In Khayelitsha the driver of an Eyethu taxi died and three passengers were injured by shots from a blue and white minibus just after 8pm.



OLDEST SAILOR . . . Briton Harry Mitchell, 70, the oldest sailor in the BOC Challenge around-the-world yacht race, sailed into Cape Town on Saturday to a big welcome from his wife, Diana. Picture: ALAN TAYLOR

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Fears of taxi war escalation after ambush

(332) ARG 29/11/94
(From page 1)

Codeta taxis travelling along the N2 towards Khayelitsha was stoned and shot at from the direction of Crossroads. No-one was injured. Five 9mm cartridges and a spent AK-47 cartridge were found.

A fuming Codeta member said they were about to leave their offices in town when they received a call from a man — identifying himself as a Cata member — requesting a meeting.

"We simply told him we were on our way home and did not have the time. It is now clear that this caller was merely trying to establish our movements. They were lucky this happened on the freeway, otherwise they would be dead men," he said.

About 3.45pm Codeta driver Sakina Mnguolo, 37, of Macassar squatter camp in Khayelitsha was driving down Lansdowne Road when stones were thrown at his taxi by people believed to be Cata supporters.

He lost control of the taxi and crashed into a boulder on an open field. Mr Mnguolo jumped out with his two passengers and they ran for their lives.

Unknown gunmen opened fire, striking Mr Mnguolo in the neck, cheek, shoulder and chest. He was rushed to Groote Schuur Hospital in a serious condition.

Six spent 9mm cartridges were found at the scene.

While police were investigating the incident, they heard the sound of automatic gunfire.

Looking up they saw a group of men brandishing firearms hanging out the windows of a pair of taxis. ● See page 13

signed by leaders of the warring Cata and Codeta.

Colonel Dowd said police were also looking at redeploying members from taxi ranks to taxi routes where most of the trouble was happening.

"People are being ambushed left, right and centre."

In conjunction with the traffic department, random roadblocks would be set up to search for weapons.

"It is definitely a much harder-handed approach and we appeal to the drivers for patience if they are stopped at roadblocks. It is to everybody's advantage.

"We are doing our best but the people seem hell-bent on killing one another," Colonel Dowd said.

About 5pm yesterday a line of

Taxi war seems set to escalate

Staff Reporters

POLICE are to set up roadblocks, randomly search taxis and launch a pamphlet campaign in an attempt to clamp down on the taxi war.

The war seems to be escalating, with Codeta claiming it was led into an ambush on the N2 and shots being fired at taxis in Lansdowne Road yesterday.

Codeta taxis were stoned and shot at on the N2 opposite Crossroads again today.

Seven people have lost their lives in the past 48 hours, making a mockery of the peace accord brokered just 10 days ago by regional police and transport minis-

ters Patrick McKenzie and Leonard Ramatlakane.

Chief police liaison officer Raymond Dowd said today a communication campaign, including thousands of pamphlets, could help inform taxi drivers who seemed not to have heard of the accord signed by their leaders.

Likening the police's position to the United Nations predicament in Bosnia, Colonel Dowd said there was a limit to what police could do to stop the war.

"we can only try to keep the lid on the pot."

ARG 29/11/94
It was hoped the pamphlet would be co-

(332) (Turn to page 2)

Plan to outlaw guns on taxis

By JACKIE CAMERON
and CHRIS BATEMAN

A LAW banning the carrying of firearms on taxis and buses is on the cards following the murder of three more people yesterday in the city's ongoing taxi war.

Western Cape Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie said offenders would face stiff penalties.

He said he had proposed to the city planners department the installation of booms with "swipe cards" for legal opera-

tors at the Nyanga and Cape Town station deck taxi ranks.

Yesterday's killings bring to seven the number who have been shot dead in taxi conflicts since Sunday.

The body of taxi driver Mr Mxolisi Jan of Guguletu was found in a Guguletu graveyard at 8.30am, police said.

An hour later an unidentified woman taxi passenger, in her 20s, died after being shot in the chest in a taxi in NY3 Guguletu.

Taxi driver Mr Felix Golo, age unknown, was injured.

In the same area driver Mr Sinofo Bonca was found dead after being shot in the chest.

No arrests have been made.

Commenting on the swipe-card plan, Mr McKenzie said this would control points of access to commuters, prevent getaways and help police catch offenders who often drove away from a rank after firing random shots at opponents.

Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane said that in spite of the violence,

his information was that the taxi leadership was respecting the peace accord.

Mediators yesterday insisted that perseverance with their peace initiatives would eventually pay off.

While Cata failed to attend yesterday's mediation session convened and former Cape attorney-general Mr Niel Rossouw, insisted negotiations continue "because there is no other way".

The alternative was "just to let things slide, withdraw and leave the people in the town-

ship to themselves — but that is out of the question."

Colonel Fanie Bouver, head of the police internal stability division, rejected suggestions by some observers that it was now "time for the big stick" in bringing taxi associations into line.

"I'm not put off by the latest violence. We must carry on the process and we'll succeed. Unfortunately, it's become a tit-for-tat situation."

● Commuter boycott 'not an option' — Page 3.

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29/11/94



TAXI DEATH ... This unidentified woman taxi passenger died yesterday when the taxi she was travelling in came under fire in Guguletu. At least three people died yesterday as taxi feuding continued, bringing to seven the number of people killed since Sunday.

Picture: BENNY GOOL

Commuter boycott 'not an option'

ET 29/11/94 (332)
Staff Reporter

A COMMUTER boycott of minibus taxis in a bid to bring the warring Codeta and Cata factions to heel "would make matters worse" and lead to more violence, a spokesman for the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) said yesterday.

"I wouldn't advise that option," said Mr Bonisile Malindi, in reaction to a statement yesterday by SA Communist Party regional general secretary and MP, Mr Philip Dexter, that taxi boycotts could be used to fight endemic violence.

But it became apparent yesterday that many township residents, fearing for their lives and despondent at the violence, had turned to busses anyway.

Taxis were few and far between in townships yesterday evening, and none was full.

"The bus is more expensive but it's still cheaper than a coffin," said a woman who was caught up in shooting at the Nyanga rank yesterday.

Speaking after the SACP's regional conference yesterday, Mr Dexter said a peace campaign would be launched, in which "ordinary people have to be mobilised and to be made aware that they can apply pressure, be it about taxi or gang violence".

But Mr Malindi said boycotts of minibus taxis had been attempted in the past, and "it doesn't work". The result of commuters boycotting taxis and catching busses instead would be that "very dangerous and ruthless" taxi operators would then turn on busses, Mr Malindi said.

Taximan fails to give evidence

Staff Reporter

CAPE Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) vice-chairman Mr Stephen Williams, who was called to give evidence in a bail application of alleged taxi warlord Mr Victor Mbelelo Sam, sent a message to the defence counsel saying he was "scared of death" and therefore would not be present in court.

Mr Williams faces murder charges along with Mr Sam, 32, of Crossroads,

who was arrested last week in the Supreme Court in connection with the hijacking of two minibus taxis and the murder of Mr Siphiso Sikunana, a passenger in one of the taxis.

After Mr Williams failed to appear at court as a witness for the defence, a note addressed to Mr Sam's attorneys was found in the prosecutor's office saying "Williams is scared of death, that is why he is not at court".

The bail application continues tomorrow.

THE CAPE

Workers' party an idle thought, say unions

304A
(134) ARG 8/11/94

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Labour Reporter

SOUTH Africa's major trade union federations have dismissed as "pie-in-the-sky stuff" embryonic attempts to form an independent workers' political party.

The Workers' Organisation for Socialist Action (Wosa) released a press statement yesterday after a national strategic meeting at the weekend of its labour commission.

It hinted that the formation of a "Mass Workers' Party (MWP)" was imminent.

Wosa said its planning meeting was attended by members of 14 trade

unions, including several affiliates of Cosatu and Nactu.

The unionists had "pledged to work together", said Wosa vice-chairman Mfanafuthi Ndlovu.

Among the resolutions adopted by the meeting were:

- To reaffirm the necessity for an independent political party of the working class.

- To call on all working class organisations to "establish a movement for the MWP".

- To set up MWP committees in every township, factory, educational institution and other appropriate areas.

The meeting also resolved to support the call by the Cosatu-aligned National Metalworkers' Union of South Africa's (Numsa) for the establishment of a new political party.

Cosatu national spokesman Neil Coleman said there was "no official Cosatu representation" at Wosa's meeting.

He confirmed Numsa had proposed, at the recent Cosatu national congress, the establishment of a new worker-based political party, but the resolution was defeated.

"We decided to continue supporting our alliance with the ANC."

He said Wosa, together with other

ultra-left organisations, were "trying to use their individual contacts" to put forward their agendas.

"We have just come out of a socialist conference at the weekend to which Wosa was invited. There were no resolutions for the launching of a workers' party.

"It's pie-in-the-sky stuff."

Nactu president James Mndaweni said the formation of a workers' party had not been on the agenda at his federation's recent annual congress.

"It has not been discussed within Nactu. We are an independent federation, not aligned to any political party or organisation, and we believe we should maintain that position."



COMPANIES

Putco slams subsidy rise delay

MICK COLLINS

A DELAY in approving an increase in subsidies paid to bus operators had put the mass transport sector under pressure, industry sources said yesterday. *B1 Day*

Putco MD Mike Oldham said the company had applied for a 10% inflation-linked increase in March and was still waiting for a decision from the Transport Department. *29/11/94*

Oldham said he appreciated the department's efforts and hoped there would be a favourable outcome.

But he said the delay could pose a "major problem" as the company was faced with escalating costs for maintenance, spares, tyres, tubes and wages.

The 10% increase requested was in line with inflation. He said Putco's figures on the number of passengers carried had been audited independently.

Analyses and investigations on subsidy structures had been conducted last year by independent consultants and accountants appointed by the department.

Their recommendations had been accepted by all parties.

Oldham said the subsidy increase was still a matter of debate and negotiation but he expected an answer "fairly soon".

Analysts said the transport group was owed almost R43m by the state in subsidies for this financial year. This was up from R21m on June 30 last year.

Oldham said there was no question that the money would be forthcoming as the formula for the subsidy had been agreed with the department, but the delay had put pressure on bus operators generally.

One analyst said the group would end the year with net borrowings of R18m, which, in relation to total assets, was small.

But over the past two years cash requirements had outstripped cash flow by R41m, resulting in the 1992 cash holding of R23m being wiped out. He said since 1992 the group had had to cater for R50m in working capital. *(322)*

Transport Department spokesmen were not available for comment.

Codeta boss will resign for peace

Supreme Court Reporter

CODETA president Mr Kidwell Magwayi yesterday told the Supreme Court he would relinquish office if it would end the taxi war. (332)

Mr Magwayi said this in the trial of Mr Patrick Nongwana, Mr Victor Sam and Mr Stephen Williams — all members of the

CT 30/11/94
rival Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) taxi group — who pleaded not guilty to two charges of murder and 16 of attempted murder.

In reply to prosecutor Mr Piet Nel, Mr Magwayi said he had been prepared to step down but had been asked by many people to remain.

Under cross-examination by

Mr William King, for Mr Sam and Mr Williams, Mr Magwayi denied he had brought false charges against the men.

Told that the men would deny that they had been near the Zolani Centre on July 7 last year, Mr Magwayi said Mr Williams had made a statement on behalf of the now defunct Western Cape Black Taxi

Association (Webta).

In the statement Mr Williams confirmed that three Codeta vehicles had arrived at the Zolani Centre and that after shots were fired from it, they returned fire and two Codeta people were killed.

The trial continues today.

Mr Justice G A Kuhn was on the bench. Mr Richard Penwill appeared for Mr Nongwana.

Taxi violence has its roots in past conflicts

Renewed shack torchings in Crossroads allied to the spiralling Cape taxi war bode ill for the upcoming local government elections. Staff Reporter ROGER FRIEDMAN investigates.

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AR 30/11/94

THE taxi war and the burning of houses in Crossroads could be linked, with old squatter rivalries and the battle for power in local government the common denominator, a Human Rights Committee report claims.

Crossroads is the headquarters of both the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Western Cape United Squatter Association (Wecusa), led by Jeffrey Nongwe.

Cata, which has close links with Wecusa, is at odds with the Congress of Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

"Wecusa... is known for its reactionary and traditionalist leanings," the HRC report says.

"Wecusa, possibly anticipating a contest in local government elections against a feared ANC-Sanco alliance, seems to have formed an alliance with Cata, perhaps having in common a support base which holds to values more rural and traditional than urban and progressive or democratic," the report continues.

Crossroads was the scene of some of the worst forced-removal violence in the country during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Squatter factions known as Witdoek vigilantes allegedly collaborated with the state to burn thousands of houses in an attempt to force residents to settle in Khayelitsha.

Two former witdoek leaders are now National Party provincial MPs — a third, Mr Nongwe — the chairman of Wecusa, still lives in Crossroads.

Shack torchings began again on October 8, a "disturbing correspondence with the October 16 Khayelitsha taxi massacre", according to the HRC.

Prominent ANC leader and Crossroads Section Two Sanco committee member John Willem was murdered on the day the shack burnings began. His house was torched the same night.

By the end of October, more than 200 homeless people were sheltering at the Mfesane Centre and a clinic.

John Willem's son, Madoda, meanwhile fled to Vietnam squatter camp near Philippi but he was hunted down and shot on November 13. By mid-November about 40 per cent of Section Two had been razed.

Residents said the arsonists came from Boys Town, north-west of Section Two, and from Section Four.

Meanwhile, Codeta — an amalgamation of the warring Webta and Lagunya taxi bodies formed in 1992 to end an earlier taxi war — had already shown signs of splintering.

According to the HRC, Codeta "must be seen as a desperate attempt to put a band-aid on the profoundly troubled taxi industry".

Cata was formed on August 25.

A group within the former Webta, known as the Big Eight, were feared in the townships for their "propensity for violence" in the middle and late 1980s.

Cata's formation was allegedly spearheaded by the Big Eight when one of their leaders, Victor Sam, was released from jail in June. Cata claimed Codeta was not addressing Webta complaints.

During August and September tension mounted with reports of Codeta members being harassed and intimidated by Cata members.

The conflict erupted into open warfare at a Sanco local government election rally in the Khayelitsha Stadium on October 16 when gunmen opened fire and 10 people died.

"The first shots were fired at Victor Sam. It is an open secret that self-defence unit hitmen were involved in the shootings at the rally. Of the 10 deaths, one was a Codeta member and about six were Cata members. The spiral of revenge killings was back in motion."

Boys Town, Crossroads, was traditionally a Sanco support-base but the civic structures have almost collapsed in the past few months — particularly since John Willem's murder.

A Cata taxi rank was established there last month.

Cata is based in Section Four, at Nongwe's Place, named for the Wecusa leader.

"The link between Wecusa and Cata is the Big Eight, who allegedly formed a bodyguard around Mr Nongwe in the late 80s and early 90s," the HRC report says.

"There are allegations from self-defence unit members in Crossroads that Big Eight members received state-aided combat training just outside Cape Town, and the professionalism of their attacks does nothing to dispel this perception."

The HRC attributes "directly or indirectly" all 14 "political deaths" in Cape Town last month to the Big Eight as well as 45 of the 113 injuries and 18 of the 25 incidents.

● Several prominent Sanco leaders have been targeted in the taxi war. They include Livingstone Kuse, Gladstone Ndamo, Roseberry Sonto and Gilbert Finqe.

According to police, shootings and stone-throwing attributed to the taxi conflict over the past few days emanated from Crossroads.

● Mr Sam is presently facing a double murder charge in the Supreme Court. He was granted bail of R10 000. He was subsequently arrested for another murder and granted a further R4 000 bail. Then he was arrested for kidnapping and murder, and has been involved in a protracted bail application since last week.

OUTBREAK: A soldier passes the bodies of men killed last month when the latest fighting in Cape Town's taxi war broke out during a rally at Khayelitsha Stadium.

34 deaths since peace accord

PIETER MALAN
Staff Reporter

THIRTY-FOUR minibus taxi drivers have been shot dead since a 1992 accord to secure peace among rival taxi organisations, the Mitchell's Plain Magistrate's Court has heard.

This was evidence by Stephen Williams, vice-chairman of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), in the bail application of Cata chief Victor Mbulelo Sam.

Mr Sam is accused of kidnapping two people in Guguletu and killing them on the N1 between Paarl and Worcester on November 11.

He is out on bail for two separate murder cases, one of which is being heard in the Supreme Court at present.

Mr Williams said problems causing the present conflict between Cata and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Organisations (Codeta) had begun soon after a 1992 peace accord.

Both Mr Sam and Mr Williams had been members of the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) before

the formation of Codeta. All Cata members had been former members of Webta, Mr Williams said.

He said false charges had been laid against Mr Sam in the past and he had subsequently been acquitted.

Prosecutor Chris Naudé told the court he would call two witnesses today who would tell the court how Mr Sam threatened a press photographer taking pictures of him after Sunday's court appearance.

The bail application continues today.

Ben Julius presided while William King, instructed by William Booth, appeared for Mr Sam. Mark Wakefield assisted by Chris Naudé prosecuted.

● A correction published in The Argus yesterday stated that Mr Sam's bail application on Friday had to be postponed because Mr Booth had failed to attend the hearing.

Mr Booth pointed out that he had been involved in another case in Cape Town. When he arrived for the bail application at 4.30 pm on Friday the case had already been postponed.

Taxi violence: Massive crackdown

Crime Reporter

A MASSIVE police and army crackdown on taxi violence is expected to be launched today.

In the combined operation, policemen and soldiers will be on the lookout for firearms, ammunition and other weapons. Confiscated firearms will be sent for ballistics tests to determine if any have been used in crimes.

Commuters are asked to be patient if the crackdown causes delays.

Peninsula violent crimes unit chief Colonel Leonard Knipe said police would begin the operation today for an indefinite period — with SANDF troops in support.

He said investigations had revealed that most of the firearms linked to recent taxi-related crimes had been licensed and it was police duty to confiscate weapons for ballistics testing.

Police would endeavour to return firearms speedily if they were not linked to any crimes.

Meanwhile eight provocateurs from both the Codeta and Cata taxi organisations, believed to be behind the violence, have been identified in an intelligence report.

The report also calls for an investigation into allegations that police members are running taxis by registering them in spouses' names.

Police also said the groups were believed to be "employing hit squads" drawn from self-defence units and that there was involve-

ment of civic/political groups at a sub-regional leadership level.

The intelligence report, compiled by the National Intelligence Service, police Crime Intelligence agencies of the ANC and PAC lists, among others, the following recommendations:

● Legislation dictating the number of permits to be issued for specific routes and ranks should be promulgated.

● Taxi associations seeking formal recognition should accurately quantify membership.

● Control and ownership of taxi rank facilities and regulation over use and access to them should be vested in a public authority

● High visible policing should be maintained at volatile ranks.

● Taxi group rejects Maharej peace plan — Page 3

ET 21/2/94
(332) 1111

West Cape MPs demand bold moves to end taxi violence

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

NEW laws to crack down on taxi violence, firmly control the industry and provide stiff penalties for offenders have been mooted in the Western Cape parliament.

Nationalist regional Minister for Local Government Pieter Marais said the taxi crisis required a "bold plan".

He suggested a new law to set up a statutory body with wide powers to regulate every aspect of the industry. "It must be given teeth to bring discipline to the industry."

He was speaking in a special debate on the taxi crisis in which all parties expressed deep concern at the spiral of violence, the disruption of township life and the prospect of Cape Town's Olympic bid being jeopardised.

Army assistance for the police in tackling the violence — and a tougher line by the authorities — was backed by all sides.

Mr Marais said it was clear taxi associations were unable to discipline their own members because they were not "legally competent" to do so. The statutory body he had in

mind should include representatives of the community and the taxi industry and be headed by a judge or magistrate.

"We must send a message to central government that we want the powers and the funds to tackle these problems. If we have courage, we can solve this."

He suggested that:

- Drivers be obliged to display identification and their licences;
- There should be compulsory annual roadworthy check-ups;
- Police should establish a "special gun-hunting squad" to

crack down on illegal arms, and that

- Commuters who used uncensored taxis also be fined.

Minister of Roads and Transport Leonard Ramatlakane said preparations for industry-wide elections for a single taxi association were "far advanced", and that this would be vital in curbing an "untenable spiral of violence" that was threatening Cape Town's Olympics bid.

Nationalist Anwar Ismail — who warned that the roads were being turned into "killing fields" — said there were suspicions that disaffected former

members of Umkhonto we Sizwe and self-defence units were being recruited by taxi factions and had a role in the violence.

ANC leader and Minister of Economic Affairs Chris Nissen said legislation was needed to stiffen bail conditions in violence-related cases, and to reduce the number of firearms in the country.

Fellow legislator Rose Sonto launched a tough attack on the police, claiming the perpetrators of the violence were known to the police, but went on killing people "unchecked, unhindered and undisturbed anytime and anywhere."

Guns swoop

ARG 2/12/94 (332)

Seven held after raid on taxi ranks

ROGER FRIEDMAN, Staff Reporter

POLICE, backed up by troops, seized 13 licensed firearms and arrested seven people in a co-ordinated dawn swoop on the Khayelitsha and Nyanga taxi ranks today.

Two illegal 9mm calibre automatic pistols were found — one at each taxi rank, and six people were arrested in connection with possession of unlicensed firearms.

The seventh man held today was arrested in connection with the killing of a Codeta taxi owner in Emms Drive, Nyanga, on Monday.

And a car believed to have been involved in a drive-by shooting last week was towed away by police from the Nyanga rank. There was no sign of its owner.

At 5am hundreds of police and soldiers gathered at the Internal Stability Unit headquarters in Faure for a briefing by violent crimes unit head Leonard Knipe.

Colonel Knipe said police were confiscating licensed guns as well as unlicensed ones as they already had evidence that li-



Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

FRISKED: Police search a taxi driver for firearms at the Nyanga taxi rank during a raid on Khayelitsha and Nyanga taxi drivers today.

censed guns had been used in some of the taxi war-related attacks over the past few weeks.

The licensed guns would be returned in about two weeks.

As the column of armoured vehicles moved into Nyanga, soldiers threw a cordon around the rank.

There were virtually no passengers present for the morning rush hour. Police split into pairs and searched every vehicle in sight.

They got a mixed reception.

Cata driver Alfred Sanzo said it was a

(To page 2)

Police in dawn swoop on taxi guns

(From page 1)

very "good thing". "I hope they keep doing the searching to make everyone safe. We have hope in the police — there is no one else we can trust."

But, fellow Cata driver Sibongile Stofile said "our houses are always attacked and we are even attacked on the road. Anywhere we go we are not safe. Now they take our guns, can they guarantee our safety?"

A third Cata driver said the police swoop was bad for business. "This is very bad, passengers don't want to come here because the police are here." A passenger

said: "We're in a hurry, it's not good. Our bosses are waiting for us."

But a passenger said if police could rid the industry of guns it would be good for the whole community. "They are doing the right thing to take the guns away," she said.

Bystanders said there was no point in the police taking legal guns when there were "huge arms caches" stashed all over KTC and Crossroads.

Semi-automatic and automatic rifles have been used in several taxi attacks but there was no sign of these weapons in Nyanga or Khayelitsha today. (332)

The swoop lasted a couple of hours. Back at Faure, Colonel Knipe said the operation had been successful and promised follow-up action.

He expressed his gratitude to drivers and commuters for their patience.

The seized weapons would be compared to the 600-odd used bullets picked up at the scenes of taxi attacks in the past few weeks.

Altogether, nine weapons were found in Nyanga and five in Khayelitsha by 8am.

The weapons will be checked against the 600 spent cartridges police have found at the scenes of taxi attacks. ARG 2/12/94

Taxi group rejects Maharaj peace plan

Own Correspondent

(332)

CT 2/12/94

JOHANNESBURG. — The Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) has rejected peace plans initiated by Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj as "unacceptable" because they came from white consultants.

OTI convener Mr Boeti Letsoela said yesterday his organisation wanted to talk to Mr Maharaj about problems besetting the taxi industry, and added: "We won't talk to a junior official."

South Third force riding wave of taxi wars

By Alexandra Zavis

LINKS between the on-going taxi violence and the recent resurgence of conflict in Crossroads point to possible "third force" involvement in the townships in the run-up to local government elections, according to a recently published report by the Human Rights Commission (HRC).

Fingers have been pointed at the state. A recently released "secret" police report, which denies any large-scale strategised support for one association over another, admits there might be individuals in the police service who have vested interests.

However, the Goldstone Commission rejected claims that the police had sided with the Western Cape Black Taxi Association (Webta) because of the Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga Taxi Association (Lagunya) alleged ANC support base.

They believe the police's handling of the conflict was less the result of a co-ordinated state strategy than bad training.

"Brainwashed to regard the ANC as 'the enemy' in a brutally fought civil war; nurtured in a culture of ignorant prejudice; ill-equipped, understaffed, badly paid, hated by the communities they were sent to patrol; a complete lack of interest in the causes of the taxi conflict, strong arm tactics and arrogance, may have led to the perception of police taking sides with one taxi association," the HRC says.

The report stresses that the tensions within the taxi industry are real and highlights the difficult working conditions of taxi drivers. These include job insecurity, long hours, bad pay, inadequate facilities, illiteracy, fierce competition for routes, ranks and passengers, and a "black sheep" status in the transport industry.

"Such a life leaves people with a short fuse, and leaves them vulnerable to accepting support from political groupings who might use a taxi association's considerable sway in the community for their own ends," the HRC says.

The on-going taxi conflict is not new, but a revival of the 1986-92 hostilities between Webta and Lagunya.

After months of negotiations, which were frequently derailed by assassinations, attacks and death threats, Webta and Lagunya



CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: Drivers often who are the victims of taxi wars

amalgamated in 1992 to form the Convention of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta). (332)

But on August 25 1994, a group of former Webta members broke away to form the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata).

The move was spearheaded by the Big Eight Gang, a group within the former Webta known and feared by black communities for their violence in the late 1980s.

They claimed Webta grievances had not been addressed from within Codeta.

There was growing tension in the townships in August and September, with reports of Codeta members being intimidated by Cata members and a few violent incidents.

However, all hints of taxi conflict during this time were denied by the police.

The current conflict erupted at a Sanco rally in Khayelitsha on October 16.

A Sanco/Codeta leaflet condemning Cata for its PAC alignment was distributed at the rally.

Cata had in fact been commissioned by the PAC to carry its membership to the rally, but the link between the political party and the taxi association was tenuous, based on Cata's need for the credibility of a community-based organisation and the PAC's membership crisis, according to the HRC.

The PAC publically broke its ties with the association after Cata's Big Eight connections became clear.

"It is an open secret that SDU hitmen were involved in the shootings at the rally," the HRC says.

The first shots were fired at Mr Victor Sam, leader of the Big Eight. Of the 10 deaths, one was a Codeta member, six Cata members and the rest innocent bystanders.

During the negotiations that followed Codeta initially stood by its refusal to recognise Cata's right to exist, claiming it had the community mandate, while Cata represented a rebel faction.

But by late October Codeta had agreed to recognise Cata for the negotiation period; Cata had agreed to cover its identification stickers when using the static upper-deck, and both had agreed in principle to the formation of a new umbrella body.

Talks foundered when Cata gunmen launched an ambush at the Mowbray taxi rank on October 31, killing two and seriously injuring four Codeta drivers.

Two days later another Codeta driver was killed at the Nyanga taxi rank.

Meanwhile, there was a resurgence of violence in Crossroads with shack torchings and killings.

Minister's taxi plans rejected

B1 Day

THEO RAWANA

AS VIOLENCE in the taxi industry continues unabated, the Organised Taxi Industry (OTI) has rejected peace plans initiated by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj as "unacceptable because they came from white consultants".

OTI convenor Boeti Letsoela said yesterday that his organisation, which was concerned about the violence, sought to talk to Maharaj about problems besetting the taxi industry, and "we won't talk to a junior official".

Maharaj's initiative, announced early last month, includes holding elections in April to set up negotiating forums to interact with government.

A national task team, consisting of transport specialists and government leaders, is envisaged to address issues such as taxi wars, collisions, illegal operators, permits and passenger needs.

Letsoela said Maharaj's initiatives were prescriptive and government had not consulted anyone in the taxi industry before announcing them. "We wonder where he gets all these plans, because he did not approach any of the taxi industry people. He got them from white consultants."

Sapa reports police have identified eight provocateurs believed to be behind violence that has marked a commercial power struggle between two Western Cape taxi groups.

The alleged instigators are named in a

13-page document, as well as the township taxi ranks from which they operate and the organisations to which they are affiliated.

And police reported recently that more than 240 incidents of murder, assault and attempted murder linked to the taxi industry had been reported this year in the former Transvaal, Free State and KwaZulu/Natal — 30% up on last year and more than three times the 1991 count.

Police statistics also show that 18 people had been killed and another 54 injured in taxi violence in the Western Cape since October 16.

Road Traffic chief director Hennie van Tonder said yesterday that Maharaj had laid out the initiatives after being approached by the Cabinet and these were not a top-down approach.

Government sought a "truly representative" structure for the industry, and the plan, which was in draft form, had received a good reception from the ministers in the provinces.

A panel of advisers would travel around the country finding out what problems were faced by each group and seeking input from these, he said.

Clarity should be achieved by January and these representative structures should be in place by the middle of next year, said Van Tonder.

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(322)

Phoenix in full flight (332)

CT 2/12/94

Aviation Editor

THE new Phoenix Airline, offering a cut-price no-frills service, flew into Cape Town for the first time yesterday.

It is currently flying between Cape Town and Johannesburg four times a day. It is also flying between Johannesburg and Durban.

Its public relations officer, Stephanie de Witt, said that planes on the Johannesburg to Cape Town route were 65% full yesterday but bookings for later in the month were heavier.

"I think people were hesitant to book until they actually saw we were in the air."

She said flights from Johannesburg to Cape Town were almost fully booked from December 10 but there were more seats available in the other direction. "Most of the passengers we are carrying now are Vaalies going to the Cape on holiday."

"Traffic to Durban is less heavy. Nobody goes on holiday to Durban from the Transvaal any more."

"We are expecting to get more business passengers when people have seen the service we offer."

International terminal

Phoenix has offices in the international terminal at D F Malan Airport, because there is no room in the domestic terminal until alterations have been completed.

Airport manager Hennie Taljaard said it was necessary to be flexible in making arrangements to accommodate the new airline. "We are handling it through the international terminal. Its flights leave at times which will not inconvenience the international airlines."

Phoenix's Cape Town manager, Hugo Smit, said he and his staff had been "very busy" yesterday and he expected the pressure to increase.

Cata taxi leader Sam refused bail

Staff Reporter

ALLEGED taxi warlord Mr Victor Sam has been refused bail, "in the interest of the public", by the Mitchells Plain Magistrate's Court.

In refusing the controversial Cata taxi leader bail on Saturday, magistrate Mr Ben Julius said the community was "tired of war in the taxi industry and innocent passengers had to pay with their lives".

He said he was not willing to release Mr Sam on bail for a third time for various reasons. This included the fact that the state appeared to have a strong case against him and that the precedent of not prejudicing justice had not been fulfilled.

ET 5/12/94
Before his latest arrest at the Supreme Court during a lunch adjournment last week, Mr Sam was out on bail on two separate counts of murder. (332)

Blitz on taxi guns to continue, police warn

Crime Reporter

(332)

POLICE warned yesterday that the blitz on guns for ballistic tests would continue until taxi-related violence in the Peninsula comes to an end.

The warning follows a dawn crime swoop on taxi ranks on Friday in which six people were arrested for possession of unlicensed firearms and 15 firearms — two unlicensed — were confiscated.

Detectives impounded a vehicle to check whether it was used in drive-by shootings, police spokesman Colonel Raymond Dowd said. About 200 police took part in the swoop, headed by Violent Crimes Unit chief Colonel Leonard Knipe.

CT 5/12/94

Legislation to control taxis

(332)
JOHANNESBURG —

Authorities will clamp down on the minibus taxi industry by legislating that owners will be liable for the safety of passengers and asking the SA National Defence Force to assist in policing taxi ranks and routes. **CT 7/12/94**

PWV Public Safety and Security Minister Mrs Jessie Duarte said she would hold no further talks until the protection of passengers was guaranteed.

Police ministers from the PWV, Eastern and Northern Transvaal and North-West have been discussing taxi violence with the industry.

All long-distance taxi organisations that signed a peace agreement in Pietersburg in the Northern Transvaal had violated all its clauses, she said. — Sapa

Taxi group backs plan

BD 8/12/94
BONILE NGONYAZA

THE SA Long Distance Taxi Association has thrown its weight behind PWV safety and security minister Jessie Duarte's proposals to quell violence.

Saidta general secretary Boeti Letsoela said yesterday he supported any peace measures. "Some sort of mechanism has got to be put in place to stop the senseless killings."

Letsoela said he understood frustration with violence. "I have criticised the government for not doing enough to put an end to the taxi feud." (332)

However, he said a different set of regulations and responsibilities should apply to taxis as they do not have access to the same level of subsidies received by the bus sector.

Duarte earlier said the defence force would be asked to secure national taxi routes and ranks to combat violence between the taxi associations.

She said the PWV government was investigating legislation which would make taxi owners liable for the safety of commuters and drivers.

Duarte said it would be costly to owners and might mean they would have to take out substantial insurance cover.

Restraining order on Codeta members

CT 9/12/94
Supreme Court Reporters

FOUR members of the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations were restrained from assaulting members of a rival taxi organisation or interfering with their access to the station deck terminus.

Mr Justice J G Foxcroft yesterday made an interim interdict granted against Mr Kidwell Magwayi, Mr James Mafuya, Mr Morris Nomala and Mr Eric Xekethwana on October 27, final. (332)

In the order the men may not assault members of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), interfere with their rights to conduct their legitimate taxi business or in any manner initiate, encourage or entice any person to do so.

The application against Codeta as a body was withdrawn. Each party agreed to pay its own costs.

Ms Liesl Fichardt, instructed by Ms D Sogrett, appeared for Codeta.

ARG 14112194

Golden Arrow fares up 10%

Staff Reporter

GOLDEN Arrow bus fares go up by 10 percent from December 26.

In June pensioners and pupils' fares rose by five percent. The last major fare increase was last December when tickets rose by 15 percent.

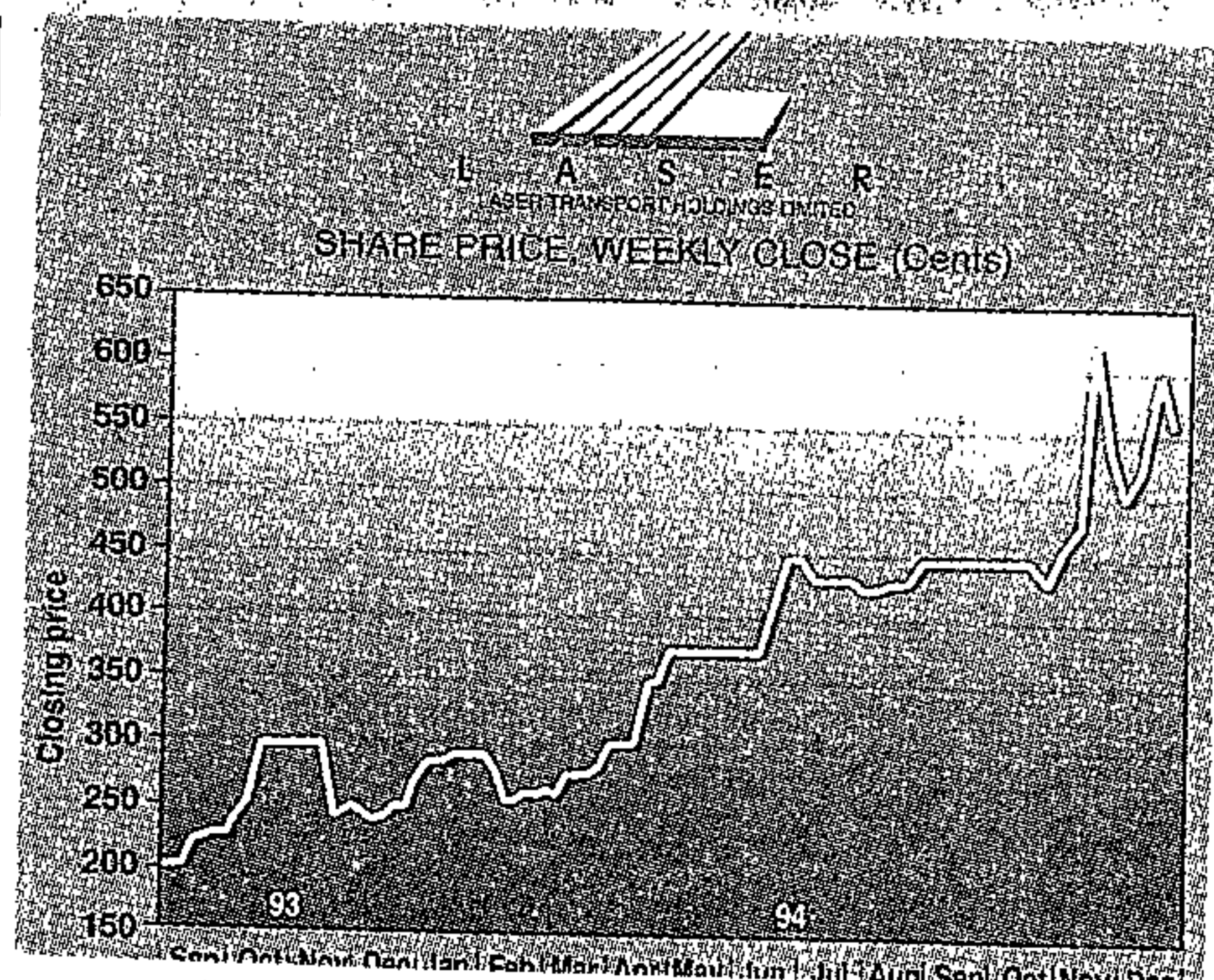
Golden Arrow spokeswoman Jeanne Welsh said the latest increase was across the board.

The fare increases had been made nec-

essary because of wage increases, inflation and the violence over the past few months which had cost the company thousands of rands in damage repair and lost revenue.

On September 20 last year a Golden Arrow driver was killed, two days later an inspector died, and on February 10 this year a security guard was killed.

All 10-ride clipcards and monthly clipcards bought before December 26 will still be valid.



Laser notches up 83% earnings rise

■ BY JOHN SPIRA

Cape-based transport services group Laser Holdings has reported a huge improvement in earnings for the year to September.

Taxed profit soared by 83 percent to R7 million on turnover which rose 71 percent to R204 million.

Earnings advanced by 82 percent to 71c a share.

However, the directors have decided against declaring a dividend "in order to strengthen the balance sheet".

That the improvement in earnings a share matches the gain made at the taxed-profit level comes as something of a surprise, since Laser has been actively pursuing acquisitions.

Clearly, generic growth has been remarkable.

"Laser generated 43 percent of the increase in turnover before the incorporation of the acquisitions," says chief executive Denis Kaye.

A 142 percent increase in operating profit to R16,3 million easily absorbed the year's heavier interest bill of R11 million, which arose from the funding of acquisitions, including operating properties.

Laser now owns most of the properties from which it trades.

"Based on our view that rental — which was a large portion of our overhead costs — will escalate dramatically in

the next few years, we deemed it prudent to acquire as many of our properties as possible with the effect of substituting rent with interest," explains managing director Tony Cotterell.

Fixed assets rocketed by 276 percent to R188 million during the year.

Laser's R35 million rights issue (which had the immediate effect of cutting net current liabilities from R65 million to R30 million) will substantially reduce gearing and position the group to take further advantage of growth opportunities.

The acquisitions of Mainline Carriers (whose turnover was included for five months of the financial year) and Dolphins Furniture Removals and Storage (four months) have broadened Laser's activities to comprise furniture removals, freight transport, tankers, heavy haulage, refrigerated goods, logistics and distribution.

The absence of dividends (the last payment was effected in 1990-91) has not deterred investors, who have pushed up the share price to nearly double the level it stood at the beginning of the year.

The price-earnings multiple on the higher earnings figure is 7,9 — well under the transportation sector's 23,2 average, suggesting scope for additional appreciation.