

TRANSPORT, PRIVATE - GENERAL

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JANUARY — JULY

Cancer of taxi wars

(332) Sowetan 4/2/96

TAXI WARS have become a pernicious cancer in the lives of many South Africans, and several attempts at prescribing a cure have so far proved to be ineffective medicine.

The gravest danger is that amid all the accusations by competing taxi associations, sight will be lost of the fact that people – ordinary and innocent people – are losing their lives.

Statistics released recently by the Human Rights Committee (HRC) show that 199 people (taxi operators and commuters) were massacred in more than 320 violent incidents during 1995.

This is an increase on the previous year's taxi violence-related killings of about 171. Another 280 people were injured by gunmen last year.

Most of the incidents took place in Gauteng (81 deaths), followed by Eastern Cape (40 deaths), KwaZulu-Natal (37) and Northern Province (20).

The situation is summed up best by National Taxi Task Team (NTTT) chairman Mr Dipak Patel: "The feuding taxi groups must realise that the majority of those killed and wounded in the taxi wars are commuters and other innocent people.

"They are chasing their own clients and business away. Continued acts of violence can cause irreparable damage to the taxi industry. It is obvious the killers have no tolerance for each other or any respect for the public's safety."

The task team was appointed last March by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to investigate all problems relating to the industry and to recommend what steps to take.

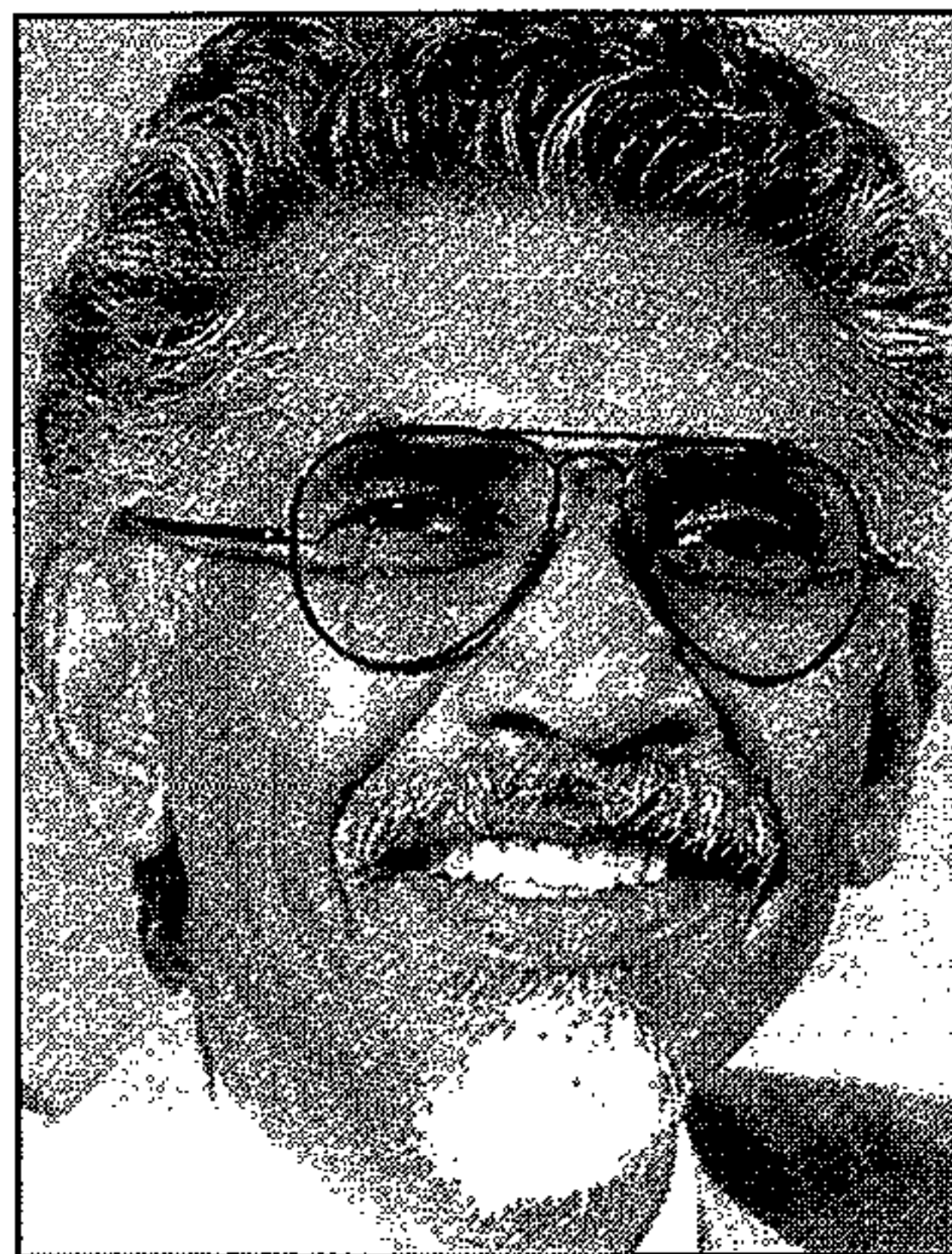
As the HRC statistics for last year show, the situation is serious:

- Gauteng: 81 people were killed and 91 injured in 76 incidents;
- KwaZulu-Natal: 37 were killed and 24 injured in 41 incidents;
- Mpumalanga: two were killed and nine injured in three incidents;
- Western Cape: two were killed and 20 injured in 34 incidents;
- Eastern Cape: 40 were killed and 80 injured in 75 incidents;
- Northern Province: 20 were killed and 14 injured in 30 incidents;
- North West: three were killed and 14 injured in seven incidents;
- Northern Cape: no deaths and two injured in one incident; and
- Free State: no violent incidents were recorded.

HRC national director Mr Patrick Kelly says in most of these incidents, sophisticated weapons such as AK-47 rifles were used in attacks.

Ordinary people are losing their lives in South Africa's vicious taxi wars. Allegations by rival taxi associations are ignoring this salient fact. Solutions are uncertain.

Joshua Raboroko explains why...



Transport Minister Mac Maharaj ... violence is the most serious manifestation of problems in the taxi industry.

Kelly added that, from December 6 to 12, there were four deaths and five injuries in Gauteng alone.

Three people were killed and two injured in an attack on a SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) taxi rank in Wolmarans Street in Johannesburg.

Another man was killed and three people injured in a shooting incident at the Quartz Street taxi rank in Johannesburg. Three men were subsequently arrested.

The Lethlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) and Saldta were apparently involved in these shooting incidents.

In Mpumalanga, nobody was injured during a shootout in December between two rival groups at a shopping centre in Bushbuckridge.

The dispute allegedly arose when taxi organisations from Pretoria and Burgersfort allegedly tried to force local operators to join Saldta.

In Northern Province, three taxi drivers were recently injured and several minibuses damaged when gunmen drove past the Erasmus taxi rank in Garankuwa and fired at commuters.

In Western Cape, a Mowbray Taxi Association member was assaulted in Mowbray, allegedly by Wynberg Taxi Association members in an dispute between the two parties.

Ironically, these incidents took place in an industry which provides more than 2,2 million people with a means of transport.

They are all trapped between the necessity of getting to work and the fear of not knowing whether they will get back home safely.

The woes of the minibus taxi industry are well-known: the market is overtraded, facilities are insufficient and many owners are not licensed.

The result is there is no such thing as normal competition; ranks have been turned into battlefields. Local authorities and security forces are often called in to end the violence.

Some taxi ranks have been closed and a security force presence established, but this is locking the stable after the horse has bolted.

Taxi ranks in the centre of Johannesburg – the Noord, King George and Quartz street ranks – have become cause for great concern.

The conflict between Saldta and the LTO revolves around ranks and routes to the "Great North". As a result of their conflict, they have signed a peace treaty.

Police and transport officials have come up with recommendations which, if introduced this year, may prevent the conflict getting worse," said a concern taxi operator.

The NTTT appointed by Maharaj represented the taxi industry, all three levels of government and specialist advisors.

Maharaj said the recommendations presented to him by the task team in December tried to provide solutions to the industry, which has been allowed to grow unchecked and is therefore in a state of economic decline.

He said: "Violence in the minibus industry is the most serious manifestation of problems plaguing the trade."

Maharaj will table a White Paper on transport policy in Parliament in February.

25% of SA road deaths 'involved minibuses' (332)

MINIBUS taxis are responsible for 25% of the deaths recorded on South African roads since the start of the holiday season, traffic authorities claimed yesterday.

The National Traffic Information Centre (NTIC) in Johannesburg said that of the 770 deaths recorded since November 30, 191 deaths had occurred in collisions involving minibus taxis.

The NTIC cited driver fatigue, high speeds, lack of concentration, unsafe overtaking and vehicle defects, particularly in tyres, as being responsible for most fatal minibus accidents.

● Mr Steven Williams, president of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), disputed the NTIC claims about lack of sleep, speeding and overcrowding

ET 4/1/96
and said Cata inspected every vehicle which left the townships on long journeys and policed its members by setting up their own roadblocks.

He said the NTIC figure could be correct, but not for the reasons given.

He said a driver could easily lose control of his vehicle when an obstacle such as a goat crossed the road and evasive action was needed. This was because most taxis had luggage trailers and travelled at high speeds.

● Transfusion services would be in urgent need of blood during the following few weeks as regular donors were still on holiday, the South African Blood Transfusion Service said yesterday. — Staff Reporter, Sapa

Saturday Star
January 6 1996

Minibus taxi death toll is 2

By KURT SWART

Accidents involving minibus taxis accounted for about a quarter, or more than 200, of the 800 holiday roads deaths this year.

And most of these could have been prevented, says the National Traffic Information Centre (NTIC).

The main causes of the fatal accidents were incompetent driving by minibus taxi drivers, alcohol-related accidents, failure to wear safety belts and hit-and-run incidents.

The centre reported that by 11am yesterday there had been 839 fatalities in 648 collisions

since November 30.

Of the fatalities, 180 were in KwaZulu Natal, 168 in Gauteng, 106 in the Free State, 104 in the Eastern Cape, 96 in the Western Cape, 65 in Mpumalanga, 61 in North West, 37 in Northern Province and 22 in the Northern Cape.

Minibus taxis were responsible for about 25% of the deaths, according to Bjorn van Oort of the NTIC.

"Driver fatigue, speed too high for circumstances, lack of concentration, collisions with pedestrians, unsafe overtaking and vehicle defects - especially unsuitable tyres - were responsible for most fatal minibus taxi

collisions.

"In terms of the kilometres travelled and the number of passengers transported, the taxis represent a large percentage of the total number of vehicles on our roads. One collision involving a minibus taxi would necessarily claim more lives than most other types of vehicles."

Van Oort said most of these collisions could have been prevented and called on taxi organisations, drivers and their passengers to join forces to promote safety on the roads.

A Transkei bus overturned and caught alight after a collision between Aberdeen and Beaufort West on Thursday. Six

people were killed and 21 seriously injured.

The NTIC's Marleen Leita said traffic safety authorities were concerned at the many people thrown from vehicles and killed. "It is clear that road users still don't realise that their chances of survival in a collision are doubled if they are buckled up. Chances of serious injuries are also reduced considerably.

"The cost of the fatal collisions only this holiday period amounted to over R145-million in terms of loss of productivity, damage, medical expenses, and administrative, legal and other costs.

"It would therefore make

Licence a breeze if you have cash

By TEFO MOTHIBELI

Acquiring a driver's licence in South Africa today is easy and there is no need for tedious reading and diligent practising, or even driving lessons.

The *Saturday Star* found out this week that, in reality, all you need to be a "legally qualified" driver is money. With good contacts, acquiring a licence is like buying any other commodity sold over the counter: you simply give money and get what you want.

This scenario, which has been with us for some time now, is continuing despite undertakings by the Government that it

would take tough measures to stop the carnage on our roads.

When we visited a driving school operating in Northern Province this week, we were told that people still going about the usual, legal way of acquiring their licences were wasting their time.

On arrival at the offices of this driving school I was met by a Sepedi-speaking woman who gave me a two-minute lecture on how I could save myself a lot of unnecessary headaches and acquire a licence in a day, given that I have my code 10 learner driver's licence.

She asked me if I could drive, to which I replied that I could do

very well with just a little practice.

"Come on. Seriously speaking, do you want to tell me that you can be beaten by all those women who drive much bigger trucks than the one used for testing those gunning for code 10?" I was asked.

To salvage my pride, I nodded and said I believed I could also drive if those women could do it.

The next thing was money. I was asked if I had the amount needed as she could book a test for me for Monday. For just R890, I was guaranteed that I could go to Pietersburg tomorrow and return on Monday with a code 10 licence in my pocket.

5 out of every 100 victims

(332)

Star 6/1/96

financial sense for the country if all vehicle occupants buckled up," said Leita.

The use of rear seatbelts and child restraints, where fitted in a vehicle, became compulsory on January 1.

"We can no longer afford the overwhelming emotional and financial price we have to pay for injuries, especially in the face of more crucial issues such as housing, medical services and employment."

KwaZulu Natal traffic police said more than 2 000 people were prosecuted in the province last month for not wearing seat-belts.

The NTIC said traffic officers

at a checkpoint in the province were outraged at the number of passengers travelling with children on their laps.

"This is extremely dangerous for the child, as, in the event of the vehicle having to stop suddenly or even a minor collision, the child can easily be flung head first onto the dashboard or through the windscreen."

The NTIC has also warned motorists who have car trouble to make every effort to get their vehicles as far off the road as possible, open the bonnet, and use hazard lights to warn oncoming traffic.

Two motorists were killed on Tuesday while changing tyres.

Alcohol-related collisions doubled from 10 to 20 % over the New Year weekend.

The frequency of all collisions slowed when rainfall levels subsided in KwaZulu Natal.

"Many motorists were travelling recklessly and were not slowing down during the wet weather," said Leita.

Another major cause of death on the roads was hit-and-run offenders.

Christa van der Walt of the NTIC said hit-and-run fatalities represented 23% of all reported pedestrian deaths since November 30.

Hit-and-run offenders can face a maximum fine of R60 000

and/or three years' jail for damage to property or animals.

Death or serious injury caused could result in a maximum fine of R180 000 and/or nine years' jail.

More accidents are likely when the flow of holidaymakers from the coast increases by tomorrow, ahead of the opening of schools next week.

The KwaZulu Natal inspectorate said traffic officers would be fully deployed along all major routes.

However, Gauteng traffic authorities expect the increase to be slight as holidaymakers appear to have staggered their return home this season.

Spanking new k

MXOLISI MGXASHE

Staff Reporter

NYANGA residents may not be too happy about the slow pace of the reconstruction and development programme, but a change that has improved their surroundings is the spanking new R7 million taxi and bus rank designed for use by more than 50 000 passengers a day.

The terminal, built by the Cape Metropolitan Council, has improved operations by scores of taxis ferrying commuters to more than 30 destinations in the Peninsula, as well as areas like the Eastern Cape where

■ The new Nyanga bus and taxi rank has been welcomed by commuters.

thousands of Cape Town residents spend their holidays.

The rank is divided into two — one for taxis and the other for Golden Arrow buses.

It used to be difficult for taxi operators and commuters to operate in a congested site where dirt, litter and smoke from meat vendors had become a way of life.

But all that is past and the site is run by a team of no-nonsense operators from rival taxi associations, Codeta and Cata, under the supervision of the Ikapa Council.

There are offices used by the management of the rank for day-to-day business and for holding meetings to discuss problems and plans.

The only major drawback is the lack of the type of shopping complex one finds in other areas like Bellville, which would improve the lives of many Nyanga residents who now depend on vendors.

Some shops that have operated from the terminal since the late 1950s are still there and the dilapidated condition of the buildings contrasts mark-

edly with the modern terminal.

It would seem the major supermarket chains have no plans for now to put up the shopping centre most Nyanga residents would love to have at their doorstep.

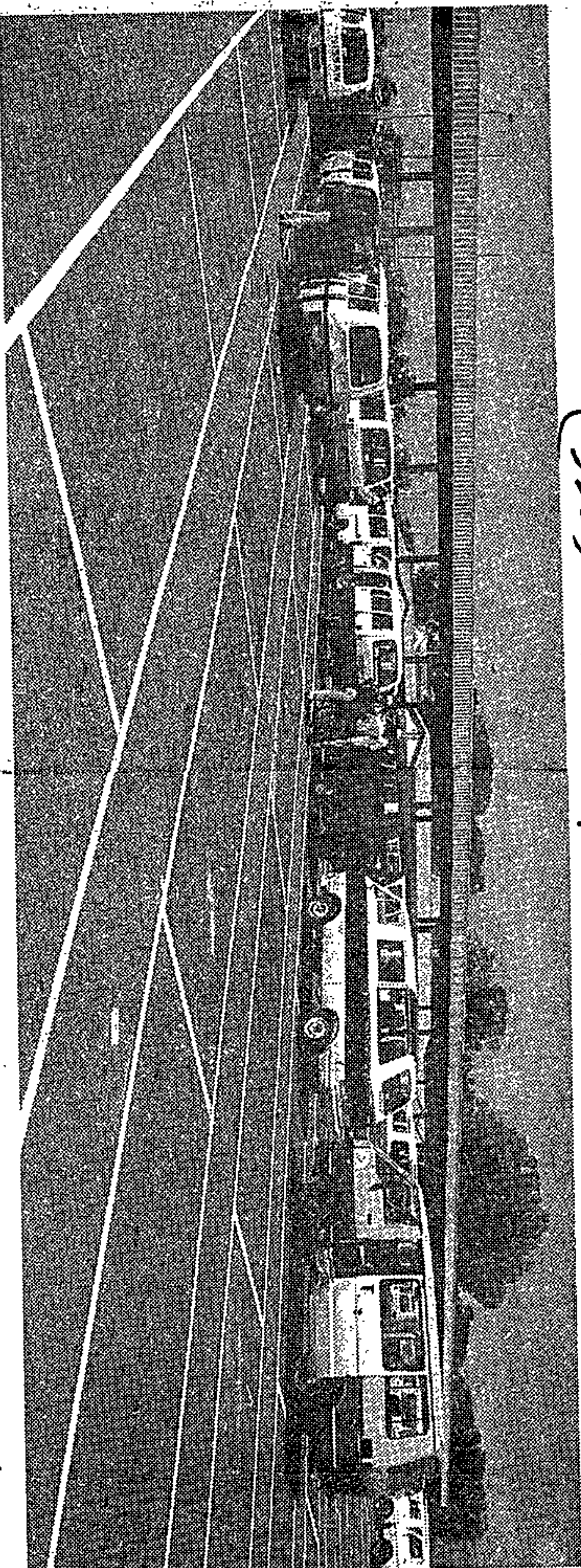
Ikapa town engineer Francois van Niekerk said the plan was confined to the improvement of the terminal "at this point".

Mr Van Niekerk said he was not aware of any plans to build a shopping complex.

Not all the people at the rank are commuters — many Nyanga residents are using the facility as a convenient place to relax, hang out and shelter from the sun.

us 'n taxi rank

(332) AR4 6/1/96



Picture: BRENTON GEACH, Staff Photographer.

□ **NEW LOOK:** The new Nyanga taxi and bus rank built by the Cape Metropolitan Council for R7 million.

4/11/96

Government to consider taxi task proposals

CT (PR) 10/11/96 (332)

By ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — The interim recommendations of the national taxi task team about restructuring the minibus taxi industry and returning it to profitability would be considered by a government committee of national and provincial transport ministers and MECs on Friday, a spokesman for Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said yesterday.

The spokesman said the recommendations would be implemented as soon as they had been adopted by the committee.

The task team had also presented a short-term survival pack-

age to the government to put the industry on a sustainable footing.

The package included alternative financial support mechanisms, with the main emphasis on input costs.

Among the key recommendations made in the team's report, handed to Maharaj last month, were that the industry should be structured into formal business units, or co-operatives, which would facilitate training and channel economic assistance to the industry.

In terms of the recommendation, taxi owners would continue to operate as individuals but, as voluntary members of a co-operative,

they would enjoy a range of benefits enabling them to reduce costs and increase their income.

Maharaj said the report would make a useful input to the government's draft White Paper on public transport, which was due for release early this year.

Assistance

The team's report proposed that the co-operatives provide the taxi operators with access to economic assistance including:

□ A financial guarantee fund to enable financial institutions to reduce the extraordinarily high

interest rate on taxis — usually 12 percent above prime;

□ Insurance guarantees to reduce the risk which banks associated with taxis, thus lowering their high premiums of up to R30 000 a year;

□ Capacity building to equip and empower the industry to be professional and develop its own institutions;

□ Direct purchase of vehicles from manufacturers to bring down prices; and

□ Capital grants for vehicle purchases to enable each co-operative to buy vehicles at auctions on behalf of its members.

By JON BEVERLEY

Tourists flocking to Durban

CT (NR) 5/1/96

Durban — The hospitality scene in Durban saw a radical change in the composition of its visitors last year, Eggy Naidu, the chairman of the Beachfront Business Committee, said yesterday.

In previous years, black tourists used to comprise about 10 to 20 percent of tourists to the area, however, they now comprised 60 percent.

The beachfront council had put proposals before the City Council dealing with the change in the composition of visitors.

If numbers increased at the same rate there would be a shortage of accommodation.

The old family entertainment venues had been allowed to die which was serious, he said. People needed somewhere to go as an alternative to the beach when it was raining.

Figures

Naidu said it was too early for trading figures but hotels, holiday flats, timeshare resorts and private accommodation were fully booked over Christmas and New Year.

Fast food outlets had reported a very good season, he said.

The accommodation scene in Durban had changed over the past few years with hotels being

downgraded and repackaged while other hotels had been changed into timeshare resorts.

Most noticeable was the change of the five-star Maharani and Malibu hotels into the Holiday Inn Garden Court format and the change of the Elangeni and Beverly Hills hotels into liaisons with international groups.

A spokesman for the Amanzimtoti Publicity Association said many resorts in the area had been fully booked over the Christmas season.

The visitor composition appeared to have swung towards businessmen and there had been a change in the racial mix of visitors from previous years, he said.

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Government adopts taxi principles

(332) CT(BR) 16/1/96

By ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — The government has adopted three strategic principles with regard to the minibus taxi industry, says Dipak Patel, the chairman of the National Taxi Task Team.

He says strategies and approaches recommended by the team and adopted by the government are the regulation and control of the taxi industry, the restructuring of the industry and economic assistance for the industry underpinned by a short-term financial

assistance programme.

These principles were adopted by the Committee of National and Provincial Transport Ministers, which met on Friday.

Restructuring

The committee met to consider the team's interim recommendations about the restructuring of the minibus taxi industry and returning it to profitability.

Patel said the progress made so far showed that the process was not just a "talk shop".

He said what now lay ahead was a final process of consultation with the industry with a view to obtaining consensus on the mechanisms to implement the recommendations accepted by the government and the time frame for implementation.

Patel said the government would have to go through a process of discussions and capacity building in all tiers of government to ensure that once an implementation programme had been developed, the government was able to manage it.

Taxi gunfight Army called in

(332) ARG 17

JOHAN SCHRONEN, Crime Reporter

ARGUS 7/1/96

THE army was called in and police were using bullet-proof vehicles after taxi violence erupted again in a bloody gun battle in Nyanga, before spreading to other parts of the Cape Flats, including Lansdowne and Philippi.

Two people have already died in the renewed violence, and at least three minibus taxi passengers have been wounded.

Violence broke out first in Nyanga about 8 am today when wild shooting at passing taxis began on the corner of Eiselen and Lansdowne roads. Three taxis came under fire.

Police found several spent cartridges strewn around a blood-smeared minibus. The sides of the bus were peppered with bullet holes and windows were broken.

Police began desperately trying to trace the wounded people to hospitals. Later, they found a wounded man in Lansdowne, a woman in Nyanga who had been shot in the buttocks, and another wounded victim in Philippi.

The hostilities spread from Nyanga to Manenberg where the first person died — a man died in his taxi in Duinefontein Road when at least two taxis came under fire. The second body was found in Vanguard Drive where it appeared the victim had been thrown out of a taxi.

Meanwhile, in a follow-up operation, a police patrol arrested three suspects and confiscated three handguns.

A police helicopter took off to back up ground patrols setting up roadblocks along the routes to Nyanga and Kuwait taxi ranks. Large groups of Cata and Co-deta members congregated in groups and were locked in discussions.

Police authorities were trying to communicate with taxi leaders in an attempt to mediate in the dispute.

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Taxi trailer aims to help industry in off-peak periods

332

FROM SABA

CT (BR) 17/1/96
Pretoria — A trailer which will enable taxi operators to maximise the use of their vehicles during off-peak commuting periods was launched in Pretoria yesterday.

The first Taxi Trailer, designed to enable taxi operators to use their vehicles profitably for small deliveries of bricks — up to 500 at a time — primarily for home improvement projects, was developed by a leading building materials supplier.

The 1,5-ton-capacity trailer can also be used for other loads in the building sector and in the distribution of consumer goods to spaza shops and shebeens.

Rod Taylor, the managing director of Brick 'n Tile, said the potential of taxis had not been fully explored. He said his company hoped to gain taxi industry support for a nationwide franchise operation which would give taxi owners the opportunity for a better return on their investment.

Useful

"Many of South Africa's 120 000 mini-bus taxis are under-used between ... rush hours. Our plan will take up some of the slack so that taxis become more useful economically," Taylor said.

Present at the first public demonstration, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said: "I see this as the beginning of a process, not only of reconstructing the taxi industry and making it profitable, but one whereby big business ensures that small business takes its rightful place in the economy."

Taxi war: thousands

6 dead, stranded

ARG 18/1/96

(332)

**LINDSAY BARNES,
DENNIS CAVERNELIS
and JOHAN SCHRÖNEN**
Staff Reporters

THOUSANDS of commuters were stranded today in the wake of horrific taxi violence that claimed the lives of six people.

Ten people were injured in yesterday's havoc, including a woman who may now be a paraplegic.

The bloody spree erupted in Nyanga at 8am yesterday with gunmen shooting wildly at passing taxis, injuring bystanders, and it spread to Lansdowne and Philippi on the Cape Flats.

Three suspects were arrested.

Police reported today that the situation was peaceful but patrols were intensified in Cape Town where a large contingent of taxi-drivers was expected to congregate on the station parking deck before a planned "peaceful" march.

This morning many people who normally travel the routes affected by the violence were too afraid to catch taxis.

Long queues formed instead for buses and trains at Khayelitsha, Guguletu and Nyanga.

At the NY1 Guguletu terminal people stood on the streets in the hope that a taxi would come along, but none ran, Argus photographer Obed Zilwa reported.

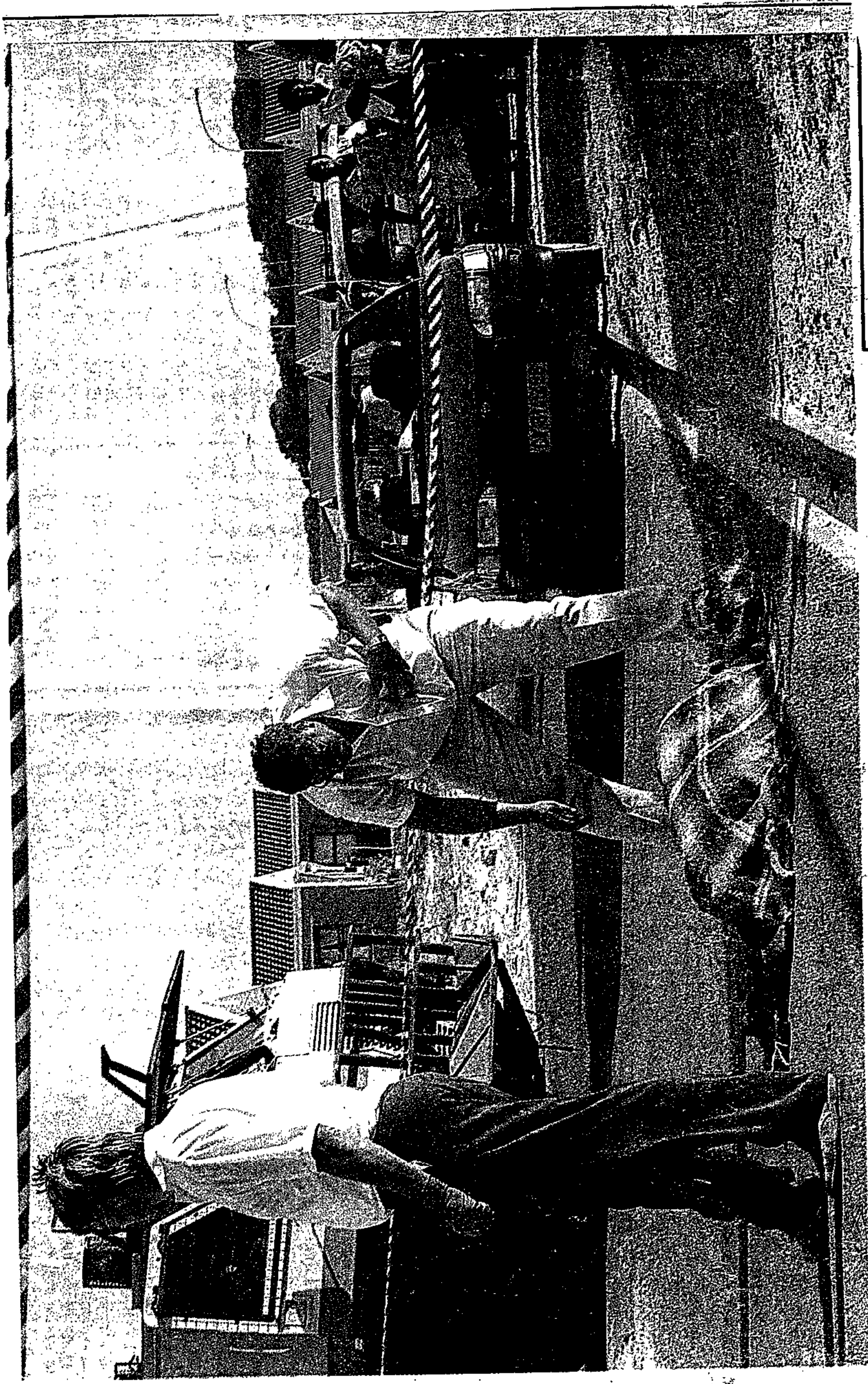
They had no choice but to hitch-hike or walk five kilometres to Lansdowne Road where they had more chance of finding transport.

In Nyanga the situation appeared more in control with numerous buses and Catta taxis operating. Fewer people waited.

Late yesterday four people were killed when violence flared in Khayelitsha.

Police said said brothers S Buleni and N Buleni, fatally wounded, were taken to Khayelitsha police station about 4.30pm.

Welcome Ledopha, 18, of Khayelitsha, was seen beside his car with a bul-



ARG
18/1/96
(332)

let wound in his neck at 5:40pm near the Good Hope College of Education.

Phami Mataname, 18, was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital after being shot in the neck in Khayelitsha.

The body of an unidentified man was found with gunshot wounds to his head and chest at the corner of Spine Road and Zola Budd Drive in Khayelitsha about 6pm.

In one of the incidents earlier yesterday a taxi-driver was killed and two of his passengers injured when their taxi was fired on in Modderdam Road, Bishop Lavis.

Police are searching for the occupants of a blue-and-white Hi-Ace minibus, registration number CA314 364, who they believe may be able to help them in their investigation.

A spokesman warned that the occupants of the minibus were considered armed and dangerous and if the vehicle was spotted, or if anyone had any infor-

TAXI VICTIM: Police inspect the body of Welcome Ledopha, 18, found near his neck, at Ilitha Park, Khayelitsha.

mation about it, they should contact Crime Stop at 0800 11 12 13, or the emergency police number 1 0111.

● Lichelle Barry, 23, injured in the taxi shootout in Modderdam Road yesterday, will have an operation today.

She works as a private tutor at the University of the Western Cape and yesterday went to the Cape Technikon, where she applied for, and was offered, a post as an English lecturer.

In the taxi on her way home she was shot twice.

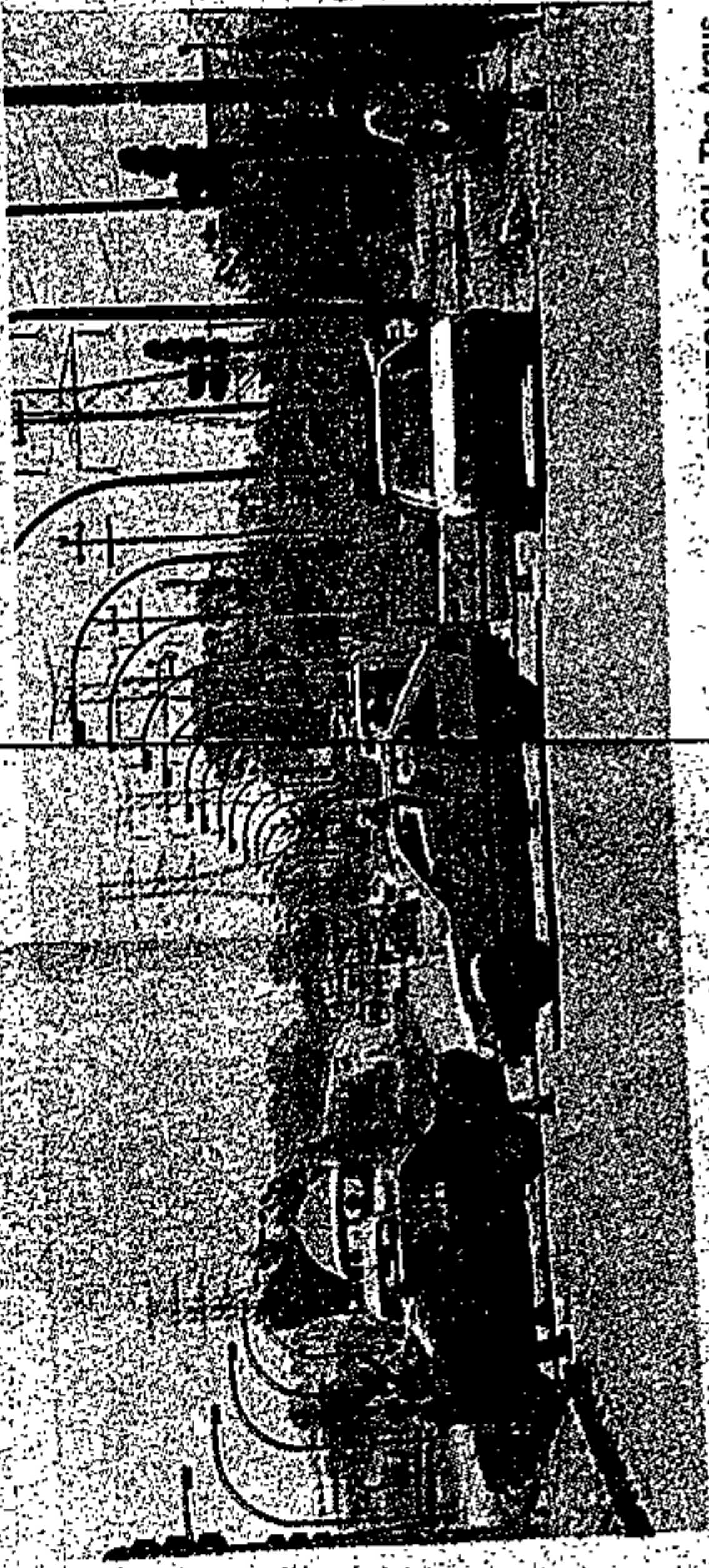
Her father Clive, the Eastern Cape horseracing correspondent for The Argus, said his daughter was paralysed from her waist.

"The doctors do not yet know whether the paralysis is permanent," he said.

● See page 8.

car with a gunshot wound to his

Picture: OBED ZILWA, The Argus.



Picture: BRENTON GEACH, The Argus.

ROADBLOCK: Traffic police seal off Hsdowne Road between Phillippi and Nyanga, where several taxis came under fire.

ARG

18/1/96

(332)

Bus operators may ask for increased subsidies

332
319
BD 18/1/96
Theo Rawana

GOVERNMENT had agreed to soften the impact of its November 1995 decision not to increase bus subsidies for 1995/96 by awarding raises for some bus companies on submission of business plans, the SA Bus Operators' Association said yesterday.

The association said Transport Minister Mac Maharaj had made it clear last week that a shortage of funds made it impossible for his department to shift from its decision not to increase bus commuter subsidies for 1995/96.

Executive director Jackie Walters said the decision would cost the industry millions of rands because companies had been operating "with the legitimate expectation" of a subsidy increase. The organisation was informed too late that the subsidy would not be increased from the current R700m.

However Walters said Maharaj had agreed at a meeting with a delegation of association, union

and commuter organisation representatives that bus companies could approach the department individually with a business plan "as to how the company intends dealing with the lack of subsidy adjustment for 1995/96, and what actions it is likely to undertake to overcome the lack of funds".

"The minister did, however, undertake to grant an increase in subsidies in 1996/97 and to provide the industry with information on the subsidy amount by mid-February, enabling the bus companies to plan in advance.

"In cases where severe hardship is experienced by bus companies, thereby also affecting employees and commuters, special attention will be paid to measures to soften the financial impact for the companies in question," Walters said.

He said: "Any further assistance will, however, only be considered from March onwards, based on criteria still to be determined."

Five die in taxi dispute over 'illegal' rank

WILLEM STEENKAMP

BARELY two days after minibus taxi operators signed an agreement to "co-operate and work together for a common good", taxi violence flared yesterday morning, eventually claiming the lives of at least five people.

Sources said last night that the violence stemmed from a dispute over the recent establishment of an "illegal" second taxi rank in Wynberg.

The antagonists are the taxi association Codeta and an alliance of its rivals, Cata and Lingcross, a Codeta breakaway faction.

Alliance members are said to have been arming themselves for a war.

According to the police, at least five people were killed and 11 wounded in violence on the Cape Flats yesterday.

A Rondebosch man, Mr Bill Gordon, was shot on his way to work in a taxi at the intersection of Manenberg and Kipfontein roads about 8.40am.

The fatal shots were fired from a taxi coming the other way.

An unidentified taxi driver was shot dead and two of his passengers were wounded in Modderdam Road, Bishop Lavis, about the same time.

About 4.30pm Mr S Buleni and Mr M Buleni drove their taxi to the Khayelitsha police station.

The brothers, who had been shot in the head and neck respectively, died at the police station before help could arrive.

At 5.40pm, driver Mr Welcome Ledopha, 18, was found dead next to his taxi in Elitha Park, Khayelitsha. He had been shot, execution-style, in the neck.

Another taxi driver, Mr Thami Matamane, 18, of Nyanga, was similarly shot. He was found lying next to his taxi in Walter Sisulu Drive,

Khayelitsha, about 2.30pm.

The police reacted immediately to the fighting yesterday morning, scrambling helicopters and setting up roadblocks at various points on the Cape Flats. Ten licensed firearms and two illegal handguns, as well as 15 taxis, were confiscated.

Two men were arrested for allegedly possessing the illegal weapons. Some 30 spent 9mm rounds and five .38 Special rounds were recovered at various places in Lansdowne Road.

Cata taxi drivers blockaded the Nyanga police station and demanded

the return of the confiscated weapons — which they claimed had been removed mostly from Cata members.

The police then initiated talks, mediated by Mr Rodney Dreyer of the Centre for Conflict Resolution, at the police station. Neither the police nor Mr Dreyer, who said his position was neutral and that he was "under oath not to divulge any information", would comment when the talks ended after 6pm.

However, a source said "progress has been made" and that another meeting was scheduled for today.

The latest violence comes two

days after both taxi groups and the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) signed an agreement — drafted by local Transport Minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane — to co-operate, reach agreements and stick to them.

A meeting was also held between Cata and Codeta in the Civic Centre yesterday afternoon, and both groups are said to have agreed that the second Wynberg rank be closed down.

A third meeting, between Mr Ramatlakane — who could not be contacted for comment last night — and a Lingcross group, also took place yesterday afternoon.

Nigeria: Will it ever find democracy?

ST 5/1/96

COLLUSION

EVEN before the international campaign against the Abacha regime is fully under way, Eurocentric critics, cynics and racists have begun to spread doubts about whether Nigeria can ever become a democratic state.

Even journalists such as Anthony Daniels—who, at least, has personal knowledge of Nigeria—have written pessimistically about whether it is possible to produce functioning parliamentary democracies in Africa.

Daniels writes: "Perhaps the reality is that no known system of government works on the continent." (Sunday Times, London, November 19, 1995).

The only conclusion one can come to from such a view (by no means confined to Daniels) is that not only Nigeria but also countries such as South Africa, Ethiopia and a score of others are condemned to live forever beyond the pale of democracy. Writing about the return of civilian rule to Nigeria, Daniels forecasts that "it will probably be less deliberately brutal than the present regime but if past experience is anything to go by, it will be every bit as corrupt."

political figures and businessmen, or Japan, where successive governments have fallen over corruption; or South Korea, where a recent president is in prison over corruption charges involving millions; or even Britain, where the government is under a cloud because of sleaze and allowing decent businessmen to go to prison in order to cover up their own secret deals with Iraq.

It is often argued that the corruption in Western and Asian countries proportionate to GDP is less heinous and damaging than in an African country such as Nigeria. But the point is that nobody, to my knowledge, has ever suggested that because of corruption—which in the case of Italy permeated the entire political and economic system—Western countries are not capable of governing themselves on democratic lines.

Yet, whenever discussion turns to democracy in Africa, the first argument one usually hears revolves around corruption. Nobody will deny that corruption is a major feature of many African countries—but the evidence is that corruption flourishes on an extensive scale in direct proportion to the absence of democratic checks and balances.

Obligations

Corruption in countries such as Nigeria and Zaire can be curbed only through creating democratic institutions. Let us turn now to examining the reasons given by Anthony Daniels and others for their bleak forecasts about achieving democracy in Nigeria. The first point they make is that the country is ethnically very diverse. "The social obligations people feel are not to the state, but to their families, villages and ethnic groups. This is true, but it

was also true of virtually every modern Western country before they became integrated nation-states.

A second point made by Daniels is that because the attractions of Western standards of living for a very poor country are so immense, "the quickest means to achieve this standard in Africa is by becoming a member of the government, which explains the desperation of the struggle for power and position on the continent."

Nobody with the slightest knowledge of Africa would accept such an oversimplification of the power struggle that has occurred on the continent since independence. While it is true that the third layer of emerging elites have engaged in power struggles, it requires a much deeper analysis of the cases of conflicts—such as regional conflicts, conflicts over access to resources, the universal struggle between haves and have-nots, the challenge to domination by minority communities, and the revolution against authoritarian rule, corrupt governments and the abuses of human rights.

Yet another negative factor usually mentioned in the case of Nigeria is that it is impossible to maintain the unity of people as diverse as the Hausa-Fulani, Yorubas, Ibos, Benis and 70 minority groups. Virtually all Third World countries are passing through the historic phase of creating harmonious nation-states—a phase through which the northern democracies passed less than two centuries ago. This historic process is inescapable in the evolution of nation-states which, judging by the history of modern societies, is the essential prerequisite for the incremental growth of democratic societies.

What are the conditions needed to achieve harmonious, democratic societies in multi-ethnic societies?

Ironically, Nigeria is a good example. The country has succeeded in establishing a constitution that balances the interests of its diverse communities through a federal system which is a model for other countries.

Having started at independence with a federation based on three states (Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Ibo) it has through the years (and after a bitter civil war) succeeded in creating the structures for a federation based on 26 states.

This basis has survived all the upheavals of recent years. What has not yet been achieved in Nigeria is the accommodation of the 70-odd minority communities (such as Ken Saro-Wira's Ogonis) located in the 26 states.

Experiments

Another example is what is being attempted in Ethiopia, a country with as many diverse communities as Nigeria. Its federation constitution is based on the recognition of ethnicity as a major source of conflict.

The problem of minorities within the nine large ethnic states has been met by creating zones within them where smaller communities have control over such affairs as education, language, culture and local government. It is only the more extensive and important constitutional experiments being conducted in Africa, although it cannot be considered as a model for all countries on the continent.

If the Ethiopian approach had been followed in Yugoslavia after the collapse of Tito's centralised state, the country could

have been saved the horrendous ethnic and religious wars of the past five years.

Finally, there is South Africa—a country that was polarised not only between white and black but also within those two communities. The new constitution enshrines the rights of its diverse communities and their sharply different economic and social interests through a federal-type constitution with built-in safeguards protected by an independent Constitutional Court. Major problems such as demands by Afrikaners and Zulus—still need to be resolved.

While it is too early to forecast the final outcome of the constitutional arrangements in South Africa, it is not being over-optimistic to suggest that they offer a reasonable chance of success. To sum up, democracy is a universal demand and the right of all people. The fact that democratic systems take will vary from country to country. Their achievement will take time—measured in terms of historic epochs—but its appeal is irresistible. Over-simplifications and generalisations based on the current crisis in Nigeria obscure the reality of the problems involved in the creation of democratic nation-states.

In the brief space of three years, the formerly 45 single-party and military states in Africa have been reduced to 23, which can be classified as semi-democratic or transitional democratic states based on political pluralism. It is a start. The Western democracies can assist its further development by helping to underpin these fledgling democracies through aid and trade policies based on the recognition—in the words of the seminal Brandt Commission—that the interests between the developed and the developing countries are inextricably intertwined.

Police 'were warned before taxi violence'

ARG 19/1/96

(332)

Staff Reporter

POLICE were warned last week of impending violence in the Western Cape taxi industry, but were apparently unable to prevent it.

The African National Congress has called on provincial Police Minister Patrick McKenzie to launch an urgent internal inquiry into why the warning was "seemingly ignored, or not acted on".

Mr McKenzie owed an explanation to the families of the six victims killed in Wednesday's violence, and to the thousands of terrified commuters, said ANC provincial secretary James Ngculu.

And while the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee (Umac), the non-governmental

organisation that fired off warning letters to key role-players on January 10, expressed "severe disappointment" today, two major taxi organisations called on the police to "do their job".

But police national priority crime director Leonard Knipe — one of the recipients of the warning letters — reacted by claiming police had not been party to "key discussions... if we had, it might have been different".

Director Knipe was apparently referring to the agreement between the two largest township taxi operators, Cata and Codeta, to vacate an "illegal" rank in Wynberg, without consulting the Khayelitsha-based users or the police.

The Khayelitsha users belong

to an organisation called Lingcross, which is affiliated to Codeta.

Director Knipe said police were warned by their own sources of imminent violence and had put "maximum" people on the case and "investigated it to the limit".

Umac director Steff Snel said this was the second time police had failed to act on warnings of violence, the first time being in November 1994 when 11 people died in what became known as the Khayelitsha Stadium Massacre.

"I am severely disappointed... We (NGOs and state agencies) have developed extensive co-operation around problem-solving, but when push comes to shove we are not able to get off the starting blocks,"

said Mr Snel.

Mr Ngculu called on Mr McKenzie to "not only step up police patrols... but to get to the roots of the crisis".

And in a joint statement, Cata and Codeta said they had done everything in their power to "avoid this madness... we do not want to see a repetition of what is happening in Johannesburg".

Lingcross was responsible for the violence, and although the culprits were known to the police, they appeared to be "dragging their feet".

"Some of these people are enriching themselves when there is taxi conflict. We would like to see the police doing their job," the statement said.

● Mr McKenzie chose not to comment.

A new task for taxis

M+G(MM) 19-25/1/96 (332)

No more standing idle for taxis as Brick 'n Tile launches its new taxi trailer project, reports **Rowan Callaghan**

THE long line of taxi's standing idle during off-peak hours at many taxi ranks may soon dwindle if their owners get hooked up with the new taxi trailer project.

The project, launched by Brick 'n Tile this week, was primarily designed to allow taxi owners to make small deliveries of bricks during off-peak hours for home improvement projects. However, other major companies have since then expressed an interest in the project and the scope of these deliveries has been expanded.

"Many of South Africa's 120 000 minibus taxis are under-used between the morning and evening rush hours. Our plan will take up some of the slack so that taxis become more useful economically."



Mac Maharaj: 'I foresee this as the beginning of a process ...'

Rod Taylor, managing director of Brick 'n Tile said.

Mac Maharaj, Minister of Transport, who was present at the launch praised the company for showing its support for the taxi industry through

this venture.

"I foresee this as the beginning of a process — not only of reconstructing the taxi industry and making it profitable, but a process whereby big business ensures that small business takes its rightful place in the economy," he said. The project also has the support of the National Taxi Task Team.

Each franchise, issued by Taxi Trailers, will cost R20 000 and will include two 1,5 ton trailers, training and corporate clothing. (The cost of a single trailer is estimated at R13 000). Successful applicants are also offered finance packages.

Each franchisee then receives contracts from the master franchisers (various businesses, which so far include breweries and supermarkets, interested in this service) involved in the venture to deliver small loads.

"The biggest problem in any distribution is small loads," Taylor said. He estimated that one taxi owner could make up to R60 000 a year using the franchise opportunity.

Govt accepts interim taxi team proposals

Theo Rawana

(332) 80 19 11 196
REGULATION and control of the taxi industry moved a step closer yesterday with government's announcement that it had accepted the national taxi task team's interim recommendations on solving problems in the industry.

The task team, set up early last year by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to seek solutions which would end the industry's bloody feuds and put it on a profitable footing, submitted the interim recommendations to Maharaj late last year after eight months of work.

The four major areas covered in the recommendations were regulation and control, industry formalisation, training and economic assistance.

Receiving the interim recommendations in Johannesburg late last year, Maharaj said the final report received from the team would form part of the national transport policy review to be finalised at the end of next month. Working groups would be established to address the four major areas, Maharaj said.

Maharaj said yesterday the broad thrust of the recommendations was acceptable to a meeting he held last week with the nine provincial transport MECs. "Certain specific issues require further investigation," he said in a statement.

The ministry spokesman was not available to say what the "specific issues" were.

It was agreed at the meeting that a national taxi workshop should be held on February 17 where the ministers and the task team would discuss the recommendations.

In Cape Town, meanwhile, taxi organisations Codeta and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association, as well as the SA National Civic Organisation, have signed a memorandum of agreement for taxi associations sharing rank facilities in the Cape Peninsula.

The agreement is in line with an agreement reached earlier between the Cape Town City Council, Codeta, Cata and the Khayelitsha branch of Codeta.

□ Sapa reports that a man was killed and another injured on Wednesday night in a shooting at a Randfontein taxi rank on the West Rand, police said yesterday.

trust, both now and in the future."

(332) CT (PR) 19/1/96
strategy and implementation

strategy and implementation plans had been finalised.

Maharaj said it had also been agreed that a national taxi workshop would be arranged jointly between Mincom and the task team to discuss the recommendations.

Among the key recommendations made in the team's report, which was handed to Maharaj last month, were that the industry should be structured into more formal business units or co-operatives to facilitate training and channel economic assistance to the industry.

Other recommendations in the task team's report involved proposals that the co-operatives provide the taxi operators with access to economic assistance including:

☐ A financial guarantee fund to enable financial institutions to reduce the extraordinary high interest rate on taxes;

- ☐ Insurance guarantees to reduce the risk banks associate with taxis, thus lowering their high premiums;

- ☐ Capacity-building to equip and empower the industry to be professional and develop its own institutions;

☐ Tax facilities, with at least 25 such facilities to be made available country-wide;

☐ Direct purchase of vehicles from manufacturers to bring down prices; and

☐ Capital grants for vehicle purchases to enable each co-operative to buy vehicles at auctions on behalf of its members.

Maharaj said working groups would be established to address the four major areas covered in the recommendations — regulation and control, formalisation of the industry, training and economic assistance.

Maharaj said the task team, in conjunction with Mincom, would hold a series of report-back seminars for all stakeholders in the industry once the

Key taxi deal focus of renewed violence

LINDIZ VAN ZILLA

THE exclusion of a taxi faction from a crucial agreement may have resulted in the explosion of taxi-related violence in which six people were killed on Wednesday, Minister of Transport in the Western Cape, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane said yesterday.

The bloodshed, which also left 10 people injured, took place as gunmen fired wildly at passing taxis, killing or wounding bystanders in Nyanga, before spreading to Lansdowne and Philippi.

The agreement which was drawn up on Monday was based on the Goldstone Report and stated that the lack of adequate facilities for transport was one of the key elements igniting taxi violence.

Furthermore it stated that all firearms in public places be banned and also proposed the closure of the illegal taxi rank at Wynberg. The agreement was signed by Codeta and Cata who agreed that all users of the illegal rank should be incorporated into the official taxi rank.

Lingcross, a breakaway Codeta faction, was however not party to this agreement and was therefore unaware of the conditions that had come into existence. It was their insistence on using the illegal rank which sparked the violence, Mr Ramatlakane said.

The group was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Mr Ramatlakane said that when the signing took place, the Lingcross representatives "were out of town".

In a joint statement to the press by Cata and Codeta yesterday they

allege that Lingcross had refused to sign the agreement.

However, in a statement released by the police, acting provincial commissioner of police in the Western Cape, Commissioner Mike Bester said the conflict was due to internal strife between Codeta management and Lingcross operators within Codeta and the fact that Lingcross was excluded from signing the agreement. A meeting is to be held at Mr Ramatlakane's offices later this morning between all the parties involved.

Education

Taxi war hitmen at

By RAYMOND JOSEPH

A DRIVER was shot dead and two passengers were seriously wounded when gunmen in a minibus opened fire on a taxi in Nyanga, near Cape Town, yesterday afternoon, bringing to seven the number of people who have died in taxi-related violence this week.

Yesterday's incident happened in the face of a major operation in which police are manning roadblocks throughout the Western Cape this weekend to monitor taxis after they received information that professional hitmen were behind the renewed violence in the long-running taxi war.

Only hours before yesterday's shooting, regional Police Minister Patrick McKenzie told Metro: "We have information that this whole thing is much wider than we thought, that there are professional hitmen behind it."

A reliable source close to the taxi industry said he had been told that four disaffected former MK members who arrived in Cape Town from Transkei recently, could be involved in the latest incidents.

The latest round in the taxi war flared up on Wednesday when gunmen went on a killing spree, which began in Nyanga before spreading to Landsdowne, Philippi, Manenberg and Bishop Lavis.

The rapid escalation of the violence led police to suspect that it was part of a well-planned campaign.

Violence flared again on Friday when unknown gunmen opened fire on two Codeta drivers at an Athlone garage. Both men are in hospital in a serious condition.

In yesterday's incident, a member of the Cata taxi organisation died when he was shot in the head by gunmen. A woman passenger in his taxi is in a critical condition after she was shot through the throat, and another passenger was hit in the leg.

In another incident yesterday afternoon police came under fire from a man armed with a .38 Special revolver, who was standing next to a stopped taxi in Nyanga. Police returned fire before the man threw his weapon to the ground and fled.

Sources said they were expecting further attacks after Cata failed to attend a meeting called to finalise a peace plan brokered on Friday by regional Transport Minister Leonard Ramathakane between Cata and rival organisation Codeta.

The latest outbreak in the long-running taxi war, was apparently sparked off by an accord signed earlier this week between Cata and Codeta, in which agreement was reached to close down an illegal rank in Wynberg used by Codeta affiliate, Lingcross.

Police intelligence sources say this deal was doomed to failure because Lingcross was excluded from the negotiations.

A week ago a letter warning of impending violence was sent to top police and government officials.

In the letter the director of the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee (UMAC), Stef Nel warned that despite an improvement in relations between Cata and Codeta, "a large component of Codeta's members appear not to support the negotiations."

96/11/96
Lavis
(382)

There are thousands of taxis yet none of them contribute to the country's running costs

CT(BR) 26/1/98 (332)

TAXING QUESTIONS

act of parliament — unlike companies that are regulated by the Companies Act.

According to the government's white paper on small business strategy published last March, there are about 800 000 small, medium and micro-enterprises.

One of the unregulated businesses is the taxi industry. It is estimated that there are more than 500 000 taxis in the country.

Up until now, taxi fares have escaped the VAT tomahawk. This means that taxi owners need not register as VAT vendors even if their turnover is more than R150 000 a year.

If taxi owners were relieved of the duty of collecting VAT on behalf of the treasury, they would still be liable to register and pay income tax like any other taxpayer. However, the majority, if not all, taxi people are not contributing to the cost of running the country through income tax.

There is an urgent need to ensure that taxi owners do not escape the fiscal thorns. Taxi enterprises operate on a cash basis and this can create fiscal headaches as far as disclosure is concerned.

A unique and effective way of taxing this industry should therefore be devised.

It is estimated that each taxi brings in about R6 000 a month or more. I am of the opinion that the taxi owners should pay a flat income tax rate of R500 a taxi. This amount should be paid monthly to the fiscus and not yearly, because they may lose the ability to pay tax at the end of the year.

This R500 minimum flat rate income tax should be set on the assumption that all expenses have been taken into account. Based on the estimation that there are 500 000 taxis, the payment of R500 a taxi a month would make the tax gatherer smile with a cool R250 million monthly.

Hawking is also one of the



UNREGULATED It is estimated that there are more than 500 000 taxis in the country, yet they have not been drawn into any type of formal tax structure

fastest growing unregulated industries in the country.

According to the National Labour Economic Development Institute, some hawkers earn as much as R2 600 a month.

It is estimated that there are more than 50 000 hawkers in the country. However, their income is not swept into the income tax basket as they are not registered as taxpayers. Hawkers too should pay a flat rate income tax. The minimum tax should be set at R200 a month a hawker.

Based on the estimation that there are about 50 000 hawkers, the payment of R200 a month could bring the fiscus R10 million monthly.

The advantages of flat rate income tax for the taxi industry, hawkers and other informal businesses is that they will escape the yearly burden of completing the income tax return.

This is very important because there is a high illiter-

acy level among taxi owners as well as other unregulated business. Another tax bonus on the flat rate approach is that they will not pay income tax on the progressive scale.

The success of flat rate income tax on taxis, hawkers and similar businesses lies in the government's regulation of these industries. For example, a compulsory but free certificate of trading

should be introduced.

This should make it easier for inland revenue to police and also know those who are paying tax and those who are not. When a taxi driver is granted a licence to trade, his name should be submitted to the revenue services.

To be effective, taxi and hawker tax should be collected at a provincial level and not at a national level. This is where fiscal federalism becomes important. Heavy penalties and interest should be imposed on any taxi owner or hawker who fails to pay the monthly income tax.

Bringing all people into the tax net will close the gap between what ought to be collected and what is being collected.

This will also help to put bricks and mortar into the RDP.

Furthermore, it will create the perception that there is a proper allocation of burdens among all the tax-paying community.

This will also breed a better view of the tax system and improve tax morality. As more taxpayers imply less tax, this will rescue us from our present fiscal drought. Failure by the government to put its foot down on tax delinquency may create a perception that the state is being hijacked by the populist magic.

This will make a mockery of words such as good governance. This is because good governance means ruling responsibly. This cannot be attained if the tax playing field is not levelled first.

□ Matsheru Matsheru is an independent tax consultant

Failure to stop tax delinquency may create a perception that the state is being hijacked by populist magic

Peace at taxi ranks?

City cabbies agree to drop guns and shake hands after pact

ARL 27/1/96

(332)

■ They came to make peace, but they were heavily armed. When rival taxi organisations Cata and Codeta met to ratify a peace agreement, about two-thirds of their representatives were carrying guns.

ANDREA WEISS

Municipal Reporter

RIVAL taxi organisations Cata and Codeta have brokered a peace agreement which will see them serving together on rank committees. Whether it will hold remains to be seen because the taxi industry is heavily armed.

From today both organisa-



Picture: JACK LESTRADE.

□ **SHAKE ON IT:** Steven Williams, left, vice-chairman of Cata, Howard Dyubeni, executive committee member of Codeta, James Matuya, Codeta chairman, Simon Halmans, Cata president, and Reggie Malimba, executive member of Codeta's Khayelitsha branch, shake on the agreement which requires their members to serve on the same rank committees.

□ **ARSENAL:** Some of the weapons, below, handed in for safekeeping by taxi drivers and owners when they gathered to ratify a peace agreement brokered between rival organisations, Cata and Codeta.

tions will be back on the road after ratifying an agreement which involves them working together on rank committees and providing the names of all operators on specific routes.

When about 60 drivers and owners met in the provincial government building yesterday to conclude the agreement, they had between them about 40 guns which were checked into security for the duration of the meeting.

A few men decided to wait outside the building, choosing not to check in their weapons.

Provincial Roads Minister Leonard Ramatlakane made it clear that he, with Police Minister Patrick McKenzie, would take tough action if there were any more shootings.

In a month eight people have been killed and 27 injured in violence between the two groups.

Mr Ramatlakane said he was considering a by-law which would make taxis and taxi ranks gun-free zones.

He said displaying and handling firearms in public facilities was "intolerable".

"You can't provide a service and terrorise at the same time. These are contradictions". We need to create a situation where we work in a gun-free environment, where we work in harmony.

"This is the best way. Leave the guns at home and work together as brothers and sisters in this industry. This is the good advice I'm giving you."

Conveying a message from Mr McKenzie, who could not attend the meeting, Mr Ramatlakane said Mr McKenzie had resolved this would be the year of action.

"If one more shooting happens the industry will be disarmed — whether your weapons are legal or illegal.

"Your gun will be taken away from you. It will be subjected to ballistic tests and will be gone for a very long time," he warned.

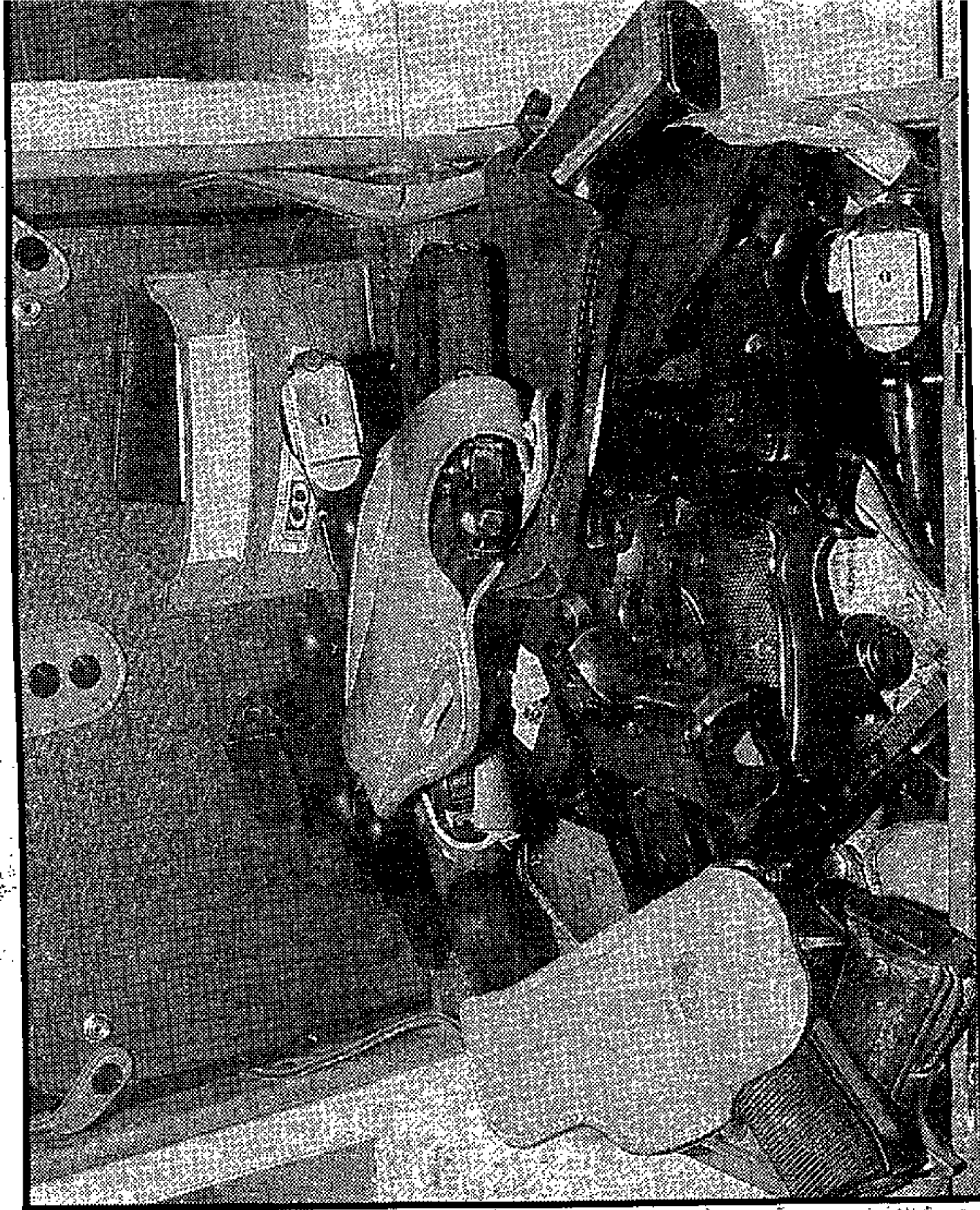
In terms of the agreement which was ratified yesterday, both organisations will put forward names of people who will serve on "rank committees" with representatives from the police, traffic department and the community.

In addition, the taxi organisations will provide lists of their members operating on certain routes, along with other details such as the registration numbers of vehicles.

It is hoped that these committees will help curb the conflict which erupted this month over the illegal use of a Wynberg holding facility as a taxi rank.

Cape Town City Council has also been asked to provide clear lane markings in Wynberg indicating route destinations to alleviate conflict.

Leonard Knipe, head of the priority crimes unit, told the gathering he supported the provincial initiative to create gun-free ranks.



ARG
27/1/96

Taxi office will deal with violence

(332)
Theo Rawana

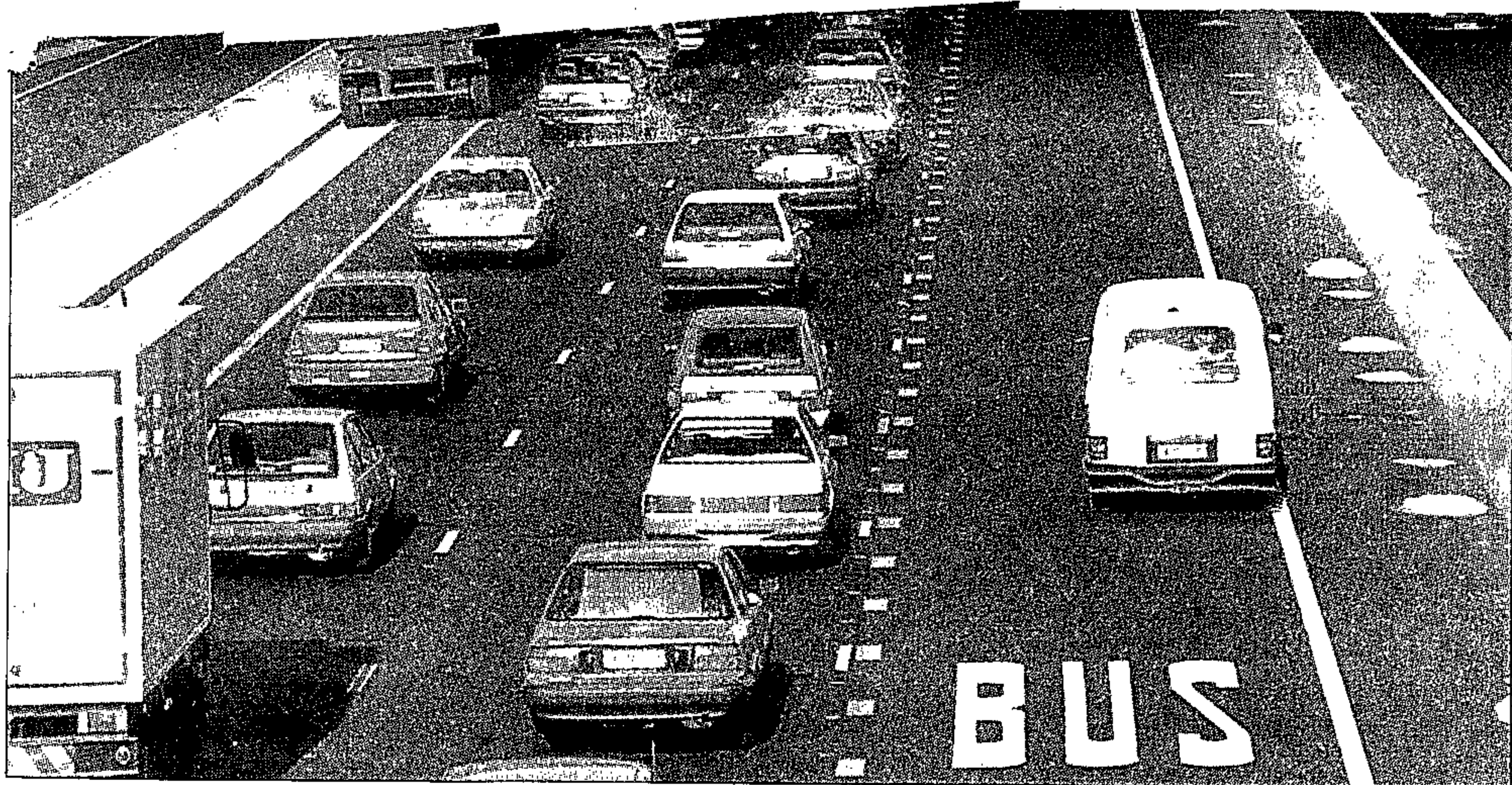
BD 29/1/96
THE Gauteng government would officially open the Gauteng Taxi Office in Johannesburg tomorrow — the first office of its kind in SA, where issues plaguing the industry and resulting in violence would be dealt with, the provincial transport ministry said on Friday.

Ministry spokesman Steph Erasmus said the office, initiated by transport MEC Olaus van Zyl,

would facilitate communication between the department and the taxi industry.

"It will be managed by the Gauteng department of public transport and will also serve as a centre for conflict resolution.

"In addition, a toll-free 0800 line will be in operation 24 hours a day at this office to handle calls from taxi members and passengers with problems," Erasmus said.



FREEWAY FOR SOME: Taxis and buses on the N2 near the Athlone power station in the "fast lane" reserved for them reach their destinations quickly, while motorists say they are slowed down by increased congestion. Some use the bus and taxi lane, but risk a fine.

PICTURE: NIC BOTHMA

Crackdown on motorists using taxi fast lane on N2

30/1/96 (332)

PETER DENNEHY
METRO WRITER

THE "fast lane" reserved on the N2 for buses and minibus taxis during the morning traffic peak from 6.30 to 9 is proving a boon to taxi drivers — but motorists complain that it has increased traffic jams in their lanes.

To add to motorists' woes, law enforcement officers — after two months in which they took a gentler approach — have begun fining drivers other than those of taxis who use the exclusive lane.

In the past 10 days, 211 tickets have been issued to motorists using the taxi lane — a figure that traffic officers regard as unusually high.

The standard fine is R50, according to the Cape Town traffic department, which serves as an agency for the provincial authorities by enforcing the law.

Mr William Desai of Brackenfell, a motorist who travels in on the N2 every day at peak hour, complained this week that he had taken half-an-hour to travel from the Athlone cooling towers to the Liesbeek Parkway.

"For nearly a year we sat in traffic jams while they were building the road," Desai said.

"We did so gladly knowing that things would be better afterwards."

"Now things are worse — and they have started fining the motorists who use the taxi lane."

He sat fuming in morning traffic jams while the taxis flew past him "at 100km/h" in their own lane, Desai said.

When he reached the point where the lane ended and public transport vehicles joined the rest of the traffic, the congestion — which he blamed for the jams further back — made him fume again.

Desai said motorists — who paid taxes to the state — were getting a raw deal.

Mr James Mafuya, president of Codeta and, as a taxi driver, a regular user of the N2, said taxi drivers were happy with the lane.

"It is much better — we are no longer caught up in traffic jams," he said.

He believed the exclusive lane had also cut down on the number of offences committed by taxi drivers, Mafuya said.

Some motorists were still using the taxi lane as a fast lane, he said.

Asked if he thought these motorists should be fined, Mafuya said that in Johannesburg, a helicopter with a "sky shout" flew over the highway and warned off such motorists.

Mr Dumisane Ntuli, a spokesman for the Western Cape's Minister of Transport, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, said a monitoring

team was checking the effectiveness of the special lane. An evaluation report would be drawn up, he said.

Mr Steve Fanner, chief engineer for planning in the provincial roads department, said the evaluation would take a few months.

"My own view is that it is too early to make a definitive judgment," he said.

He had been told that, near the start of the lane, about a third of the vehicles using it were not supposed to be there.

Fanner suspected that the drivers were aware of this as most moved over into the cars' lane after a distance.

A working group is considering ways of dealing with the Cape Town end of the lane.

A destination survey may be needed to determine if most of the vehicles want to proceed to the Eastern Boulevard, get on to the Main Road, or would be willing to be diverted on to the Black River Parkway.

Fanner said he did not want to anticipate the findings of the monitoring scheme, but he believed the bus and taxi lane was here to stay.

"I don't think scrapping it is on the cards," he said.

"We might make adjustments."

A similar scheme has not been implemented yet on the outgoing carriageway of the N2.

New taxi troubleshooting bid

(332) Star 12/2/96

The Gauteng Taxi Office "will contribute towards peace, co-operation, good regulation and financial viability in the industry", says Gauteng Transport MEC Olaus van Zyl.

The newly opened office was set up on the recommendation of the Gauteng Taxi Initiative, convened to provide practical

solutions to industry problems. It aims to improve communication between taxi associations, passengers and the Government.

A toll-free number will be installed, but for now these officials - John Msiza on (011) 339-1612 or Knox Matjila on 240-1726/1555

- can be contacted directly.
- Staff Reporter.

CT (BR) 12/2/96
**Taxi insurance
for commuters**

(332)

By FRANÇOISE BOTHA

Cape Town — In a bid to combat the low levels of compensation offered by the Motor Vehicle Accidents Fund, Heritage Insurance Brokers (Cape) will launch an insurance package for taxi and minibus commuters today.

The package, underwritten by Lloyd's, will be launched nationwide and will cover both metropolitan and long-distance trips.

Bernard O'Sullivan, the attorney who has been handling the development of the package, said: "The fund only provides R25 000 in the case of death or permanent disability and no compensation if passengers were travelling in the vehicle that caused the accident."

The fund often took "many months" to process these claims and the compensation for the loss of the breadwinner was not high enough. As a result, the family of the victim suffered.

O'Sullivan said the package was part of a bid to reduce the public's reliance on the fund, which was funded by a 9c a litre fuel levy.

"The fund, which is close to bankruptcy, could not be supported by an increased fuel levy because this would be inflationary," he said.

The policy offers commuters insurance in the case of death or total disability in multiples of R10 000 for R17 a year up to a maximum of R75 000 and covers commuters travelling in registered and unregistered taxis.

Police use dogs to break up IFP demonstration

Farouk Chothia

(332)

BD 14/2/96

DURBAN — Police used a water cannon and dogs to disperse about 600 IFP supporters who staged a march in Durban yesterday to demand the withdrawal of Putco buses from the Lindelani squatter camp north of the city.

The demonstrators, who had earlier prevented commuters from boarding Putco buses, were warned the march was illegal as no permission had been obtained. Some heeded the warning while others continued marching before being dispersed.

The demonstrators are aligned to IFP KwaZulu-Natal MP Thomas Shabalala, who was censured by the IFP national council recently for the anti-Putco campaign in his Lindelani stronghold.

IFP secretary-general Ziba Jiyane was forced to flee a meeting there last month after Shabalala's supporters fired gunshots. Jiyane had visited Lindelani to try to persuade them to let residents choose their transport. Shabalala's supporters were accused of intimidating residents out of using Putco so that taxi operators could expand their business. Seven Putco buses had been torched in December.

Shabalala denied any knowledge of yesterday's demonstration, but said residents were dissatisfied with Putco as it was unable to provide an effective service. Residents wanted other bus companies and taxi services to operate in Lindelani.

Meanwhile in Richmond, IFP MP Theresa Millen said the ANC had launched a stayaway to turn the area into a "little Cuba" in the run-up to the May 29 election. The ANC had warned anyone not adhering to the stayaway call that they would be beaten to death, she said.

which
LUMLEY

IFP slams protesters

By Simon Zwane

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Sowetan 15/2/96

THE Inkatha Freedom Party has strongly condemned residents from the party's stronghold of Lindelani for demanding the withdrawal of Putco buses from the area.

Residents in the township prevented pupils from attending schools and forced shops to close as they enforced a work stayaway on Tuesday.

Putco buses were forced out of the township and one of the company's bus drivers was forcefully removed from his bus. A shot was fired at him as he fled from his assailants at a roadblock.

Putco spokesman said the driver was later rescued from the mob by police and no damage was done to the bus. The protesters later moved to the city centre where chaos broke out as police opened fire and used water cannons with purple dye to disperse the unruly mob.

The IFP also condemned those involved in an illegal march in the Durban city centre on Tuesday and said they should face the full legal consequence of their actions and face the party's disciplinary machinery. The protesters, armed with dangerous weapons, threw traffic into chaos when they blocked two main roads in the city.

IFP South Coast spokesman Mr Anthony Grinker said the party was not aware of the march and its provincial leadership had not been consulted. "Those behind the march should immediately desist from any further planned action," Grinker said.

He said those responsible for the action should face the full legal implications of their action. The party would also take appropriate action on all those who defied its resolutions. The party censured the area's strongman Thomas Shabalala earlier this month for allegedly orchestrating the call for the withdrawal of Putco buses in the area.

Police use dogs to break up IFP demonstration

Farouk Ghothia

332
BD 14/2/96

DURBAN — Police used a water cannon and dogs to disperse about 600 IFP supporters who staged a march in Durban yesterday to demand the withdrawal of Putco buses from the Lindelani squatter camp north of the city.

The demonstrators, who had earlier prevented commuters from boarding Putco buses, were warned the march was illegal as no permission had been obtained. Some heeded the warning while others continued marching before being dispersed.

The demonstrators are aligned to IFP KwaZulu-Natal MP Thomas Shabalala, who was censured by the IFP national council recently for the anti-Putco campaign in his Lindelani stronghold.

IFP secretary-general Ziba Jiyane was forced to flee a meeting there last month after Shabalala's supporters fired gunshots. Jiyane had visited Lindelani to try to persuade them to let residents choose their transport. Shabalala's supporters were accused of intimidating residents out of using Putco so that taxi operators could expand their business. Seven Putco buses had been torched in December.

Shabalala denied any knowledge of yesterday's demonstration, but said residents were dissatisfied with Putco as it was unable to provide an effective service. Residents wanted other bus companies and taxi services to operate in Lindelani.

Meanwhile in Richmond, IFP MP Theresa Millen said the ANC had launched a stayaway to turn the area into a "little Cuba" in the run-up to the May 29 election. The ANC had warned anyone not adhering to the stayaway call that they would be beaten to death, she said.

SA 'not serious' about co-operation

Michael Hartnack

VICTORIA FALLS — Tough words marked the first session of a three-day Southern African Development Conference which had aimed to defuse some of the tensions surrounding SA's economic relations with its neighbours.

Morrison Sifelani, head of Zimbabwe's export promotion body Zimtrade, said SA trends "do not suggest there is economic or political willingness to enter into serious co-operation".

Sifelani, a former head of the Confederation of Zimbabwean Industries told the 140 delegates he had attended six meetings with South Africans.

"I get the impression they are saying 'we are too big, if you don't like it, tough luck, we are going to steamroller over you'. If that is the case then we are going to sit down and look at our future," he said.

Sifelani said a review of trade problems given by Natal University's Prof Gavin Maasdorp gave him the impression there were no hopes of reviving Zimbabwe's lapsed 1964 most favoured nation pact with SA.

The current three-

day conference is a follow-up to last year's exclusive confederation congress when SA high commissioner Kingsley Mamabolo made an emergency trip to Victoria Falls to try and damp down talk of an all-out trade war between SA and Zimbabwe over the stalled trade pact talks.

Maasdorp said the World Trade Organisation was worried at a lack of appreciation in southern Africa of the implications of the 1994 Marrakech agreement.

It barred SA from giving Zimbabwe any concessions not extended to every other developing country in the world.

Maasdorp urged the region to look towards sectoral co-operation rather than trade.

Confederation president Jonah Wakatama said: "One of the issues that inhibits serious regional integration is the narrow-minded national identity which is common in this region. Until we overcome that hurdle our success towards regional integration remains a dream."

He warned that southern Africa was not keeping pace with other underdeveloped regions, as population growth continued to outstrip economic growth.

3 die in taxi altercation

Theo Rawana

A FEUD over use of a taxi rank led to shooting left three people dead and 17 injured — seven of them policemen — in Carletonville, Gauteng, yesterday, police said.

Five of the 10 victims were seriously injured, police spokesman Supt Melica Moss said.

She said 27 people were arrested.

Moss said there had been an arbitration meeting the previous night, at which an interim agreement between the Carletonville United Taxi Association and the Carletonville-Botswana Close Corporation was reached.

It had been decided at the meeting that police should monitor the agreement by patrolling the area at night.

"At 4am a white Toyota Hi-Ace with 10 occupants raced towards the rank.

"The occupants jumped out, shooting at the police and their rivals. The other group fired back and in the conflict, three people died. But at the moment we do not know which group was which," Moss said.

In police action following the attack, 27 people were arrested and a large number of arms, mainly traditional weapons, were seized.

IFP condemns members' march against Putco

Farouk Chothia

B015/2/96 (232)

DURBAN — The IFP yesterday condemned the violent demonstration its supporters staged in central Durban earlier this week and vowed that disciplinary action would be taken against the culprits.

IFP south coast deputy publicity secretary Anthony Grinker said the demands listed during the demonstration were "nothing less" than defiance of the IFP national council. Those behind the march would have to face the consequences of defying IFP policy.

About 500 IFP supporters from Lindelani, near Durban, marched through the city on Tuesday demanding the withdrawal of the Putco bus service from their area. The demonstrators also chanted "down with Jiyane" — a reference to IFP secretary-general Ziba Jiyane, who last month criticised the IFP members for setting alight seven Putco buses in Lindelani.

The demonstrators are aligned to IFP south coast deputy chairman and KwaZulu-Natal MP Thomas Shabalala, who was censured by the national

council last month for the anti-Putco campaign. The council warned him that if he did not "remedy" his mistakes he would be expelled at a council meeting scheduled for March 9.

Shabalala said yesterday the demonstration should not be politicised. It had been organised by the Lindelani transport committee, and he had had no role in it. He was not acting in defiance of the IFP and would remain a member of the party.

Police used teargas, dogs and batons to disperse the marchers.

Grinker said those who had caused disruptions faced the "full legal implications" of their actions.

Police spokesman Supt Bala Naidoo said two demonstrators had been arrested and could be charged with malicious damage to property.

Shabalala said the demonstrators had legitimate grievances, but had erred in organising an illegal march.

Shabalala's critics had previously accused him of wanting to drive Putco out of the area so that he could expand his taxi business, a charge which Shabalala denied.

Crime syndicates into meeting

Bid to implement national taxi policy

(332) Star 19/2/96

BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj will tomorrow begin a process to implement a national taxi policy by meeting local road transportation boards countrywide, after the Government's approval of the National Taxi Task Team's recommendations.

The task team will monitor the implementation of the national policy, as its mandate has been extended to another six months so that it can make its final proposals by the end of March.

Each province will hold workshops over the next three weeks on these recommendations and another plenary will be convened within a month.

Maharaj made the announcements at the weekend's national taxi plenary conference held in Midrand. The recommendations included financial assistance but not subsidies, formalisation of the industry, regulation and control.

A move to larger vehicles would be encouraged.

Putco's operations in KwaZulu to close down

Lukanyo Mnyanda

JSE-LISTED bus operator Putco plans to close all its operations in KwaZulu-Natal, resulting in about 600 job losses, following government's refusal to lift subsidies for the 1995/96 financial year.

Bus operators warned in December that they would cut jobs and routes and raise fares after government decided to hold 1995/96 subsidy allocations at the previous year's R770m level.

Putco MD Michael Oldham said at the weekend: "It is highly unfortunate that a large number of jobs will be lost. Putco will try to treat this traumatic situation as sensitively as possible."

Putco's operations in Durban — one of its principal areas of operation — had been running at a deficit for a long time.

Oldham called on government

to provide a subsidy to cover the Durban operation's losses until it could be placed on open tender.

The unstable political situation in KwaZulu-Natal, coupled with the "disastrous" position in Lindelani, where some community leaders were preventing Putco from operating, had also contributed to the company's decision to pull-out of the province.

Oldham said Putco, which employs about 5 500 people nationally, had decided to put a freeze on all new appointments and would try to integrate some of its transferable KwaZulu-Natal staff into its other operations.

The company would also evaluate its other operations to determine whether there should be further rationalisation.

Oldham said Putco would increase passenger fares by an average 10% from next month and,

depending on the subsidy situation, by a further 10%-12% in October. Pupils' fares, previously discounted, would also increase by the same amount.

The diesel price had increased 14c over the past two months and further fare increases would follow if the trend continued.

The company would still lose about R15m as a result of the subsidy situation, despite the fare increases. "The losses will be greater if we lose passengers as a result (of the fare increase)."

Wage negotiations would commence shortly and Putco hoped that trade unions would agree to a "substantially" reduced settlement to lessen the impact of the subsidy freeze.

Putco reported share earnings of 85,2c for the year to June 1995 from 66,4c a year before, on turnover of R549,2m (R478m).

BD 19/2/96 269 (332)

Taxi industry adopts govt proposals

IMPLEMENTING a national policy for the taxi industry could go ahead as a National Taxi Task Team plenary had adopted government proposals at the weekend, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said.

Recommendations included financial assistance, including help to lower input costs, form co-operatives and business training; formalising industry regulations through provincial registrars as well as cleaning up the present permit system and legalising illegal operators.

The recommendations, along with better safety and security measures, would affect taxi-related violence, Maharaj said.

In a briefing after the plenary in Midrand, task team chairman Dipak Patel said the process of involving all stakeholders had led to a realisation that the industry's future lay with responsible business development.

To develop the industry, government wanted operators to form co-operatives to co-exist with established taxi associations. This meant a move by the associations away from their roles which at present combine leadership and control/regulation towards a focus on regulation.

Some recommendations adopted by the 275 delegates representing the industry in each province could be implemented immediately, while others were more long term, Patel said.

No new radius (area) or temporary permits would be issued. Multiple permits linked to one vehicle only could now be eliminated as there was a computer-based permit system. Cupboard permits — those procured without a vehicle and literally kept in briefcases — would also be cancelled.

Also, government wanted to encourage a move to larger 22- to 28-seater vehicles

which are now coming onto the market. Research showed they were more economical as well as safer.

In the medium term taxi associations and operators are to be registered at provincial level with an overall national registrar.

Although government would encourage officials, including policemen, councillors and traffic officers not to own taxis, it may not be legally possible to enforce this. Similarly downgrading taxi permits to apply to sedans may not be possible.

Each province would over the next three weeks hold workshops on these recommendations and another plenary would be called within the next month.

The task team's mandate was extended to another six months so it could make its final recommendations by end-March and monitor the implementation of the national policy. — Sapa.

Commuters threaten bus boycott over Putco fares

332 Star 20/2/96
BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

The SA Commuter Organisation (Saco) has warned it will arrange alternative transport for bus commuters if Putco implements its 10% fare increase on March 1.

Saco chairman Stephen Sangweni said other bus companies were being consulted, adding that trains and taxis would also be used to "save passengers from unaffordable fares" which would also be increased by a further 10%-12% in October, depending on Putco's subsidy allocation.

This follows the Government deciding not to increase bus subsidies from the previous R770-million for 1995-6, following demands by other transport bodies to be subsidised.

Putco, which employs about 5 500 people, warned in December it would retrench drivers, cut routes and raise fares if its subsidy allocation was not increased.

In its first move, the company is considering closing its operations in KwaZulu Natal resulting in about 600 job losses.

Sangweni said Putco was "venting its anger" on commuters. "Unlike the taxis, at least buses are being subsidised," he said.

Sangweni called on the Government to address the situation, saying it would "frustrate commuters who cannot afford the fares".

Putco managing director Mike Oldham said the company would still lose about R15-million as a result of no increase in subsidies, despite the fare increases.

Oldham added that Putco would be holding a conference on Saturday to discuss the subsidy situation.

Anger at Putco moves to cut services

B0 20/2/96

(332)

Lukanyo Mnyanda

WORKER and commuter organisations have reacted angrily to reports that bus operator Putco was planning to cut operations and increase fares, dubbing the moves premature and harsh.

The SA Commuters' Organisation (SACO) said yesterday it would meet Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to ask him to subsidise the increases.

SACO president Steven Sangweni said if the meeting with Maharaj was unsuccessful, they would be forced to look at alternative transport and would hold

talks with the taxi industry.

Putco warned at the weekend that the freeze on passenger subsidies from government would force it to halt operations in KwaZulu-Natal, axe around 600 staff and jack up fares.

The Transport and General Workers' Union called on the company to halt its plans and negotiate alternatives with unions.

Spokesman Malcolm Ray said his union would reject any unilateral closures and demanded Putco disclose its financial position to prove the cuts were necessary.

Other KwaZulu-Natal operators have warned of further fare

increases and job cuts if government does not reverse its decision to freeze passenger subsidies for the 1995/96 financial year.

South Coast Bus Services GM Asokon Naidu said it would lift fares by about 40%.

Durban Transport Acting CE Brian Stokes said the council-owned company had been "seriously" affected by the subsidy freeze and he urged government to act to remedy the situation.

KwaZulu Transport MD Chris Peckett said the company had advised its shareholders it would not be able to continue operating unless new funding was found.

Government unveils R14,5m taxi plan

By Roy COKAYNE

ET (PR) 20/2/96 (332)

Pretoria — The government has unveiled a R14,5 million-a-year package that it hopes will help resolve the problems in the taxi industry.

The package forms part of the government's response to recommendations made by the national taxi task team. It was unveiled by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj over the weekend.

The package includes a R10 million-a-year training programme to increase the industry's capacity. There will also be economic assistance in the form of co-operatives based at petrol stations. Nine provincial offices will be established to help organise the taxi industry.

Katso Gordhan, director general of transport, confirmed that financing for the package had already been approved by the cabinet.

Gordhan said a plenary meeting of Mincom, which is comprised of all the provincial transport MECs, and the task team had accepted in principle the recommendations about the industry.

Gordhan said the government's response to the control and regulation of the taxi industry involved three aspects. They were:

- ☐ Cleaning up the permit system to make it more manageable. This would probably entail changing from a radius-based to a route-based taxi permit system;
- ☐ Legalising taxi operators through a registration system. There are an estimated 60 000 illegal operators at present;
- ☐ A process to issue new permits through local taxi or transport forums.

This would also involve a passenger plan for areas with local authorities involved in preparing plans for routes.

Gordhan said all of the government responses to the task team recommendations were accepted in principle, but there were issues that required discussion.

These included the process by which the co-operatives would be established around petrol stations. The issuing of route permits also needed discussion, he said.

Putco⁽³³²⁾ Seweton 21/2/96 announce fare hike

PUTCO bus fares would rise by 10 percent on average on March 1, Putco announced yesterday.

A further average increase of between 10 and 12 percent would take effect on October 1, the company said in a statement in Johannesburg.

It said the rise had been necessitated by the Government's decision not to increase subsidies for bus commuters.

"The Department of Transport informed the bus industry in December 1995 that, due to a limited increase in the allocation of its budget for bus subsidies, they are not in a position to increase subsidies to bus commuters on a general basis during the 1995-96 financial year," the company said.

"Meetings covering the subsidy issue have also been held with our union representatives and with the commuters in the various areas of our operation. Putco has stated that it would have to consider various alternatives to lessen the impact."

Putco said it had asked the Government to reconsider its decision but Transport Minister Mac Maharaj, at a joint meeting with unions and commuter representatives, had reiterated the Cabinet's decision.

"The Minister appreciated the problems being experienced by operators, commuters and labour but stated that the industry is going through a period of structural adjustment and all the parties concerned should find ways of addressing the obstacles."

Meanwhile, the SA Commuter Organisation has warned it will arrange alternative transport for bus commuters if Putco implements the fare increase on March 1.

Saco chairman Mr Stephen Sangweni said other bus companies were being consulted, adding that trains and taxis would be used to "save passengers from unaffordable fares". - Sapa.

Increased bus subsidy, but fares go up

Star 22/2/96

(332)

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

Bus subsidies for 1996/7 would be increased by 8% from April 1 to ensure continued services, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj has announced.

He said yesterday that the increase – announced earlier than in previous years to end uncertainty among commuters and operators – has been made possible by “careful management and adjustments in the transport budget”.

Last year, the Government froze bus subsidies to the R770-million level because of lack of funds, prompting Putco to increase its fares by 10% from March 1 and threatening to cut jobs and routes in the event of no increase in government subsidies.

“Of the funds available, a limited amount will also be used to adjust the current low economic

tariff structure of some bus operators,” said Maharaj, urging bus companies to plan rationally for their operations and passenger fare increases.

Ministry spokesman Theo Maeder said the subsidy budget had now increased to R840-mil-

Putco to revise plans to cut jobs and routes

lion, and would be divided among 28 bus companies according to their distances and passenger volumes. He added that the changes in the bus subsidy system were consistent with the strategy being developed for the

entire transport system, also involving rail and taxis.

“A partnership between the Government, public transport operators, labour and commuters will ensure we overcome the short-term difficulties and build an efficient public transport system,” he said.

Putco managing director Mike Oldham was delighted about the subsidy increase, saying: “It was what we expected and we will be consulting with all stakeholders to review the pending cuts in jobs and routes.”

However, he indicated the fare increases had nothing to do with subsidy increases because the fares were covering last year's losses.

The SA Commuter Organisation and the Commuters' Rights Association of SA also welcomed the subsidy increase, but regretted that fares were not subsidised.

FEATURE

TAXI INDUSTRY

THE BIG BLACK HOLE

fm 23/2/96
Fuel will be added to the blazing taxi row after an astonishing report by the government-appointed National Taxi Task Team, released last week. If its recommendations are heeded, millions of rand will be "donated" to the beleaguered industry.

Approved by Cabinet on Friday, the plan — with an initial bill of R40m — calls for the establishment of co-operatives, registration of taxi operators and associations and the issue of route-based permits.

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj says the programme will be implemented in stages. One of the main reasons behind the frequent "taxi wars" is quarrelling over routes and passengers, he says, blaming the problems on "the financial insecurity of taxi drivers."

He says the move to co-ops calls for business management training for drivers, which will be provided by the small business unit of the Department of Trade & Industry. "We estimate it will cost about R1m per co-op in the form of assistance from government," Maharaj says.

The co-ops are expected to be self-financing in less than two years. But therein lies the twist. The report asks for a "donation" of R500 000 to each co-op to employ a core management team. Further "donations" of R450 000 to each co-op are envisaged to pay directors' fees and management costs for the first year. Though co-ops "are intended to become self-financing after limited first-year support, there may be need for additional support during the second year," says the report. "Government 'should budget 70% of the first-year figures for this purpose.'"

It recommends the creation of a "notional" fund of R100m and a cash fund of R10m to guarantee finance houses against co-op members defaulting. In return, finance houses must agree to reduce rates from 10 percentage points above prime to three.

Government is expected to help co-ops sidestep the present insurance rates of 25% of the value of the vehicle, by enabling each to have its own insurance

(332)
 cell — "effectively its own insurance company with capital supplied by government in the form of cash and guarantees. A stop-loss policy will be taken with Lloyd's of London."

The taxpayer will also be asked to provide each co-op with R200 000 to enable it to buy vehicles at auctions.

And so the list goes on — all for an industry that doesn't even pay tax. One suggestion is unlikely to endear the report to the motor vehicle manufacturing industry. The team believes the present system of manufacturers selling vehicles to the public through dealers "has elements of a cartel." Therefore government should persuade manufacturers to appoint taxi co-ops as dealers. It doesn't suggest where the operating capital will come from but notes the co-ops "would find this an invaluable source of income."

Government will also be asked to contribute R20m "for a wide-ranging series of pilot projects." Local authorities will be requested to "transfer" off-street taxi ranks to co-ops, "if only by way of a long-term lease." This would enable them "to suddenly acquire a significant capital asset," through which they could raise finance by using the ranks as collateral. The co-ops could also enter into wealth-generating ventures with property developers.

Government will also be asked to force financial institutions and credit bureaus to eliminate all bad-debt listings. It regrets that many minibus-taxi operators have defaulted on payments, but says it's usually not their fault. Rather, it is economic conditions and past government policies.

Surprisingly, the report manages to include some findings which smack of reality. These include recommendations on improving standards, criticism of the violence in the industry and the bad driving and concomitant accidents. It also suggests compulsory registration and says only permit holders should be eligible for registration.

It suggests expelling members from associations and cancelling permits for certain misdemeanours. This would be fine if half the 140 000 taxis on the road were not already without permits.

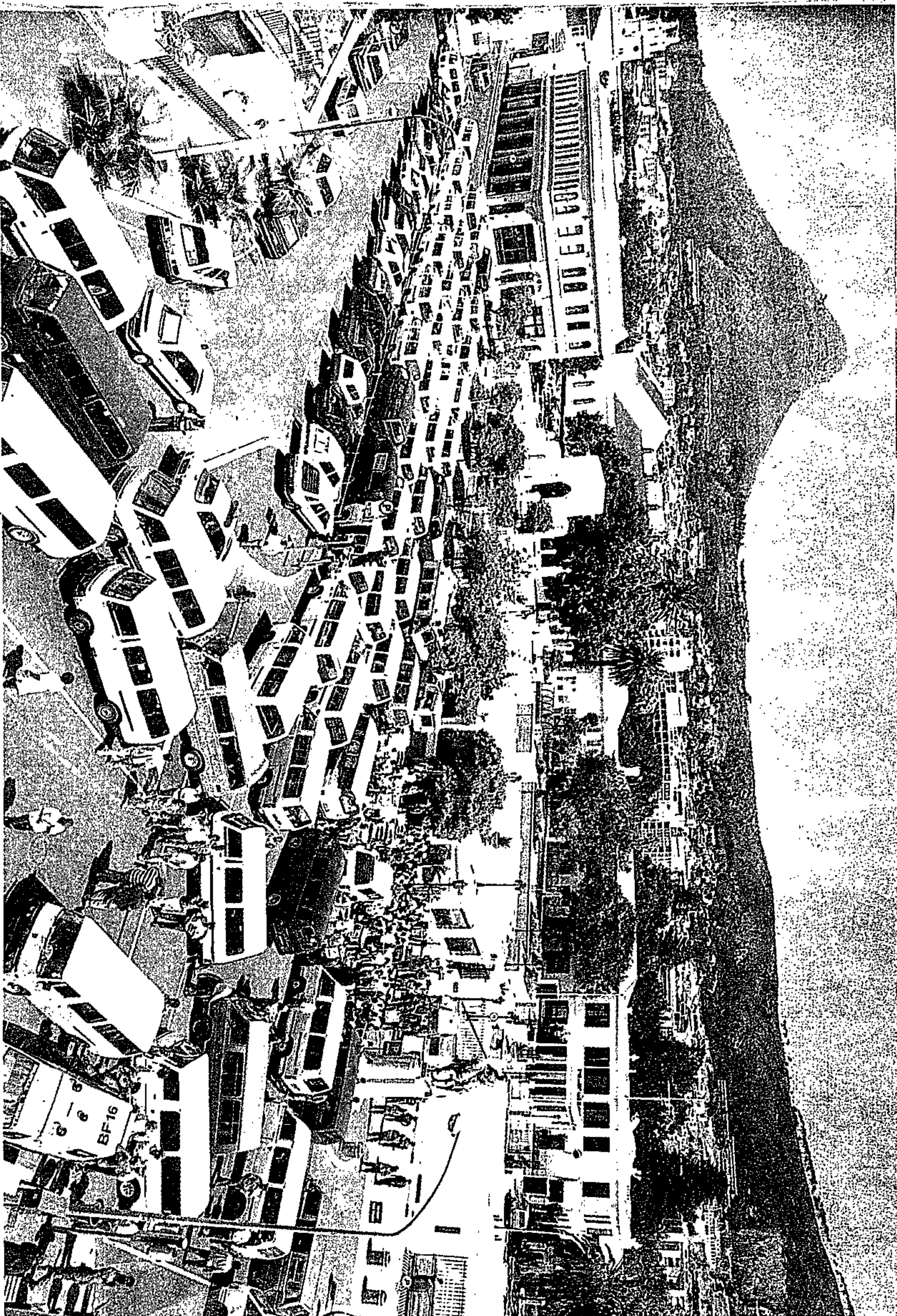
In its search for ways to move the industry from the informal to the formal sector, it considers only what can be done for it, not what it can do for itself. It fails to mention that the taxi owners' plight is attributable, to a large extent, to customer resistance to fare increases.

What was once hailed as the first deregulated model to which other sectors should aspire, has virtually become the graveyard of "free enterprise." Discussion forums have given way to gun battles and terrorism wins the day.

Despite the fact that this is an interim report, its acceptance by government is likely to further raise unrealistic expectations. The industry which, from the outside, appears dominated by a coterie of terrorists, will continue to attract those seeking easy pickings, rather than business-related growth. ■



Taxi blockade . . . but it's not their fault, says Maharaj (right)



❑ **BLOCKED:** Dozens of mini-bus taxis blockade the Stal Plein entrance to parliament in protest to the government's recent announcement to increase the subsidy to bus commuters.

Pictures: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

Arg 24/2/96



gry taxi drivers and owners show their disgust at the Transport Decision to increase the subsidy to bus commuters.

Protesting taxi drivers block entrance to parliament

JOSEPH ARANES

Municipal Staff

(332)
ARG 24/2/96

ABOUT 200 minibus taxi drivers blocked the Stal Plein entrance to parliament in protest against the recent government announcement that subsidies for bus commuters will increase by eight percent as from April 1.

The taxi drivers and owners — all members of the Western Cape Taxi Task Team, a body which represents all the different taxi associations in the Western Cape — outlined their grievances to provincial Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane under a heavy police guard.

Chairman of the task team Basil Nagel said the government "had done little or nothing" to enable the historically disadvantaged taxi industry to benefit from a government subsidy.

"Just last week we had a national meeting of the task team and were told by the national Transport Minister Mac Maharaj that the government did not have money to restructure the taxi industry.

"But just five days later they made an announcement they would be giving the bus companies R90 million to help subsidise their commuters."

Mr Nagel said what angered them was the fact that the government's own statistics indicated that bus companies only transported 25 percent of the country's workforce.

"We are demanding that a moratorium be placed on all forms of government subsidies until a structure is in place which will allow all commuters to benefit from it."

He said yesterday's protest actions were done in such a way that it did not inconvenience anybody, but warned that if their demands and concerns were not properly addressed, they would embark on a national campaign to highlight their plight.

"We are angry and believe the government is acting in bad faith by unilaterally making subsidies available while they are still involved in talks and negotiations with the role-players.

"Throughout this process of talks we continuously raised the problem we had with only certain sectors getting subsidies — yet they went ahead and increased the amount paid to bus commuters," he said.

Mr Ramatlakane said he would raise these concerns with the national transport minister and arrange a meeting so the issue could be discussed and hopefully resolved.

In a statement yesterday, the taxi component of the national taxi task team said the eight percent increase in subsidies for bus commuters was an insult to the taxi industry.

It called on the taxi industry to boycott the team's planned plenary policy meeting for today and rather embark on a campaign aimed at preventing the bus subsidy increase.

Monies saved by retrenchments to help pay for civil service parity

ARG 29/2/96 did to cut pension pay-out

Tour is just a stage in Leanne's odyssey for needy children

IAN SADLER, Sports Staff

MOST cyclists finishing The Argus/Pick'n Pay Cycle Tour next month will be content to hang their bikes up in the garage for a few weeks and take a breather.

Not so Leanne Dickerson of London. She will continue on her way up the Garden Route, headed for Kosi Bay.

This determined Englishwoman is cycling from Vioolsdrif on the Namibian border along the coastline - stopping off in Cape Town for the Tour - then on to the Mozambican border.

She left Vioolsdrif on February 19 and is due in

Cape Town on March 5.

The reason for the 3 200 km ride is to collect money for Isaiah 58, a children's shelter in East London.

"This will be my first long cycle trip, although I've done plenty of training," said Leanne, Press officer for the national Missing Persons Helpline in London.

"Singer Cliff Richard, a patron of Helpline and a supporter of Isaiah 58, sent Leanne a letter of encouragement on the eve of her trip.

She intends covering about 80km a day and will be accompanied on the first leg by Neil Smith of the firm Puncture Buster, sponsors of her bike.

Contributors can get in touch with Leanne on 987 1210, fax 987 1218.



MARATHON JOURNEY: Leanne Dickerson of London on the bicycle she will ride for charity round the coast from Vioolsdrif on the Namibian border to Kosi Bay on the border with Mozambique. While in Cape Town she will take part in The Argus/Pick'n Pay Cycle Tour.

ESTELLE RANDALL, Labour Reporter

THE government wants to cut pension payouts to up to 100 000 civil servants who face retrenchment. Many of these are from the former homelands, but some Western Cape civil servants could also face the chop.

Civil servants may be asked to volunteer for retrenchment from March 1. Retrenchment packages are now being negotiated, union sources disclosed.

The government wants to use the savings from pension payouts to help finance wage increases for civil servants next year.

These are some of the chips on the table as the bargaining began at public sector wage talks in Cape Town. Unions this week obtained clarity on the government's proposals.

The talks in the Public Service Bargaining Council are scheduled to continue until March 8, with implementation of wages and conditions for April 1.

They affect employees in health services, state administration and correctional services.

A spokesman for the Public Service Ministry said trade unions and government had agreed not to release details of proposals, at this stage.

It is understood, however, that the key proposals contained in the government's offer are to reduce pension payouts for retrenched public sector employees and to phase in a new grading system over two years instead of three.

Assistant general secretary of National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, Fikile Majola, said unions agreed in October on new grades comprising six broad bands with 16 salary ranges.

He said there also had been a proposal for a significantly higher starting salary of R40 000 a year.

In March 1995, the average salary in the public sector had risen from R3 271 to R3 497, but there was still a wage gap between white and black salaries. Average salary for white civil servants was R5 205, while black civil servants earned an average of R2 600.

Phasing in a new grading system was estimated to cost R9,1 billion for the first year, but earlier this year the government indicated that there was only R8,5 billion available.

Since then, the government had secured additional funds, bringing the amount available to R7,4 billion.

But, savings on pension payouts could increase funds available for wage increases and regrading to about R8,5 billion.

The government's October 1995 proposal for a new grading system was aimed at halting industrial action and retaining skilled staff and was to be accompanied by staff cuts of up to 100 000 people.

Negotiations affecting police pay would be dealt with in a separate national negotiating forum.

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Commuters threaten to boycott buses

Sowetan
26/2/96

(332)

By Joshua Raboroko

THOUSANDS of commuters have threatened to boycott Putco buses if the company implements its 10 percent fare increase on March 1.

The South African Commuters Organisation has warned that it will arrange alternative transport, including taxis and trains, for bus commuters.

The new fares will hit hard on the pockets of commuters in the Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga provinces where most blacks use Putco buses.

Saco's chairman Mr Stephen Sangweni said other bus companies were being consulted to save the commuters from the high fares.

Indications of increases

Putco had indicated that fares would be increased by between 10 and 12 percent in October last year depending on its subsidy allocation from the government.

The move to hike fares follows Government's decision not to increase Putco's subsidy

from the previous R770-million for 1995/96 after subsidy demands by other transport bodies.

Putco, which employs more than 5 500 workers, warned that it would retrench drivers, cut routes and raise fares if its subsidy was not increased.

Putco managing director Mr Mike Oldham said the company would still lose about R15-million due to the freeze in subsidies despite the fare increase.

Sangweni said Putco was "taking out its anger" on poor commuters who could not afford the increased fares. Most blacks were still reeling under the escalating cost of living.

He called on the Government to resolve the matter with Putco.

Meanwhile the minibus taxi industry has also asked the Government for subsidies, arguing that it provides one of the largest mode of transport in South Africa.

This matter is being studied by the Minister of Transport, Mr Mac Maharaj, but no decision had been taken so far, official sources disclosed yesterday.

Commuters threaten to boycott buses

Sowetan
26/2/96

(332)

By Joshua Raboroko

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Taxi strike threat over bus subsidy rise

(332)
BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

Star 26/2/96
The taxi industry believes it has been neglected by the Government and has called for an urgent meeting with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to avert a possible national strike, following an 8% increase in bus subsidies from April 1.

Taxi organisations said the increase indicated how the Department of Transport "continued to favour the highly subsidised bus industry over the long-suffering taxi industry".

The increase meant buses would get about R90-million compared with R10-million for taxis.

This increase led the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) and the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) to boycott the national transport policy plenary session held at the weekend.

Saldta said it did not want to be part of the process because it had not been consulted about the proposals in the Government's green paper.

The LTO accused Maharaj of "using and abusing the national taxi task team for his own political gain".

Spokesman Jacob Ledwaba warned that "there are very serious problems awaiting the Government if the minister tries to determine our future".

SA National Civic Organisation spokesman Dumisani Daniels said the subsidy problem would continue "unless commuters are relocated into areas near their jobs".

"Providing subsidies is only a short-term solution," he said.

Cape Town taxi organisations staged a march on Parliament on Friday in protest against the increased subsidies for buses.

On the same day, the national taxi task team met Maharaj to voice its anger over the bus subsidy increase.

er 26/2/96

Taxi industry set for battle

JOHANNESBURG: The taxi industry has called for an urgent meeting with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to avert a possible national strike following an 8% increase in bus subsidy allocations from April 1.

Taxi organisations said the increase showed the Department of Transport "continues to advantage the highly subsidised bus industry against the long-suffering taxi industry".

The subsidy increase means the bus industry will get about R90 million compared to R10 million for the taxi industry.

The Lehlabile Taxi Organisation warned that "there are very serious problems awaiting the government if the minister goes unilaterally in trying to determine our future".

(332)

Putco's fare hikes on

By Joshua Raboroko and Sapa

PUTCO will go ahead with its fare increases on Friday, despite the threat by commuters to boycott it and seek alternative transport.

Putco managing director Mr Mike Oldham said yesterday he had spoken to different commuters' groups to explain reasons for the hike. The company has announced that it will

increase its fares by 10 percent from Friday. The second hike of 10 percent will be introduced in October.

The South African National Civic Organisation described the new fares as "a reflection of a complete disregard of the economic problems" of the poor.

Sanco views Putco as being "insensitive and naive". Sanco has asked Putco to suspend the fare

increase until an amicable solution had been reached. It called on the company and the Minister of Transport, Mr Mac Maharaj, to convene a meeting to discuss the subsidy issue.

Oldham said he welcomed the move, but indicated that the subsidy issue was not the only reason. He also cited the hike in the price of petrol, diesel and vehicle maintenance as some of the "burning issues".

Sowetan 27/2/96 (332)

Eastern Cape wins first round in rail tariff row -

Own Correspondent

PORT ELIZABETH — In what could amount to a substantial economic boost for the region, the Eastern Cape has gained solid ground in the struggle to gain equitable rail tariffs.

Proposals by a regional delegation at a meeting at the weekend were unanimously accepted by the full plenary after six commissions (including transport and maritime) met in Gauteng to draw up a draft national transport document.

Leader of the Eastern Cape delegation, Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO: chamber division Kevin Wakeford said the delegation's full recommendation had been included in the revised green paper.

He said this was a giant step forward for Port Elizabeth and East London. Despite being 400km to 500km closer to Gauteng, they have had to pay the same rail tariffs as the Western Cape. This has meant the two ports have remained underutilised — East London has only feeder port status and has failed to attract international lines.

As a result the Eastern Cape cities have also been avoided by some foreign investors.

Cape Town's rail tariffs were lower to enable Spoornet to compete with road haulers.

Wakeford said the Eastern Cape recommendation pointed out that "serious consideration" needed to be given to the rail tariff structure.

It said the principle of equity — based on economic principles — should be applied to ensure that no rail route drew benefits above another. The principle should be regulated until competition evolved between rail routes and operators.

Maritime industry winning foreign currency for SA

GEORGE YOUNG

IT IS a fair assumption that no facet of industry is more exposed than the South African maritime portfolio to the surging, and resurging value of the rand. Engaged in a business conducted almost entirely in US dollars, international shipping is sensitive and responsive to the changing value of currencies.

South African shipping was at one time regarded as the Cinderella industry, since for a century all sea trade was conveyed by monopolistic cartels composed of foreign lines securing millions in profit in any currency.

But by breaking out of the cocoon after World War II, SA developed a highly respected and effectively managed maritime industry, the success of which is the envy of some of those who withdrew in the wake of new trends.

It was largely thanks to American know-how that SA spawned its first long-haul commercial shipping operations, in spite of opposition and competition from long-established carriers, and it required intervention from a Nationalist Minister, Eric Louw, to pressure the Europe-SA cartel to accept indigenous carriers into its membership.

Louw made it clear to the chairman of the cartel, Sir Francis Vernon Thomson, who also was chairman of the Union-Castle Line, that intransigence could imperil future negotiations for renewal of the sea mail contract with his company.

Every ounce of gold, every box of fruit, and every letter to Britain and Europe went in the ships of one overseas company, and the profits secured by the foreign lines caused a London newspaper to comment on the prosperity of

"the Golden Route". Ironically, in succeeding years many of the companies which had ships on the route, bowed out.

South African shipping enterprise is now quoted on the JSE, and tonnage costing hundreds of millions of rands is under construction in Far East yards, and in Poland for indigenous owners. South Africa's turnover these days hovers around R1 800-million annually, and Union-Castle, which started out with a pour of coasters plying the seaboard

in competition with deep-sea carriers and competitive port-to-port rates by the railways, now provides annual earnings exceeding R33,5-million attributable to ordinary shareholders.

The government has now recognised the need for streamlining the maritime portfolio, and has appointed Dr Henrietta van Niekerk at Stellenbosch to smooth out some of the problems, including taxation...

The marine portfolio, enjoying backing from some of the most prestigious South African finance houses, is not surprisingly also proving attractive for increasing numbers of new investors. Operations are also conducted offshore by the indigenous shipping entities, in the Isle of Man, Hong Kong, Switzerland, and

elsewhere, and ships owned by respective companies have been put out on time charter to affluent overseas principals, each earning \$12 000, and more, a day.

Converted into local currency, this is very good money requiring little effort on the home front.

The government has now recognised the need for streamlining the marine portfolio, and has appointed Dr Henrietta van Niekerk at Stellenbosch to smooth out some of the problems.

It is ironic that, allowances accepted, South African shipping is still required to pay substantial tax while competing along sea routes plying by overseas carriers sailing tax free.

Most maritime nations recognise the earnings by national carriers constitute a major asset to the economy, and regard it unwise to discourage increased partici-

27/2/96 (332)

pation by stiff home taxation. During the years of sanctions it proved essential for South African ships to conceal national identity, but they, nevertheless, succeeded to trade satisfactorily by switching registry in other countries.

Without this facility, the Republic's ships could not enter important distant terminals. Two container ships have since returned to SA registry.

What originally was the Cinderella industry has blossomed into a remarkably successful portfolio, and the small man-in-the-street investor is also satisfied that the facet is in good hands. It would not have attracted capital from big guns of national finance if this were not true.

George Young retired in 1981 after 43 years as Shipping Editor of the Cape Times. He is now Editor of the monthly digest, "Sea Views".

Mediation for taxi dispute under strain as one side withdraws (332)

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

Prospects to resolve the taxi dispute over the use of Rank 29 near Johannesburg's Park station has been dealt a heavy blow by the withdrawal of the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) from the mediation process.

This follows a deadlock on the procedure of last week's mediation meeting between LTO and the Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (Felldta), forcing mediator Roger Oxlee to postpone the meeting.

"We are withdrawing until a suitable person, like a retired judge, is appointed to lead the (mediation) process which has

lost direction," said LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba, alleging Felldta was controlling the process.

Felldta wanted to discuss a Northern Province incident in which one of their members, LP Malahlela, was shot dead last Monday. LTO member Joseph Phoshoko was arrested for the shooting.

But LTO opposed the discussion on the grounds that the mediation process was set up to deal with matters in Gauteng.

Ledwaba said Felldta had "deliberately interfered with the agenda to undermine all participants".

"We are suspicious that this dirty trick was calculated and well-or-

chestrated with the intention to cause damage to all efforts of the mediation process," said Ledwaba.

He expressed unhappiness about the mediation process, saying the process had been prolonged by "unnecessary" delays.

Felldta spokesman Paul Mametsa accused LTO of being "unfaithful", adding the Northern Province incident had a bearing on the meeting as "our members are being killed while we are negotiating".

Several meetings in the past had also to be postponed as organisations involved would either walk out or not turn up for meetings.

Bus operators 'must prepare to compete'

Theo Rawana

(332) 29/2/96
BUS companies not satisfied with the new subsidy system and who clamoured for the maintenance of the status quo should realise it was time to drop their dependency syndrome and be prepared to compete, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said yesterday.

He told the SA Bus Operators' Association (Saboa) AGM in Pretoria that while some bus companies were not satisfied with the 8% interim increase in subsidies he announced last week, taxi operators were up in arms, complaining that the move was an insult to their industry.

The transport policy document set out the proposed framework for the provision of future bus commuter services on the basis of tendered contracts.

"We are convinced that greater efficiency can be brought into the system by means of tendered contracts. Your industry has for a number of years indicated support for the system, but it appears that every time we start moving in that direction, the industry shies away," Maharaj said.

He reminded the bus operators that he had asked them if they were prepared to co-operate in developing a new subsidy policy which would be accessible to smaller, emerging operators, and in which the playing fields would be levelled without setting pre-conditions before getting that co-operation.

He expected "firm and executable recommendations" regarding the few problem areas that still existed in the contract system.

"In a meeting with representatives from Saboa, trade unions and commuter organisations last month, I indicated that a partnership would be required between those role players to assist in steering the process through the transitional bumps."

His announcement of the subsidy increase for 1996/97 last week was the first step in the direction of a general implementation of tendered contracts. "Thereafter, consideration will be given to a possible further increase based on each company's particular circumstances. This will be with the clear understanding that we will be moving towards interim contracts to be concluded with each company this year. "It may be the last time subsidy increases will be handled on this basis."

At the end of the interim contract period, tenders would be invited for service.

ANC, IFP want Mdlalose to intervene after bus attack

Farouk Chothia

90 1/3/96

(332)

DURBAN — ANC and IFP leaders will meet KwaZulu-Natal premier and safety and security MEC Frank Mdlalose today in a bid to persuade him to restore law and order in Durban's Lindelani settlement after a Putco bus driver was shot yesterday by suspected IFP dissidents.

Putco KwaZulu-Natal manager Ricky Stevenson said a bus was fired at as it travelled in the vicinity of Lindelani early yesterday morning. Driver Christopher Zungu was injured after a bullet "skinned his head and ear". There were no passengers in the bus.

Stevenson said the incident had forced Putco to suspend its services to Lindelani. Putco had served an average 180 000 people a month on this route, and it contributed to about 20% of Putco's business in the province.

Putco MD Michael Oldham announced a week ago Putco planned to close all KwaZulu-Natal operations because of government's refusal to lift subsidies for the 1995/96 financial year. The unstable political situation in KwaZulu-Natal, coupled with the "disastrous" situation in Lindelani, had contributed to the decision.

Stevenson said Putco would resume operations on the Lindelani route only after the authorities gave the company guarantee of safe passage. The SAPS had since early February been providing Putco with an escort. However, police had been unable to provide protection at the required level at the time that Zungu was shot because of their extended commitments.

Durban transitional metropolitan council executive committee chairman Obed Mlaba (ANC) announced at a news briefing that a multiparty delegation, including IFP leaders, would urge Mdlalose to bring the "criminality" to an end.

Mlaba said the violence was spilling into the city centre. Some Lindelani residents were now hijacking Durban Transport Management Board buses. An average of three board buses had been hijacked daily in the past two weeks, Mlaba said.

IFP south coast deputy publicity secretary and Durban councillor Anthony Grinker said the IFP would discuss the behaviour of its supporters at a national council meeting on March 9. If IFP supporters were found to have been involved, they would be "dismissed" from the party, Grinker said.



Wage deal likely for taxi drivers

Labour Reporter

TAXI drivers' wages and working conditions may soon be regulated, as could those of security guards.

Lisa Seftal, director of the Department of Labour's Minimum Standards Directorate, said a wage determination for the taxi industry and a labour order for the security sector was part of the Wage Board's programme, which Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni had approved last year.

However, the Wage Board had collapsed some time ago and had to be resuscitated.

Trade unions and organised business in the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) had already agreed on new nominations to the Wage Board.

All that remained was for the Department of Labour to formally set up the structure. Ms Seftal said this was likely to happen this month.

Current road transport laws are limited to particular areas of the country and

exclude small employers. A wage determination in the Road Passenger Transport Act excludes employers who own fewer than 11 minibuses.

Taxi drivers and security guards are currently covered by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, but this does not deal with minimum wages.

Earlier this month the Department of Labour released a Green Paper with proposals for revised minimum employment standards. The paper proposed that working hours for security guards drop from a 60-hour week to 48 hours a week.

Workers who now normally worked 46 and 48 hours a week should have the number reduced to 45 hours.

Overtime should drop to 10 hours a week, payable at one and half times the normal wage, and Sunday work should be paid at double the normal rate.

There were also proposals for an Employment Standards Commission to replace the Wage Board.

The Department of Labour has proposed that until the Green Paper proposals are refined into a new employment standards law later this year, the Wage Board should be resuscitated to deal with the 19 sectors of the economy, such as the taxi and security sectors, which are covered by wage determinations.

During February the government also announced a R14,5 million-a-year package to regulate the taxi industry.

This followed recommendations from a national taxi task team that the industry should be restructured into more formal business units to facilitate training and to get economic assistance.

The package includes a training programme to boost capacity in the taxi industry, economic aid through co-operatives based at petrol stations, and nine provincial offices to help organise the industry.

Taxi owners would be required to register, and the permit system would be changed to make it more manageable.

(332) ARG 1/3/96

Bus boycott fails to materialise

Star 1/3/96

(332)

The threat by the SA Commuter Organisation (Saco) to boycott Putco buses from today if the corporation's 10% price increase is not reversed failed to materialise early this morning.

Thousands of commuters in Soweto used the bus service as usual. Putco said any impact of the boycott would probably only be felt next week when passengers bought their weekly tickets.

Mike Oldham, managing director of Putco, said he hoped commuters would abandon their threats to strike in keeping with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj's appeal for restraint and under-

standing over the fare increases.

Saco has warned it would arrange alternative transport for bus commuters if Putco implemented the 10% rise, which comes into effect today.

The increase comes as a result of transport subsidy restructuring by the Government, which is likely to also mean a further escalation in fares later this year. Oldham said there had been no increases in fares last year, despite increases in wages, fuel, maintenance and vehicle servicing. "Fares should have gone up by 43% if all these things are taken into account." - Staff Reporters.

ARG 2/3/96
**Mass action
threat
over promise
of 8% bus
subsidy** (332)

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — The taxi industry has threatened to embark on a nationwide mass action campaign culminating in a two-day strike to protest against the government's increase in bus subsidies.

John Ledwaba, Gauteng spokesman of the taxi component of the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT), said the taxi industry had decided to take a "firm stand against the unilateral decision taken by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to increase bus subsidies by eight percent.

"We will meet the taxi industry leaders from the other provinces next week to finalise the mass action programme and decide on a further course of action," Mr Ledwaba said.

The taxi industry has also decided to boycott all further meetings of the transport policy review of the Department of Transport.

It also said it is unwilling to further participate in any of the meetings of the NTTT.

"This decision unanimously upholds taxi operators rights to boycott as a fundamental human right when authorities disregard bilateral talks and take unilateral decisions," Mr Ledwaba said.

Earlier this week the taxi industry released a joint statement slamming the Minister of Transport's announcement of the eight percent increase in the bus subsidy.

"At a meeting between the taxi industry and the government on February 17 Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj indicated that the government of national unity inherited a bankrupt government from the past regime.

"Therefore his department can only subsidise our (taxi) industry with R10 million, but hardly four days thereafter the minister approved giving R90 million to the Putco bus company.

The taxi industry accused Minister Maharaj of using the NTTT for his own political gain.

Taxi-owners angry with 'rip-off' banks

AKG 2/3/96

(332)

JEAN LE MAY
Staff Reporter

■ Taxi-owners have threatened to blockade the Cape Town in a dispute with banks over finance charges.

MINISTER of Justice Dullah Omar has given his support to action against banks and financial institutions which are charging clients more than they should.

The issue has been boiling up for months among owners of minibus taxis, who threatened yesterday to blockade Cape Town if they were not refunded money overpaid on vehicle financing agreements.

Saturday Argus reported in October last year that problems with the financing of taxis were partly responsible for recurrent taxi wars because taxi-owners had to compete for routes to get money to meet escalating payments.

Steven Williams, vice-chairman of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), said yesterday that a delegation from Cata had interviewed Mr Omar.

"Taxi-owners have discovered that they are being ripped off. If we don't get our money

back we may be forced to take action by blockading the streets," he said.

Mr Omar said he would facilitate a meeting between Cape attorney-general Frank Kahn and directors of the Cape-based Financial Research Foundation (FRF), which has investigated thousands of cases.

Mr Omar said he "shared the concern" and that consumers needed protection. It appeared that banks and financial institutions were contravening the Credit Agreements Act, a criminal offence.

He suggested that people who could show they had been overcharged should also bring civil actions.

Trevor Manuel, Minister of Trade and Industry, also met the FRF. He was not available for comment yesterday.

Gerrit Breyl, Department of Trade and Industry deputy director-general (trade), said the department had "only recently

become aware of these breaches and contraventions and was currently exploring the most satisfactory way to deal with them".

FRF director Laurie Friedman said they had given Mr Omar and Mr Manuel details of 636 contraventions of the Usury Act and 248 contraventions of the Credit Agreements Act.

Banks involved were Absa (300 cases), Standard Bank and Stanbic (103 cases), First National Bank and Wesbank (95 cases), Bolland Bank (91 cases) and other banks (47 cases).

Local authorities and several well-known business firms were among the claimants, according to an FRF schedule.

Overall, claims amounted to millions of rands, said Mr Friedman. Claims by minibus taxi-owners averaged R20 000.

Mr Friedman said that over and above the cases discussed with the two ministers, the FRF had received thousands of complaints from minibus taxi

owners whose agreements had been made before 1991 with Wesbank, the vehicle-financing arm of First National Bank.

Problems had arisen, he said, because in 1991 Wesbank formed a new bank, Future Bank, as a joint venture with the Foundation of African Business and Consumer Services (Fabcos), Taxi SA Marketing and the Get Ahead Foundation.

Wesbank's problem child — the "taxi book", for the financing of minibus taxis — was handed over to Future Bank, which described itself as "the bank with the new attitude".

Earlier agreements by Wesbank with taxi-owners had been handed over to Future Bank. However, Future Bank had refused to provide all the information necessary to investigate accounts on which taxi-owners felt they had been overcharged, said Mr Friedman.

Claimants against Future Bank included two taxi owners

from Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, who were claiming R75 000 and R53 000 respectively, according to the FRF schedule.

Future Bank's managing director, Neville Watchurst, denied to Saturday Argus that it had been unhelpful, saying that letters of complaint from investigators had "flooded in", but that "they had not been able to prove anything".

In an acrimonious exchange, Mr Friedman told Wesbank that "FRF has not disputed your formula on the running of accounts, although it seems rather odd".

However, "human-driven" errors had arisen, he said, such as "bank officers not informing clients of the contents of agreements, agreements not complying with the Usury Act and the Credit Agreements Act, insurance not done according to the Act and agreements with a third party (such as insurers) being concluded without this being specified in the agreements with the client".

"We shall let the law take its course," said Mr Friedman.

Taxi strike looms after bus subsidies increased

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

The taxi industry yesterday threatened to embark on a nationwide mass-action campaign culminating in a two-day strike to protest against the Government's increase in bus subsidies.

John Ledwaba, Gauteng spokesman for the taxi component of the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT), said the taxi industry had decided to take a stand against "the unilateral decision by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to increase bus subsidies by 8%".

"We will meet the taxi industry leaders from the other provinces next week to finalise the mass action programme and decide on a further course of action," Ledwaba said.

The taxi industry has also decided to boycott all further meetings of the transport policy review of the Department of Transport.

It also said it was unwilling to participate further in any of the meetings of the NTTT.

"This decision unanimously up-

holds taxi operators' rights to boycott as a fundamental human right when authorities disregard bilateral talks and take unilateral decisions," he said.

Earlier this week, the taxi industry released a joint statement slamming the minister of transport's announcement of the 8% increase in the bus subsidy.

"At a meeting between the taxi industry and the Government on February 17, Mac Maharaj indicated that the Government of National Unity inherited a bankrupt government from the past regime.

"Therefore, his department can only subsidise our (taxi) industry with R10-million, but hardly four days thereafter the minister approved giving R90-million to the Puteo bus company.

"It shows once again how the transport ministry continues to advantage the already highly sub-



MAC MAHARAJ:
Made a "unilateral decision"

sidised bus industry against the long-suffering taxi industry.

"This move has taken us all by surprise and we need to reiterate to the minister that we are not going to tolerate this," the statement said.

The taxi industry accused Maharaj of using the NTTT for his own political gain and of negotiating in bad faith.

"If the minister and the NTTT go on unilaterally in trying to determine our future, there are going to be serious problems in the future," the statement read.

"While we are open for ongoing discussions with the Transport Department, we are confident that our concerns enjoy the support of the overwhelming majority in the taxi industry."

Ledwaba said the proposed mass action by the taxi industry could be reversed only if the minister met the industry "very soon".

Mediation efforts over lucrative rank falter

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

Peace talks between the three rival taxi associations in the ongoing feud over the use of Park Station's lucrative rank 29 were derailed this week when one of the parties pulled out of the negotiations.

The rival organisations - the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO), the Federated Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (Felldta) and the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) - deadlocked at a meeting called to resolve the conflict over the Johannesburg rank.

Mediator Roger Oxlee then decided to postpone the meeting after the two taxi operators could not agree on an agenda.

The LTO said it was withdrawing from the mediation process, citing difficulties with Oxlee and delaying tactics from Felldta.

"We are withdrawing until a suitable person, like a retired judge, is appointed to lead the mediation process, which has lost direction," said LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba.

He alleged that Oxlee had been too lenient with the Felldta delegation and allowed Felldta to hold the mediation process to ransom.

At the meeting, Felldta insisted on discussing last week's shooting of L P Malahlela, a Northern Province member of the organisation.

Joseph Phoshoko, alleged to be a LTO member, was arrested.

The LTO opposed the discussion on the grounds that it did not fall within the terms of reference of the meeting, which was set up to deal only with taxi violence in Gauteng.

Ledwaba said Felldta had "deliberately interfered with the agenda to undermine all participants".

"We are suspicious that this dirty trick was calculated and well orchestrated with the intention to cause damage to the mediation efforts."

Felldta spokesman Paul Mametsa blamed the LTO and accused it of being unfaithful, adding that the Northern Province incident had a bearing on the meeting because "our members were being killed while we were negotiating".

Wesley Mpawu, spokesman for Saldta, the other taxi organisation involved in the peace talks, defended Oxlee's role in the mediation.

"The credibility of Oxlee is beyond dispute, and Saldta can't see why he should be replaced," he said.

"Saldta views any suggestions that Oxlee is biased towards any of the parties as untrue," he said.

Mpawu accused the LTO of straining the peace negotiations and of unwillingness to commit itself to resolving the taxi violence. "For the sake of bringing an end to the senseless killings and counter-killings, we would settle for any other credible mediator suggested by the LTO."

Mpawu said his organisation saw nothing wrong with the Felldta delegation at the meeting insisting on discussing the slaying of one of its members. "We (Saldta) want to sit down around the negotiating table to resolve the conflict," he said.

On Thursday night, LTO failed to arrive at a follow-up meeting that would have decided on a process to resume the peace negotiations.

NEWS

Putco calls for halt to boycott plans

(332) 27 (BR) 4/3/96

Johannesburg — Putco has asked the South African National Civics Organisation not to go ahead with its planned boycott of the transport utility today.

The boycott and the uncertainty about bus subsidies have caused a sharp drop in the company's share.

Putco increased its fares by 10 percent on Friday. Threats of the boycott in protest against the increase caused the share to drop 50c last week, from 410c on Monday to 360c on Friday.

Michael Oldham, the managing director of Putco, said at the weekend that the boycott threat had created uncertainty about the shares on the JSE.

"People are obviously concerned about what's happening and are of the view that there may be problems. As soon as there is uncertainty, (as was the case) with the rand, it makes investors jittery," said Oldham.

He said a reason for the sharp drop in the company's share price since December was that investors had expected a low dividend when the company published its results later this month. This followed the transport department's announcement that it would not increase bus

South Africa's biggest bus operator, Putco, is caught between a rock and a hard place. Having put up fares last week after the government failed to approve an increase in subsidy, it now faces boycott action by commuters. Thabo Leshilo spoke to Putco managing director Michael Oldham.

commuter subsidies between July 1 last year to March 31 this year.

Oldham said Putco had expected a 10,5 percent increase in subsidies for the period, so the decision meant a loss in revenue of R32 million to the company.

He said Transport Minister Mac Maharaj's announcement last month of the 8 percent increase in subsidies for 1996-97 would enable Putco to recover only R6 million of the losses, leaving it with a R26 million shortfall.

The weekend 10 percent fare increase would help recover a further R8 million, leaving a difference of R18 million.

"Putco will bear this loss from fares and endeavour to recover it by internal savings over a period of time," Oldham said.

"The minister has requested that as the transport industry is going

through a period of structural adjustment all the parties concerned should find ways of addressing the obstacle.

"Putco is trying to assist in the transformation process and is not increasing its fares by 40 percent, which is what is required, but nevertheless needs to ... take some action to ensure that it can operate and provide jobs for its 5 500 employees," said Oldham.

Last week, Dumnisani Daniels, the Civics national co-ordinator for roads and transport, warned that "strong resistance from the suffering masses" would meet Putco's fare increase.

The organisation said the increase did not take account of the economic problems of poor people. The organisation would hold meetings in Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal to co-ordinate the boycott.



CONCERNED Michael Oldham, the managing director of Putco

PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

Policing 'vital to taxi competition'

Theo Rawana

THE introduction of regulated competition which would allow taxis to bid for routes in the same way as buses would succeed only if there was strict law enforcement to regulate competition on the road, the SA Bus Operators' Association said.

In a paper spelling out the bus industry's response to the public transport policy review initiatives contained in the draft green paper on national transport policy, association vice-president Helen Gray said the ability of the taxi industry to gain access to the regulated competition for service provision would determine the long-term success of the policy.

"Key to the success of regulated competition is the issue of law en-

forcement. Not only must the current lawlessness be curbed, but law enforcement will be required to regulate competition on the road and to control operators," Gray said.

The draft document recommends that the public transport system be based on regulated competition. It says: "This implies competition for a route or network, and not competition on a route or network. The regulation will be in the form of a permission, contract or concession awarded in terms of a passenger transport plan and supported by strict law enforcement."

It says permission will be given only to privately owned or fully corporatised municipal and parastatal bus companies and registered minibuses operators.

604/3/96
(332)
Taxis could form legally registered co-operatives or companies, or be registered as associations. Taxi businesses could also compete for contracts from transport authorities.

"Financial and technical assistance will be offered to minibuses taxis to enable them to obtain permission and/or contracts and to improve their economic viability."

Buses might get permission from provincial permit boards and might have to compete for contracts from a transport authority.

All transport operators will be encouraged and empowered to bid for contracts and concessions. "Contracts will be partitioned into manageable parcels to encourage bids by co-operatives comprising small, medium and micro enterprises," the document says.

Minibus taxi collisions increasing — Maharaj

□ *More than 166 000 accidents in three years* ARG 5/3/96 (332)

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

THERE have been more than 166 000 collisions involving minibus taxis in the past three years, with the figure increasing each year.

Most were because of too high speeds, lack of concentration, unsafe overtaking, overloading, fatigue or unroadworthy vehicles, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj told the national assembly.

In a written reply to a question by Farouk Cassim (IFP), Mr Maharaj said a task team of national, provincial and local officials had made detailed proposals for reforming the industry.

These proposals affected regu-

lation of the industry, its formalisation and financing.

Other aspects investigated by the task team included lack of regulation, lack of skills — including driving skills — working conditions of drivers, and inadequate infrastructure — for example, shortage of stopping bays and inadequate ranks.

Mr Maharaj said the task team's reports were aimed at putting it on the path towards greater order, professionalism and profitability.

"It is expected that these interventions will, through addressing the underlying causes of violence and intolerance, contribute significantly to the stabilisation of the minibus industry."

Replying to a question by Piet Welgemoed (NP), Mr Maharaj said 3 028 drivers, 3 544 passengers and 4 473 pedestrians had died in road accidents last year.

Drivers seriously injured totalled 13 386, passengers 17 896 and pedestrians 11 558.

On the Beaufort West to Laingsburg "death road", notorious for fatal accidents, 42 occupants of vehicles were fatally injured between January 1993 and August last year.

On the road from Beaufort West to Three Sisters, 10 occupants of vehicles were fatally injured between January 1993 and December last year.

Mr Maharaj said steps were being taken to reduce traffic accidents.

Bank denies taxi loan rip-off

'We ensure our rate is never above legal limit'

ARG 7/3/96

Staff Reporter

A LEADING bank has denied overcharging taxi owners and other clients on their interest.

Last week The Argus reported that a number of taxi drivers and associations had threatened to blockade Cape Town roads, alleging they were being ripped off by banks.

Standard Bank's national manager for motor finance, Henk Vosloo, said that while mistakes could occur, the bank had control mechanisms in place that made this almost impossible.

"We have long ago taken the necessary steps to ensure that our computer system will reject any interest rate entered which is above the maximum permitted by law. All agreements get loaded into the system immediately and even if there is an error of 0,125 percent, the programme will reject the data."

He said although the taxi industry was a high-risk operation for the bank, taxi owners were being charged the same interest rate levels as any other client.

"It is a high-risk segment of the industry with lots of bad debts, but it is also an industry we need and will look after. We handle them with a great deal of empathy as we know and understand the background."

Mr Vosloo said the bank had established a dedicated unit to look at claims relating to the recalculation of interest and that to date, no payouts had been made relating to the allegations of the taxi drivers.

"While there is always room for improvement in this business, our own investigations into the allegations revealed that no errors had been made.

"We are open for scrutiny and

if any mistakes are found we will rectify them immediately, and even pay interest on the refunds," he said.

He urged taxi owners to go directly to the bank if they had any problems relating to the agreement they had signed, and he promised that the bank's staff would do everything in their power to explain all aspects of the contract to them.

Mr Vosloo said the bank held discussions with members of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) on the issue and would continue its open-door approach in trying to address their concerns.

"There is no need to blockade streets to highlight their plight.

"They must come in and speak to us, and I am sure the confusion about the recalculation of their interest rates would be sorted out," he said.

POLITICS

60 000 MINIBUS TAXIS OPERATE ILLEGALLY

Taxis in line for R80 million subsidy

CT 8/3/96

(332)

FUNDS WILL BE USED to reduce interest rates paid by taxi operators on capital goods, and to assist them to establish petrol stations and maintenance shops.

THE government will make R80 million available over the next two years for a capital guarantee fund to assist the minibus taxi industry, Transport Department director-general Kelso Gordhan said yesterday.

Speaking at the launch of the department's Green Paper on National Transport Policy, Gordhan said details of the funding were still being finalised with the Department of Finance.

The capital guarantee fund would channel assistance to taxi operators in two ways. It would attempt to reduce interest rates

being paid by taxi operators on capital goods from prime plus eight percent to the prime rate. The rest would go towards setting up taxi co-operatives and assisting them to establish petrol stations, spares and maintenance shops.

Introducing the Green Paper, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said a policy of "regulated competition" would be introduced for the road transport system. This included measures to formalise the taxi industry.

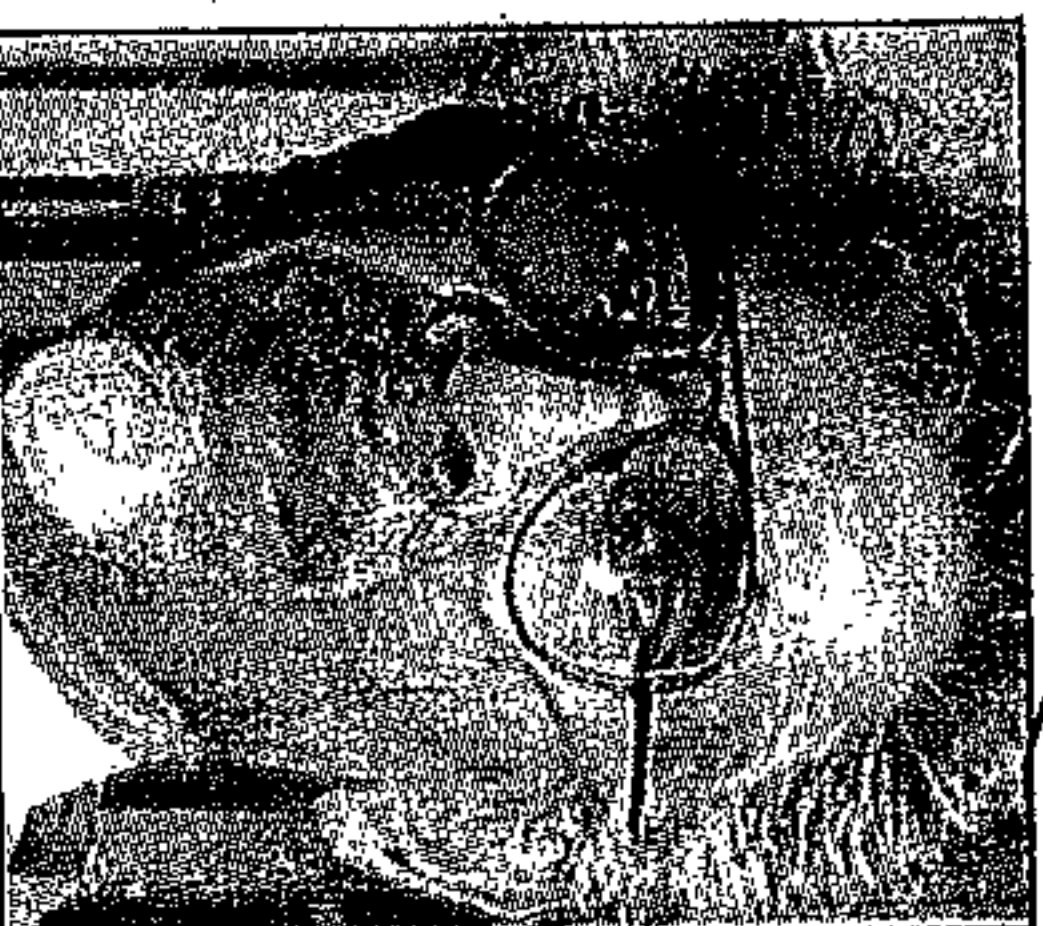
Gordhan said the 70 000 legal and 60 000 illegal taxis operating on the country's roads indicated

the extent of the demand for road transport. Taxis would, however, have to be registered and would have to apply for permission to operate certain routes.

The Green Paper says: "As far as is possible in terms of the transport plan, the determination of route networks will be based on existing operations, including both legal and pirate operators."

"Financial and technical assistance will be offered to minibus taxis to enable them to obtain permits and/or contracts and to improve their economic viability. Minibus taxi businesses may apply for permits and/or contracts either on their own or in partnership with bus operators."

The current system of issuing bus transport permits on a perma-



ADAPT OR DIE: Mac Maharaj unveils new transport policy.

nent basis would be phased out over the next three years. Existing permits will be turned into interim contracts.

Maharaj said the Green Paper was the result of intensive negotiations and consultation over the past 12 months. Transport was an important catalyst to development and ranked second only to education in this role.

"The transport sector must be outward-looking, shaped by the needs of society in general, of passenger and goods customers in particular, and of the economy that transport has to satisfy," he said.

"South Africa's present transport system reflects the goals and investments of the past. These have fashioned the system as it now exists.

"The country's priorities have changed and the transport system needs to adapt accordingly." — Political Staff

Permits to control taxis in new plan

ARG 8/3/96

(332)

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

PROPOSALS to control the unruly minibus taxi industry have been unveiled by Mac Maharaj, the national Minister of Transport.

Not yet government policy, the proposals are contained in a preliminary green paper on the transport industry. They are subject to change depending on further consultation.

The green paper, released yesterday, proposes regulating competition in the minibus taxi industry. This would mean formalising the industry and introducing measures to ensure its economic viability.

Minibus taxi operators could form legally registered businesses, for example co-operatives or companies, or become registered associations.

These would have to get permission from a provincial permit board to operate on a route or network.

The number of permits would depend on the need estimated in terms of a passenger transport plan.

Minibus taxi businesses would be able allowed to compete for contracts granted by transport authorities.

Routes and networks would be based on existing operations, both legal and pirate.

Financial and technical assistance would be offered to minibus taxi operators to enable them to get permits and contracts and to improve their economic viability.

Minibus taxi businesses would have the option of going into partnerships with bus operators.

On bus operations, the green paper recommends that they should be privately owned, legal entities or full corporatised municipal or parastatal bus companies.

Permission to operate would be decided by the provincial permit board.

Existing permits on subsidised routes would be converted into interim contracts.

Special efforts would be made to encourage small, medium and micro enterprises in the bus transport industry.

On rail passenger transport, the report said all infrastructure, rolling stock and reserve land should be owned by a national transport authority.

The deficit financing system for rail transport should be abolished and replaced with a concession system, ensuring more efficient use of funds.

The green paper recommends increased fiscal powers for provincial and local governments to augment national funds to urban and public transport. However, funding should be channelled through a single authority.

"This is to ensure that transport operations do not receive funds from more than one authority for offering the same service," the green paper states.

Tow truckers apologise (332) for blockade

ARG 8/3/96
Staff Reporter

TOW truckers involved in this week's blockade of the N1 in Goodwood in peak-hour traffic have apologised to motorists they inconvenienced.

"We achieved what we wanted to, but on the other hand we had bad vibes from the motorists," said Frans Conradie, a committee member of the Cape Towing Association.

He said the incident would not be repeated.

The tow truckers blocked the N1 to publicise their demands to be allowed to listen to police radio frequencies to get early notice of road accidents.

FEATURE
TAXI INDUSTRY

IN DEFENCE OF THE HANSOM

PM 8/3/96 (372)

Your article "The Big Black Hole" (*Business* February 23) on the taxi industry, is so wide of the mark, that it obliges me to take issue with you vigorously.

When the *FM* went to print the position was: the interim report of the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT) had been presented to me at a public event on December 6 1995 and I made it available to the public. Mincom (the structure representing the nine provincial MECs for transport and myself) indicated that it had considered the report at a special meeting held on January 12 1996. Its assessment and evaluation was the basis on which I took the matter to Cabinet on February 7 1996.

Cabinet informed the public that government's response was a broad approval and that I was mandated to provide the detailed response, which I announced I would do at a plenary meeting of the taxi industry on February 17 1996.

All this and more was known to you even before you put pen to paper. Yet your article descends into denigrating the industry ("the industry . . . dominated by a coterie of terrorists, will continue to attract those seeking easy pickings . . .") pours scorn on the NTTT recommendations ("fuel will be added to the blazing row . . . discussion forums have given way to gun battles and terrorism wins the day"); is dismissive of government's response and paints me as a bumbling fool ("taxi blockade . . . but it's not their fault, says Maharaj").

Hardly a serious analysis and commentary in our common search for solutions for an industry which serves 50% of our daily commuters and which is trapped in a spiral of violence and severe economic straits.

The interim recommendations of the NTTT are the outcome of intensive consultations with all the stakeholders concentrated into a period of nine months and including 35 public hearings in all nine provinces.

It is a deeply inclusive exercise. The NTTT is composed of nine representatives of the industry (one from each province), nine representatives from the three tiers of government and nine specialist advisers.

Why, you may ask, bother with all this inclusivity and deep-going consultation? First, effecting regulation and control becomes more feasible, effective and reduces reliance on policing if we draw the industry into finding the solutions.

Second, the majority of the industry are black, that is, part of the community which was previously never allowed any say in determining public passenger transport policy. Finally, as an industry serving the public (almost exclusively black commuters) it remains important that the commuters should play a role, which was eminently served by the public hearings.

Given that the NTTT recommendations are the product of such an inclusive and thorough process it behoves us to evaluate them rigorously and constructively. This you fail to do.

The recommendations fall into three important categories:

- ☐ The need for and mechanism through which regulation and control may be established;
- ☐ Support for and the means which would enable formalising and restructuring the industry; and
- ☐ The setting up of taxi co-ops to enable the industry to move to business-related growth and receive economic assistance.

That the industry has participated in a process which comes to these critical conclusions is, to my simple mind, a major breakthrough. The taxi plenary held on February 17 1996 and attended by over 215 taxi operators from all nine provinces endorsed these three proposals as a package.

This in itself is significant evidence of considerable realism and maturity of approach within the industry.

Why is it that you regard every proposal dealing with economic assistance to the industry as "donations"?

It should be clear by now that government evaluated the recommendations — each one on its feasibility, financial viability and effectiveness in helping solve the problems on the basis of sustainable development.

As became clear from the detailed resolution adopted by the industry at the plenary meeting, and because your article goes on a rant about economic assistance proposals, let me outline government's response on this aspect:

- ☐ Support for the principle of co-operatives. Plenary agreed;
- ☐ Use the 25 and hopefully 36 petrol installations, spare parts and maintenance businesses as vehicles to promote co-ops. Plenary agreed;

☐ Government will investigate the capital and insurance guarantee funds. Plenary noted this; and

☐ Taxi industry with help from the Department of Transport to pursue other matters such as radio frequency, direct purchase of vehicles, with the relevant authorities. Plenary agreed. In similar fashion I took careful note of the industry's frankness. In those instances where some had not gained sufficient understanding of the recommendations and government's response, at my request plenary accepted processes within clearly defined time frames for such aspects to be further scrutinised before implementation.

There are still many issues to be resolved. The process of systematically re-regulating an industry which was allowed to descent into anarchy is not an easy one. There is a long and tough road ahead. The crises in the industry are due to a range of factors including internal mismanagement and government complicity over many years.

The NTTT process has laid a solid platform for responsible development-orientated strategies which have differing degrees of support from those in the industry who are equally concerned about its long-term viability. ■



Mac Maharaj

R80-m Government subsidy for minibus-taxi industry

(332) Star 8/3/96

By PATRICK BULGER
Political Correspondent

Cape Town – The Government will make R80-million available over the next two years to assist the minibus taxi industry, Transport Department director-general Ketso Gordhan said yesterday.

Speaking at the launch of the department's Green Paper on National Transport Policy, Gordhan said details of the funding were still being finalised in negotiations with the Department of Finance.

The capital guarantee fund would channel assistance to taxi operators in two ways. It would attempt to reduce interest rates

being paid by taxi operators on capital goods from prime plus 8% to the prime rate. The rest would go towards setting up and assisting taxi co-operatives to establish petrol stations, spares and maintenance shops.

Introducing the green paper, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said a policy of "regulated competition" would be introduced for the road transport system. This included measures to formalise the taxi industry.

Gordhan said the 70 000 legal and 60 000 illegal taxis operating on the country's roads indicated the extent of the demand for road transport. Taxis would, however,

have to be registered and would have to apply for permission to operate certain routes.

"As far as is possible in terms of the transport plan, the determination of routes networks will be based on existing operations, including legal and pirate operators. Financial and technical assistance will be offered to minibus taxis to enable them to obtain permission and/or contracts, and to improve their economic viability.

"Minibus-taxi businesses may apply for permission and/or contracts either on their own or in partnership with bus operators," the green paper says.

The system of issuing bus per-

mits on a permanent basis would be phased out over the next three years and existing permits will be translated into interim contracts.

Maharaj said the green paper was the result of an intensive process of negotiations and consultation over the past year.

He said transport was an important catalyst to development and ranked second only to education in this role.

"The transport sector must be outward looking, shaped by the needs of society in general, of passenger and goods customers in particular, and of the economy that transport has to satisfy," he said.

at Shell House before the sue would continue to ar-

Minibus taxi industry crisis 'has been defused'

BD 13/3/96

(332)

CAPE TOWN — The crisis in the minibus taxi industry, after Transport Minister Mac Maharaj's announcement of an 8% rise in bus subsidies for the new financial year, had been defused, national taxi task team chairman Dipak Patel said yesterday.

Briefing Parliament's transport committee, Patel said the threats of national blockades and strikes had been averted after talks and much "diplomatic" activity. However, about 60 taxi drivers formed a blockade in the Germiston CBD yesterday. Police arrested five people while removing it.

The dispute regarding routes is between the Katlehong People's Taxi Association, Greater Germiston Taxi Association and the Vosloorus Taxi Association.

Patel said that while no increase in the bus subsidy had been granted last year, the increase this year was granted because of the move towards a tender contract system for public transport.

In future, bus companies would have to enter into interim contracts when subsidies were increased. These would last for about three years before the new open tender contract system for routes and services was started. Efforts to formalise and restructure the minibus taxi industry were being made, but were hampered by a lack of a comprehensive database.

Training to improve skills was an important aspect of the process and R20m had been made available for this over the next two years.

Measures to regulate and control the industry included cleaning up existing permits. This was being done voluntarily, Patel said. — Sapa.

Ultimatum for taximen

(332) Sowetan 13/3/96

By Dan Fuphe

THE Germiston City Council has given feuding taxi groups in Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus on the East Rand three days to resolve their differences or face competition from a municipal bus service.

Council chairman Mr Oupa Modikoane issued the ultimatum after a four-hour meeting and said he was disappointed by the unwillingness of the Germiston and Vosloorus taxi associations to reach a compromise on routes.

He said discussions between the Germiston, Boksburg and Alberton councils to look at restoring municipal bus services in the suburbs were in the pipeline.

Meanwhile, the Vosloorus-Spruitview taxi blockade which involved about 200 minibuses and left hundreds of commuters stranded on Monday appears to be over.

Taxi fare hike looms large

(332) Sowetan 15/3/96

By Joshua Raboroko

THOUSANDS of taxi commuters, already reeling under the escalating cost of living, should prepare themselves for an increase in taxi fares from next month, according to transport organisations.

South African Black Taxi Association treasurer Mr Enos Makena said yesterday there was a strong possibility fares would go up after the Minister of Finance Mr Chris Liebenberg announced an increase in the price of petrol and diesel.

In his 1996/7 Budget Liebenberg announced that petrol and diesel prices are to increase by 3 cents a litre from next month.

Makena said different taxi organisations would hold meetings with commuters in various regions to decide new fares because "we have not increased our fares for the past three years".

"Our fares will definitely have to

go up, whatever opposition we have to face this year. Civic associations normally protest when we increase our fares, but we hope they become sympathetic to our problems this time," he said.

Makena said unlike buses, taxis were not subsidised. "Poor taximen have to pay high prices for vehicles, tyres, spares and general maintenance. The price of petrol and diesel worsens the situation.

"We are also feeling the pinch and unless we increase fares we will never be able to run our business," said Makena. Taxi commuters have in the past accused the taxi organisations of unilaterally increasing fares without consulting the passengers.

A taxi commuter Mr Sam Mkhize said most blacks, who were still reeling under the soaring cost of living, would be hard hit if taxi fares were increased. Employers would have to increase their employees' salaries, he said.

Putco sees its earnings halved

Patrick Wadula

BUS company Putco's earnings more than halved to R4,8m in the six months to December from R10,6m a year before following government's refusal to increase passenger subsidies for the 1995/96 fiscal year and the continuing deterioration of its KwaZulu-Natal operations.

Share earnings came to 18,2c from 40,1c previously, while an interim dividend of 8,5c (17c) was declared.

Chairman and CE Albino Carleo said government's announcement to the bus industry in December that it was unable to raise subsidies to bus commuters had caused serious problems.

"The company was confronted by, firstly, the holiday period and secondly, limited time to correct

BD 18/3/96
the adverse financial position with which it was faced.

"Putco was unable to implement any measures which could have improved the first six months' results."

The company's "multi-faceted action plan" included a decision to raise fares by 10% from March 1.

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj announced last month that 1996/97 subsidies would increase by 8%. As a result of this and the 10% fare hike, it was decided that the annual fare increase would be postponed to October 1.

Carleo said the KwaZulu/Natal operation had been operating at a deficit for some time. Putco was discussing final alternatives with various stakeholders to determine if there were any viable solutions, although the prospects of finding an acceptable solution were very

26 (332)
limited, unless special subsidies were received.

Putco's intention was to "minimally disrupt" bus transport in the province while the required actions were being implemented. About 600 employees would be adversely affected and 220 buses were involved.

Revenue in the review period edged up 4,4% to R281,5m, but operating profit plunged 70,7% to R4,7 after operating costs rose to R276,7m from R253,4m.

Interest received rose 72,7% to R3,4m, while a tax bill of R3,2m (R7,7m) left taxed profit at R5m from R10,6m.

Carleo said Putco expected to spend R55,8m (R57,7m) on major chassis and body overalls in the current financial year, while the cost of new buses purchased would amount to about R23,3m (R18m).

One killed, 25 hurt in taxi violence

ET 20/3/96
DALE GRANGER
STAFF WRITER

MONTHS of peace between the city's volatile taxi factions ended last night when running gun battles erupted all over the Cape Flats.

One man was killed and up to 25 commuters were injured.

Police spokesman Captain Wicus Holtzhausen said last night the shootings flared in Guguletu, Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Philippi at taxi ranks and on routes.

Police were investigating the possibility that rival taxi groups Cata and Codeta had resumed their war for control of the routes.

At Groote Schuur Hospital nine injured men were treated with gunshot wounds to the neck, chest, back, stomach, arms and legs. Seven were in a serious condition.

At Khayelitsha Day Hospital a nursing sister said 25 people had been injured.

Tygerberg Hospital reported treating one man for a wound in the foot.

Speaking from the trauma unit at Groote Schuur last night Mr Clarence Mtendukane, 24, of Claremont, who was shot in the hand, described the terror of commuters in the Cata taxi he was travelling in down Lansdowne Road between Guguletu and Philippi.

He said they screamed as they came under fire and fled from a hail of bullets.

"Another taxi came past and bullets just came flying through the window," said Mtendukane.

"The driver hit the brakes, the taxi stopped and people just fled for their lives. I don't know how many people were wounded."

Mr John Mdoyakae, 22, said he was near traffic lights at Site C taxi rank in Khayelitsha when gunmen leapt out of a taxi and opened fire. He was hit in the arm.

Another man identified as Sibota described how the attackers fired at almost point-blank range into the taxi he was travelling in between Lansdowne East and Khayelitsha.

He was shot in the side but was too weak to give more details from hospital last night.

A weak Mr Nzola Ilani said he too was shot in the side.

Joint venture creates black-owned truck dealership

By ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — Africa Truck & Bus, the first black commercial-vehicle dealership in South Africa, has been created through a joint venture between MAN Truck & Bus, Fabcos, Nafcoc and Baobab Solid Growth.

Wolf Meurer, the executive chairman of MAN and deputy chairman of the joint venture, said MAN was overseeing the venture under a management agreement.

He said that MAN Germany

(332)CT(BR)21/3/96
and MAN South Africa were contractually committed to comprehensive training courses.

The aim was that a professional dealership for MAN products would be run and owned by black South Africans within the next three to five years.

"By that time it is expected that annual sales of between R200 million and R250 million will be achieved in Gauteng through sales to government, parastatal and municipal organisations," he said.

Meurer said the present shareholding of the joint venture was 30 percent each held by Fabcos, Nafcoc and MAN, and 10 percent held by Baobab Solid Growth, an investment company listed on the JSE, which was helping to finance the joint venture.

Meurer said total shareholding in the joint venture consisted of 1 000 shares of 100c each. MAN's 30 percent shareholding would also be sold at par value.

"MAN has put its money where

its mouth is, and our South African partners are getting their shares at nominal value without any premium or goodwill," he said.

Africa Truck & Bus has rented the former MAN Isando premises and has taken over its retail sales of trucks, buses, parts and service.

Africa Truck & Bus will also offer an opportunity to enhance owner-driver schemes whereby entrepreneurs will be encouraged to establish and develop their own businesses.

Taxi peace talks flounder again

(331) Star 23/3/96
Hopes of getting the taxi peace talks, which ran aground three weeks ago, back on track faded this week when the warring parties failed to pitch up for a meeting intended to entice them to return to the negotiation table — sparking fears of renewed taxi violence.

Roger Oxlee, mediator in the feud between the Federation of Local and Long Distance Taxi Association, Lehlabile Taxi Association (LTO) and the SA Long Distance Taxi Association over the busy Johannesburg Park Station's rank 29, has called on the provincial government and local authorities to be part of the mediation process.

"The Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, the provincial safety and security departments and the transport department, which regulates the taxi routes, should help resolve the conflict," Oxlee said.

The LTO yesterday remained adamant that it would not return to the negotiation table unless Oxlee was replaced by a mediator of its choice.

Oxlee, however, was cautiously optimistic that the LTO could still be brought back to the mediation process and help bring the conflict to an end. — William-Mervin Gumede

Commuters shun taxis after weekend violence

CT 26/3/96

(332)

GOLDEN Arrow Bus Services provided an extra 16 buses on Khayelitsha routes during peak hour yesterday morning as many commuters shunned minibus taxis after Sunday's violence in which two people were shot dead and five wounded.

A police spokesman said the situation in the townships was calm, but police were still being deployed at a number of taxi ranks.

A Golden Arrow spokeswoman said demand in other areas, including Nyanga and Guguletu, had been "a little more manageable".

Hundreds of commuters also used train services.

In Durban, police and the army were out in full force and coils of barbed wire were placed

at potential flashpoints.

In Port Elizabeth, where four people were killed in taxi feud-related violence at the weekend, taxi services were suspended indefinitely.

Among the victims was Eastern Province Hockey Board founding member and former teacher Ms Grace Fredericks, 75, who was hit by a stray bullet.

Thousands of township residents were bused to work after mayor Mr Nceba Faku said taxi organisations would be sidelined until they had sorted out their differences.

The ANC-Cosatu-SACP alliance said "people have decided enough is enough and they can't stand being victims of a war they are not part of". — Sapa, Own Correspondent

● See Page 6

Thousands shun taxis after weekend battles

BD 26/3/96 (332)

Own Correspondent

PORT ELIZABETH — Thousands of township residents were bussed into work yesterday after Port Elizabeth mayor Nceba Faku announced that taxi transport would be avoided until feuding organisations sorted out their differences.

The ANC-Cosatu-SACP alliance announced the move on Sunday night, saying "people have decided enough is enough, and they can't stand being victims of a war they are not part of".

Taxi ranks were deserted yesterday and police and the army were out in full force. Barbed wire was placed at

points around Port Elizabeth in readiness for a possible flare-up of violence. By late afternoon no incidents had been reported after a bloody weekend which left four dead.

A police spokesman said the situation was under control.

Among the four people killed in the weekend feud was Eastern Province Hockey Board founding member and former Port Elizabeth teacher Grace Fredericks, 75, who was hit by a stray bullet while visiting a friend near the Durban Road taxi rank in Korsten. The other victims were an unidentified 32-year-old man, who was shot dead in Strand Street, a man who was killed in

Sidwell and a commuter who was killed on the north-south freeway.

The battles began on Saturday when a man was shot dead at the Strand Street rank and commuters injured in the crossfire between rival groups. A man was shot dead in Sidwell after being chased by taxi drivers.

Sapa reports from Cape Town that Golden Arrow Bus Services laid on extra buses in Khayelitsha, Nyanga and Guguletu yesterday after commuters shunned minibuses following Sunday's taxi violence in which two people were shot dead and five injured. Others were killed earlier in the week. Hundreds of commuters also used trains.

Taxi routes to be put out to tender

(332)
METRO WRITER

CT 28/3/96

PUBLIC transport routes are to be identified and put out to tender and successful operators will get subsidies to ply their exclusive routes.

It appears that, for the first time, taxi operators will be in line for commuter subsidies.

This emerged from a report to the Cape Metropolitan Council at its monthly meeting yesterday. Councillors passed the report without debating it.

Two Metro councillors, Ms. Rhoda Southgate and Mr. Nic Bischoff, and the acting chief engineer Mr. Tony Murray, went to a Transport Policy Review workshop at the end of last month at the Rand Afrikaans University.

They reported that the government's new transport policy "is in the final stages of formation".

The government's new proposals had been released at two conferences at the end of last month — one at RAU, the other in Pretoria at a bus operators' association gathering.



KEEPING IT SWEET . . . Dr Malcolm Dodd checks the sweetness of the fruit with his "sweetometer" at the Trans-Fresh laboratory at Cape Town's harbour
Picture: AMBROSE PETERS

Sweet future for fruit and vegetable exports

By Jeremy Woods

A LEADING American corporation, Trans-Fresh, who specialise in making rarified air to keep perishable fruit fresh during transportation, is making a major impact on Western Cape agricultural exports.

Trans-Fresh came to the Western Cape a year ago and targeted deciduous fruit and vegetable shippers as likely users of their technology, which involves controlling the temperature and atmosphere levels inside a container.

And the move into the local agricultural market is beginning to pay off.

"In the first year of business we have easily beaten our budgets and now that exporters have experienced the improved quality our air control systems bring to their fruit during

transportation, the business looks set for an exciting future," says Dr Malcolm Dodd, managing director of Trans-Fresh in Cape Town.

The key to the Trans-Fresh operation is its preservation of fruit and vegetables during a long export journey.

This is done by sealing a container with plastic sheeting and installing a portable computer with a specially developed software programme to regulate the flow of oxygen through the container during the voyage.

"When fresh fruit and vegetables are harvested they continue to breathe, consuming oxygen and emitting carbon dioxide. By using our computerised Tectrol system to control the atmospheric components, the respiration rate is lowered and the product maintains its quality over longer periods of time," says Dr

Dodd.

An important factor in this operation is finding the right rate of respiration for the right product.

One hurdle to installing the Trans-Fresh system is its cost.

"It increases shipping costs by about 25 percent a container of goods and this is obviously a significant added cost that shippers have to contemplate," says Dr Dodd.

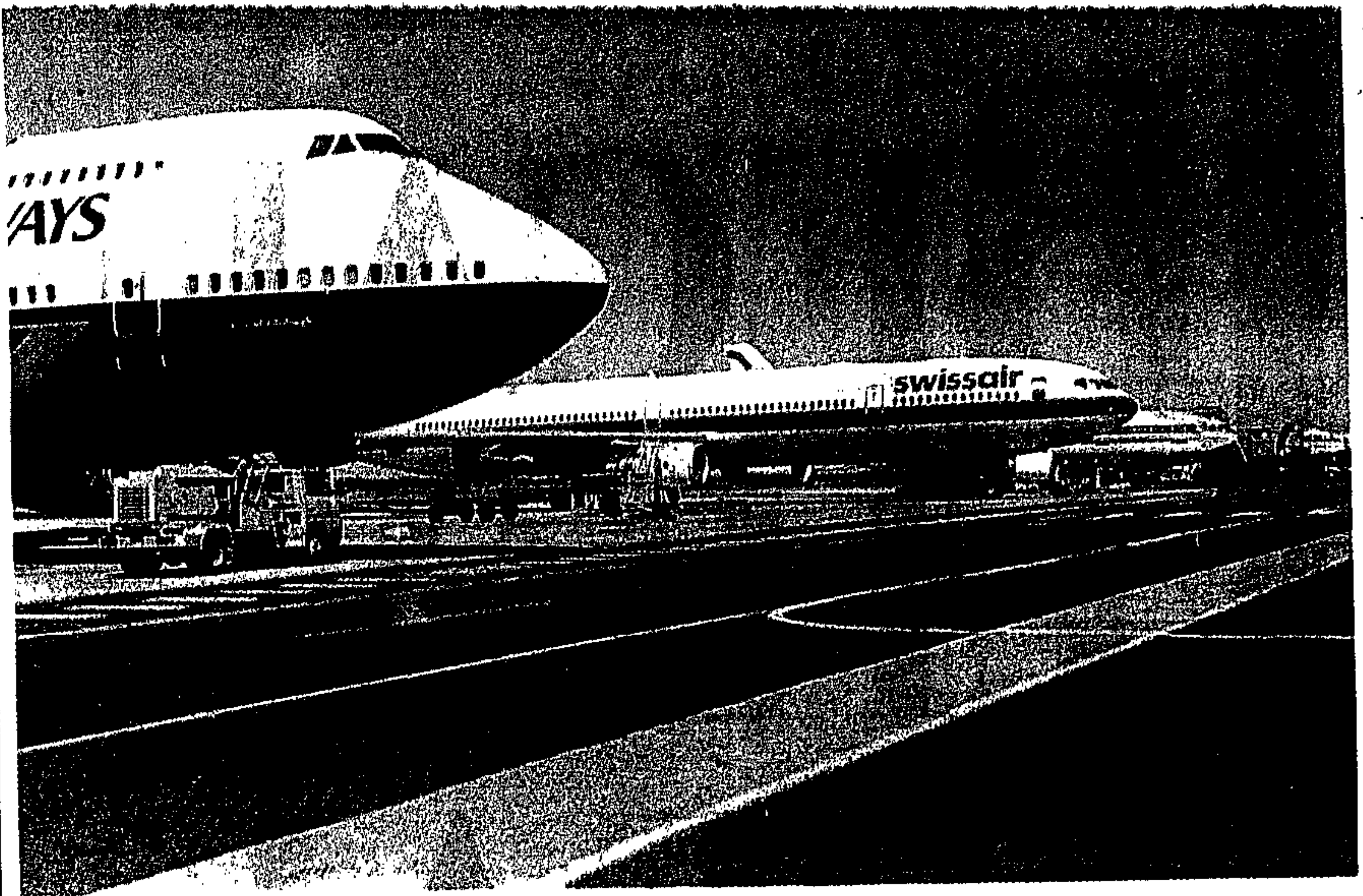
"However, the significant growth of the business over the last year suggests local exporters are prepared to pay this price so long as using our system allows better prices to be obtained for the goods transported."

But there is another interesting facet to the use of Trans-Fresh, who operate in a number of other food-exporting countries.

"So long as the system is being used by competing countries to their advantage, major fruit and vegetable exporting countries like South Africa will be forced to look at it."

There has been such a range of inquiries from growers that Trans-Fresh has now opened a small laboratory close to Cape Town harbour.

"We are running a series of tests on various products to see how they respond to our air control systems. Once growers see the effect of our methods on their produce here, they feel more confident about using them during export."



GROWING AIRPORT: Increased lines of aircraft at Cape Town International Airport bear witness to the growing importance of the city as a destination. The number of passengers is expected to double by the year 2000.

Airport gets ready for the year 2000

Big changes on way as millions more fly in

Cape Town International has been rated as the sixth busiest in Africa, handling 3,2 million passengers during 1995, with some seven million passengers expected to be handled by the year 2000.

Over the past two years regular passengers will have noticed a vast improvement in the airport's facilities.

Major alterations are to commence shortly with the upgrading of the international terminals, which will in the short term be able to cope with current traffic increases.

These improvements are not part of the long term development plans for the airport, but will ease passenger handling in the short term.

Passengers entering the international departures terminal will proceed up escalators to the first floor where they will pass through check-in and immigration.

An enlarged ground floor area will allow for a more spa-

cious departure lounge capable of handling sufficient passengers for five simultaneous departures of jumbo jets.

Airline offices are to be moved to the first floor allocating more area of the ground floor to passenger services.

The recently opened world standard first and business class lounges have been well received by travellers and offer full phone, fax and secretarial services. Passengers have also complimented the new duty free shop and VIP lounges.

The international arrivals hall will also receive an upper floor while new carousels will assist arriving passengers with the speedier retrieval of luggage.

A recently created area for the departure of pilgrims has been welcomed by the Muslim community.

A special events terminal is to be built shortly according to Hennie Taljaard, manager of Cape Town Airport.

This facility will not only

cater for pilgrims but will also be used for other events.

However, as the terminal will primarily serve the Muslim community, the Airports Company has had consultations with the community with regard to their own architects designing the project and implementing their ideas to suit their needs.

This terminal will assist in taking pressure off the international terminals as friends and families of the pilgrims will be able to greet them in the new terminal.

The green light has been given for a railway service to be established from the airport to the centre of Cape Town.

Mr Taljaard sees this rail service as not only serving airport passengers and workers, but hopes to draw in commuters from Somerset West and surrounding areas who would park their cars at the airport and take the 15-minute train journey into the city.

A multi-story parking garage is to be built as well as a hitec filling station which will cater for exotic car rentals.

Plans are well advanced for the longterm development of the airport and final proposals are presently being studied by the Airports Company.

Proposals include the establishment of a new central terminal with departure and arrival areas extending on either side.

Enlarged tarmac areas extending to a new set of buildings, the creation of an additional runway and redesigning the airport to cater for the expected increase in passenger and flight movements is part of the long term plan.

The Airports Company has already put in motion plans to cope with the 2004 Olympics should the games be awarded to Cape Town, and according to Mr. Taljaard the facilities will be in place and fully functional before 2004.

CT (AK) 29/3/96

332 24 217

Metrorail to clean up its act and woo passengers

Theo Rawana

DD 29/3/96

(332)

METRORAIL had embarked on an R81m programme to clean up and upgrade stations, clean, paint and generally repair coaches as part of a campaign to woo back passengers lost to other modes of passenger transport, Metrorail Services said yesterday.

CE Mafika Mkhwanazi said besides the "commuter flight" triggered off by train violence in the 1980s and 90s, the lack of cleanliness at stations and in coaches, and the general breakdown of facilities, had done nothing to win passenger confidence.

Market research conducted last year moved him to start preaching the "Back To Basics" campaign, by which the organisation would undergo a process of soul-searching and upraisal and try to win back passengers.

"The demands from commuters are clear: Clean trains, clean stations, punctuality and safety. This is a focused campaign to get all our employees, all our divisions and all our regions to strive to be competitive as a transport organisation. It is also a drive to

focus on the commuter by ensuring that our services are user-friendly and grant true value for money."

Mkhwanazi said ticket examiners and barrier attendants were taught to be polite and helpful and security was stepped up. "We have employed a multi-pronged strategy, including commuter participation, community policing, better training of guards as well as hi-tech equipment to ensure the safety of passengers and Metrorail property.

"We are setting up a computer system that will analyse the trends of crime so that we can react to them speedily. Also, we are setting up a close circuit TV camera network on stations. The pilot project, in Dube, is already running," said Mkhwanazi.

Meanwhile, the SA Rail Commuter Corporation donated R450 000 to 36 community organisations as part of its annual social responsibility programme. Strategic planning and communication GM Connie Nkosi said the organisations were a vibrant non-government organisational and community assistance sector which SA should be grateful for.

(332) CP 31/3/96

Taxi factions agree on ranks

A MAJOR breakthrough has been brokered among the warring Port Elizabeth taxi factions.

Spokesperson for the three main local taxi organisations Howard Hans said taxi bosses on Friday signed an agreement to

use all ranks together.

Hans said the agreement stipulated that 17 ranks would be overseen by management committees comprising the three organisations. Two marshalls would supervise each rank under strict supervision by the management committees.

ervision by the management committees.

A disciplinary committee has also been put into place. However, the taxi bosses still have to inform their drivers of the agreement. — Sapa

Crackdown on taxi war renegades

332
BY YVETTE VAN BREDA

ST(M) 31/3/96

POLICE have begun a major crack-down on a renegade splinter taxi group which they believe is behind the latest flare-up in the long-running taxi war in the Western Cape and have so far arrested nine men.

The arrests followed intensive investigations by the National Priority Crimes Investigation unit after the taxi dispute flared up again this week, leaving two people dead and at least seven injured after gunmen attacked taxis in several incidents in the Peninsula.

Police also seized three firearms on Thursday, bringing to 20 the number of weapons confiscated during the past week. The firearms will be tested ballistically to ascertain whether they were used in attacks on taxis.

Five of the suspects were arrested on Thursday and are due to appear in court tomorrow. Police said five men suspected of being ringleaders in the taxi conflict fled the Western Cape after the latest attacks, but were arrested when they returned to the Peninsula earlier this week.

Negotiations to end the violence and to regulate the taxi industry were continuing, but as long as there was disagreement about ranks and routes, the process would be hampered by ongoing conflict, said provincial commander of intelligence co-ordination for the National Crime Intelligence Service, Colonel Gordon Brookbanks.

Col Brookbanks said "fringe elements", who represented "a very small part of the vast industry", were responsible for the violence and the police were focusing their investigations on these men.

He said the conflict in the taxi industry in the Cape had "peaked", leading to major outbreaks of violence on three occasions.

The first major violence took place between October and December 1994, followed by a renewed outbreak in January this year.

This week's violence was the third sustained period.

Each time arrests were made, it was found that "similar individuals were the key role players in the violence."

The suspects arrested in December 1994 and those arrested in January were released on bail and police were now trying to ensure that the latest men arrested were not released.

Unrest Monitoring and Awareness Committee (UMAC) spokesman Mark Jansen said it was an "open secret" that the two warring factions, Cata and Codeta, each had their own hit squads.

The latest conflict was apparently sparked off by an accord signed in January between Cata and Codeta in which it was agreed to close an illegal rank in Wynberg used by a Codeta affiliate, Lingcross, said Mr Jansen.

Cata was dissatisfied with taxis being able to operate on any route and wanted "the gap-gap" system, which meant "you load one, I load one", while the conflict was being resolved, he said.

Despite the January 26 agreement, all the parties were not honest in their allocation of ranks and routes to specific taxis, and violence flared again.

Yesterday no Lingcross taxis were operating.

KM 22/3/96

(332)

DOWN ANOTHER CUL-DE-SAC

Technical (share-price chart) analysts are likely to say the prognosis for Laser's price is down.

Over the past four years it has built a

- **ACTIVITIES:** *Transportation and storage of household and commercial goods, machine moving and rigging.*
- **CONTROL:** *Directors 54,3%.*
- **CHAIRMAN:** *P R S Thomas. MD: A C P Cotterell.*
- **CAPITAL STRUCTURE:** *18m ords. Market capitalisation: R49,5m.*
- **SHARE MARKET:** *Price: 275c. Yields: p:e ratio, n/a; cover, n/a. 12-month high, 500c; low, 220c. Trading volume last quarter, 630 000 shares.*

Year to September 30	'92	'93	'94	'95
ST debt (Rm)	10,2	6,5	43,1	26,2
LT debt (Rm)	9,5	15,4	68,4	83,0
Debt:equity ratio	0,99	0,86	2,39	1,26
Shareholders' interest	0,31	0,31	0,18	0,29
Int & leasing cover	nil	2,2	1,48	(0,1)
Return on cap (%)	1,2	8,9	6,3	6,0
Turnover (Rm)	116,2	119,3	204	263
Pre-int profit (Rm)	0,7	6,7	16,3	17,8
Pre-int margin (%)	0,01	5,6	8,0	6,8
Earnings (c)	(28)	39	71	0
Tangible NAV (c)	192	234	462	474

FINANCIAL MAIL · MARCH 22 · 1996

80 COMPANIES

large "head-and-shoulders" formation. This would be seen as the precursor of a substantial fall in the share price which, if it penetrates the resistance level at 250c, could tumble from 275c now to an extreme low around 150c.

From a technical analyst's viewpoint, the share is at a critical point. The fundamentals indicate a similar conclusion.

The slight improvement in operating income for 1995 could be cause for guarded optimism. But that is where it ends. Interest payments absorbed more than the year's profit.

Outgoing chairman Peter Thomas makes it clear that while the household removals division had a satisfactory year and, by implication, were profitable, Mainline Carriers, bought in early 1994 for R11m, produced disastrous losses.

This acquisition, plus the outright purchase of certain properties used by the group, propelled the debt:equity ratio to an unacceptable high.

Clearly, Mainline's contribution was

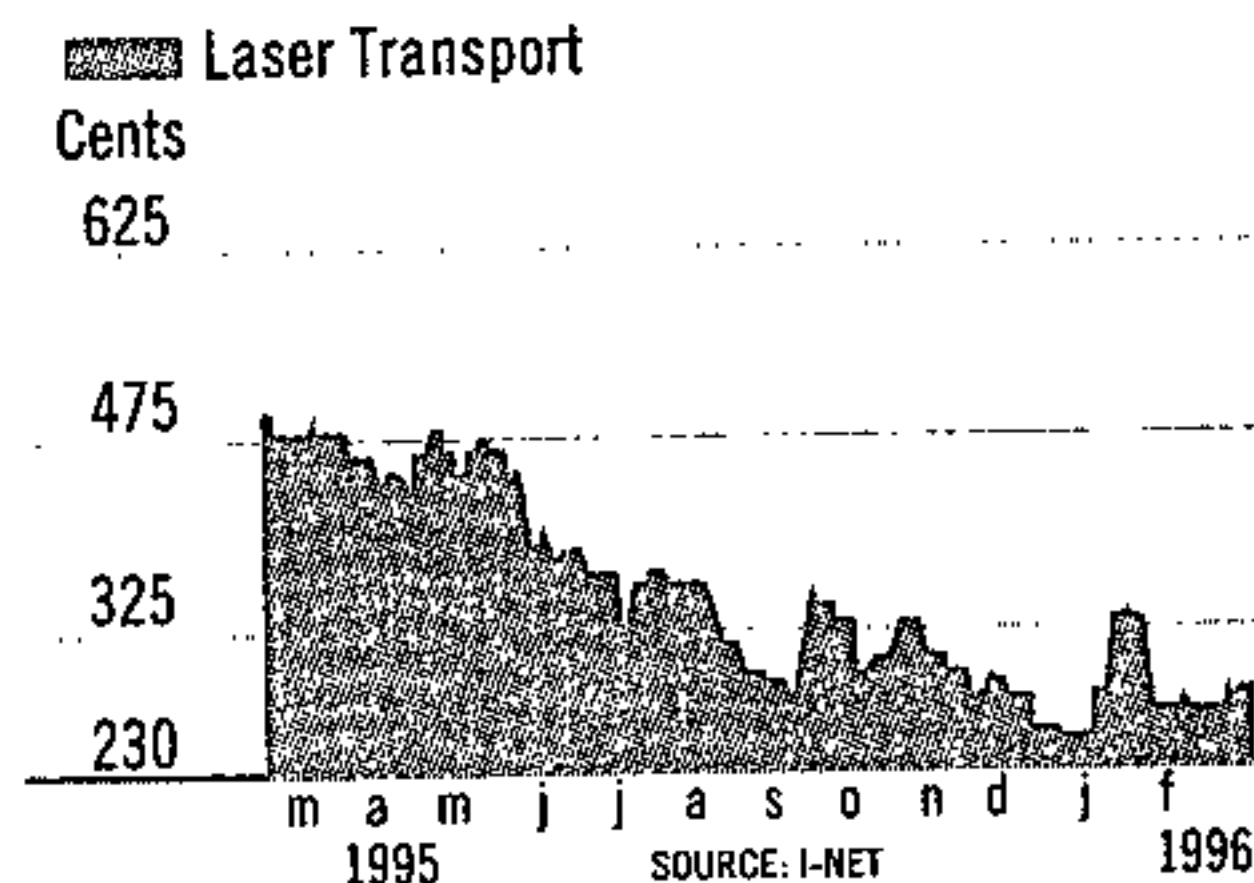
expected to click in much earlier, to at least counterbalance interest payments on borrowings. Instead, its high losses have caused a crisis for the company.

The pre-tax loss was R315 000. It is a crisis because, having come to the market with a successful R36m rights issue at a share price of 450c in October/November 1994 — in spite of a dubious track record since the late Eighties — the company is in no position to do this again now it urgently needs to reduce debt.

Other ways will have to be found to achieve this. Assets are likely to be sold — unless Mainline can be turned around in a hurry and good times continue for the core removal business.

Thomas says: "a major focus will be on the continuance of overhead cost reduction and the rationalisation of operating divisions and functions to more productive levels."

Laser is essentially in transport, a tough, competitive and capital-intensive



business that can only be successful if its assets can be made to produce returns considerably greater than the cost of capital — which Laser has not done for some time. Perhaps the arrival of former Wooltru CE Tony Williamson on the Laser board will provide some of the acumen to achieve this.

Until results provide evidence the company has improved its balance sheet and its ability to produce sustainable and growing profits, the share should be avoided. *Gerald Hirshon*

Hansard
THURSDAY, 28 MARCH 1996

to increase the competitiveness of South African exports. On the negative side, however, imports will become more expensive and this will result in a higher rate of inflation, which is likely to neutralise the favourable effects on exports within a relatively short period of time.

- (3) The internal as well as the external value of the Rand can only be protected by ensuring through appropriate macro-economic policy a sound economy. Characteristics of a sound economic situation include relative domestic price stability and, more generally, financial stability, general government budgets (all levels of government) that are roughly in balance, restraint on general government's demand on available saving, international competitiveness (encompassing issues such as optimal management efficiency, labour productivity and wage flexibility) and competitive domestic pricing. Social issues are also fundamentally important from the point of view of underpinning a sound economic system.

Restructuring/regulating of taxi industry

*10. Sen N L DIALLE asked the Minister of Transport:

- (1) Whether his Department has conducted an investigation into the taxi industry with a view to restructuring and regulating this industry; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether his Department has investigated a recent incident in the Northern Province in which 17 motor vehicles were allegedly set alight and some persons were allegedly shot; if so, what are the relevant details?

S171E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

- (1) Yes. In April 1995 I set up a National Taxi Task Team specifically to investigate the key problems and developmental issues facing the Minibus taxi industry and to seek solutions for its restructuring and regulation. The six major themes of the NTT to date have been economic sustainability and industrial structure, regulation and control, safety, labour relations and land passenger transport policy. The Team, composed of representatives of

nine (9) minibus-taxi operators, nine governmental representatives and nine specialist advisors, went through a process of intensive debate in working groups and conducted more than 36 public hearings and two major plenary meetings. In November 1995 it submitted an Interim Recommendation Report for my consideration. This document is available from the national Department of Transport and all the provincial departments. From the workshops and hearings has emerged a vision, now embodied in the Report, of an industry in which minibus-taxi businesses, through government intervention, will be put on the path towards greater order, professionalism and profitability, offering improved standards of safety and service to their communities and improved working conditions for their employees, in a well-regulated environment.

The main proposals of the Report, which have won widespread consensus amongst the vast majority of stakeholders, are as follows:

1. The establishment of Provincial Registrars of minibus taxi associations and their members.
2. Revision of the current system of issuing operator permits, such that permits will be route-specific rather than radius-based and will only be issued to registered operators with mechanically fit vehicles. Permits will thus be given an official status they currently lack. Illegal operators will be encouraged to register provided they meet certain agreed and specified criteria.
3. Encouragement of—and the provision of targeted funding and training for minibus-taxi cooperatives or companies. Cooperatives are seen as the most practically viable type of structure in the short term and will initially be concentrated in the areas of bulk fuel purchasing, spares and maintenance. The state should also provide capital grants and insurance guarantees to registered minibus taxi cooperatives.

THURSDAY, 28 MARCH 1996

4. Establishment of Provincial Taxi Offices with tasks of setting up computerised training databases and coordinating and implementing training programmes in technical and business skills, in partnership with private sector training providers.

5. Examination of employment practices within the industry, with a view towards the possible establishment of a statutory body to make recommendations relating to minimum standards and basic conditions of employment, in consultation with the major role players in the industry.

6. Radical improvement of existing safety standards, through the issue of vehicle maintenance manuals, driver training, the implementation of a code of conduct regarding customer relations, upgrading of taxi ranks and stopping bays, and strict enforcement of the new regulating framework for the industry.

- (2) The NTT envisages further restructuring, beyond what is proposed in these Interim Recommendations. The next proposed phase will be the transformation of cooperatives into companies, and of minibus-taxis into vehicles of larger carrying capacity. While the focus of the proposed cooperatives is providing services to members and reducing costs, thereby stabilising the industry in the initial phases, the focus of companies will be on improving transport operational capacity across the board.
- May I indicate to the Honourable Senator that the second part of his question was not within the competency of our Department, but we have contacted the Ministry of Safety and Security and they have provided us with the following reply:

Yes. The incident occurred on the 2nd of March 1996 and this conflict was apparently between the members of rival taxi associations, FELDTA and KAPER TAXI ASSOCIATIONS.

According to the information received and investigated by the Northern Province Police Service at this time, the allegations are that private taxi owners who operate

the Nebo-Johannesburg Route are responsible for the attack and arson.

Casualties: Two men were shot and wounded, their condition is said to be serious. Several cases have been registered at Apel and Nebo Police Stations. The cases being investigated following this incident range from malicious damage to property to arson, attempted murder and robbery.

Arrests: Six suspects have been arrested and further arrests are expected soon.

Civilians harassed/intimidated/robbed by taxi drivers

*11. Sen N L DIALLE asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

Whether the South African Police Service has investigated certain incidents in the Northern Province in which persons allegedly have become the victims of armed taxi drivers who allegedly staged illegal road-blocks and harassed, intimidated and robbed civilians of their belongings; if not, why not; if so, what was the outcome of the investigation?

S172E

The DEPUTY MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

Yes. The case is still under investigation and will be submitted to the Attorney-General, Northern Province in the near future.

Senator M G E WILEY: Mr President, I would like to withdraw the question.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Order! The question has been withdrawn, and the hon senator is perfectly entitled to do that. Before we go on to question 13, may I say I think it is inappropriate not to advise Ministers in advance of the withdrawal of a question, since they have preparations to make.

Senator M G E WILEY: Mr President, I do apologise for that. Had the Minister been here to answer the question, I had follow-up questions for him. However, in his absence I would like to withdraw the question.

The PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: Senator Wiley, I think that it is possible, according to the

Easter taxi blockade will not be allowed, warn authorities

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Durban - Provincial traffic and police authorities have come out fighting against a threatened taxi blockade around Durban during the Easter weekend, promising to use maximum force if necessary and not to entertain any negotiations with protesters.

This follows a warning by taxi bosses at the weekend that they would have their taxis blockade the city unless the authorities did something about the increasing

violence among taxi operators.

However, traffic chief Peter Noppe said yesterday that no such action would be tolerated.

"Any persons who attempt to carry out this threat will be removed immediately - with force if necessary - and arrested. They will face the full wrath of the law if they make any attempt to organise such an illegal gathering," Noppe said.

Anna Cox reports that Easter weekend traffic is expected to peak on national roads from

Thursday around 2pm. The busiest routes are expected to be north-bound on the N1 to Pietersburg and the N3 to Durban.

Director of Traffic Safety Perry Parrenyatiwa said the dangers of speeding and its contribution to collisions, deaths and injuries would be focused on this season. He added that about 73% of all fatal collisions last year were the result of human error.

The most dangerous time of the year to be on the road is the Easter weekend, according to the

Automobile Association. Last year the four-day weekend claimed 178 lives.

Traffic authorities, the police, emergency medical rescue services, tow-in services, officials of the Department of Transport and voluntary organisations will be on standby throughout the weekend.

The AA's Operation Peace of Mind will operate 24 hours a day from April 4 to April 9. It is designed to provide all road users with a free, rapid response rescue

service following a breakdown or collision.

Motorists should use seatbelts front and rear - which is now compulsory. They must maintain a two-second following distance which should be increased at night, in foggy or rainy conditions and when the road is wet. The AA also recommends frequent rest stops.

The National Traffic Information Centre will be set up in Pretoria from tomorrow to April 9. The phone number is (012) 86-1110.

Community may lift boycott today

(332)
Theo Rawana

BD 3/4/96
PORT ELIZABETH taxi operators would know today whether the community boycott, launched last week in reaction to taxi violence, had been lifted, a local ANC source said yesterday.

The boycott began when Port Elizabeth mayor Nceba Faku announced that taxi transport would be avoided until feuding organisations sorted out their differences.

The ANC-Cosatu-SACP alliance said "people have decided enough is enough".

The source said yesterday that the community would march through KwaZakhele this morning to a rally where an announcement would be made on whether the boycott had been lifted.

Meanwhile, Durban traffic chief Peter Noppe said a taxi group threatening to stage a blockade during the Easter weekend would face the full force of the law if they acted on their threat.

Meanwhile, Sapa reported that two men were killed and three wounded in a shoot-out in Nyanga, Cape Town, in an incident believed to be linked to taxi violence.

Two killed in taxi shoot-outs

ARG 3/4/96

(332)

Staff Reporter

TAXI violence flared up again today, claiming two lives, in spite of a strong police presence on the taxi routes and combatng taxi-related crimes being declared a national priority.

In two separate incidents only minutes apart, a driver and passenger were killed and two others were injured, police

spokesman Wicus Holtzhausen announced.

At Middestad Mall in Bellville at 10.30am a Codeta minibus taxi was fired upon by a bystander and the driver of the vehicle was killed. There were no other injuries.

Just 15 minutes later, gunmen standing in the street opened fire on a taxi that had stopped in Lansdowne Road, Nyanga. One passenger died and two were injured. No arrests have been made.

Taxi fares hit by petrol hike

(332) (S) (2441)
JOHANNESBURG: Today's eight cents a litre increase in the petrol price would add to the suffering of taxi commuters who would have to pay higher fares, Lehlabile Taxi Organisation spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba said yesterday.

The R40-million financial assistance package promised to the taxi industry by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj from April 1 would cost the government nothing because of the petrol increases, he said.

"We have the government giving with one hand but taking everything they give with the other." — Sapa

CT 3/4/96

Taxi chiefs renew their (332) peace pact

ARG 4/4/96
Staff Reporter

HOURS after renewed taxi violence claimed two more lives, leaders of Cape Town's main taxi organisations, Cata and Codeta, have again declared peace.

Only 24 hours after an earlier cease-fire, there were shootings at taxi ranks early yesterday in Bellville and Nyanga.

A meeting was urgently called by Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and the Centre for Conflict Resolution to find out what had gone wrong with the peace agreement.

During the two-and-a-half-hour meeting last night, emotions ran high as the taxi organisations blamed each other and the police for the outbreaks of violence.

Internal struggles within Codeta seemed to be another obstacle in the peace process.

But the parties finally agreed to hold a press conference, at which leaders again confirmed their commitment to peace.

In a show of solidarity they called on members to stop the violence and asked commuters to return to the taxis. Another meeting was arranged for 9am today.

Fragile peace as warring taxi groups hold talks

(372)
ANDREA BOTHA

Staff Reporter

APR 6/4/96
PEACE has been restored between the warring taxi organisations, Cata and Codeta.

After weeks of violence and turmoil at taxi ranks all over Cape Town, leaders and representatives of the associations met on Thursday morning to resolve the conflict between the parties.

Two people died in separate shootings on Wednesday.

Strife within the Codeta executive structures is slowing down the peace process.

The Khayelitsha faction of Codeta is challenging the authority of Codeta executives to speak for all its members.

Several speakers emphasised that Codeta's internal problems had to be resolved before further negotiations could take place.

But at the end of the gruelling three-hour meeting, the parties agreed on changes to several operating procedures at the taxi ranks.

These include the dropping of the "gap-gap" system and registration at the ranks, to allow members of all taxi organisations to have fair access to commuters.

Raymond Jaba, of the ANC Peace Desk, said definite progress had been made just by getting all of the parties together and in agreement on basic principles.

Another meeting has been scheduled for April 10 to continue further problems.

Meanwhile, police have linked some suspects in the taxi violence to attacks in both the Eastern and Western Cape, and some of the suspects are believed to be members of the former liberation armies.

A key suspect in both provinces is Teenage Siphwe Naki, whom Western Cape police spokesman John Sterrenberg confirmed was awaiting trial in Pollsmoor Prison on one count of murder and another of vehicle hijacking.

Eastern Cape police say Mr Naki, said to be former member of Umkhonto we Sizwe, is a suspect in taxi violence.

In April last year he was arrested in the Eastern Cape in connection with an attempted murder at the Queenstown taxi rank.

In the Eastern Cape, Mr Naki has been linked to the Uncedo taxi association. In the Western Cape, he has been linked to Uncedo's ally, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Associations.

He was also arrested in Lady Frere in connection with the murder of taxi operator Mickey van Heerden.

He failed to appear in court for his Eastern Cape cases, jumped bail and fled to Cape Town.

Western Cape police claim Mr Naki was a key member of a Western Cape vehicle hijacking syndicate, believed to be led by Andile Joseph Mladlane, whose members were linked to the Pan African Congress and its former military wing, the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army.

Police have arrested 14 members of this gang since February and all are in custody. Police believe the gang is also closely linked to taxi-related attacks.

Eastern Cape police are also looking for Simphiwe Ngqusha, who also faces charges with Mr Naki in connection with Mr Van Heerden's murder.

Border Allied Taxi Association member Peterson van Heerden, believed to be related to the late Mickey van Heerden, faces charges of attempted murder in a case in which he allegedly retaliated to the attacks to which Mr Naki has been linked.

Petersen, also known as Zithulele Sohuma, has three armed robbery convictions and was last month sentenced to three years' imprisonment for possession of an unlicensed firearm.

He is out on bail pending appeal. - Sapa

Ex-MK cadre named in taxi war

(332)
CP 7/4/96

Cops say crimes form violent chain

POLICE have linked some suspects in ongoing taxi violence to attacks in both the Eastern and Western Cape, and some of the suspects are believed to be members of the former liberation armies.

A key suspect in both provinces is Teenage Siphiwe Naki.

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Linked

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Petersen, also known as Zithulele Sohuma, has three armed robbery convictions and was last month sentenced to three years in jail for possession of an unlicensed firearm. He is out on bail pending appeal. — Sapa

Taxis clash at station rank

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

TAXI violence erupted in the heart of Cape Town when members of the rival taxi organisations, Cata and Codeta clashed over the loading of passengers at the station taxi rank.

No one was injured in yesterday's incident, but several minibuses were damaged. Tyres were slashed, side mirrors ripped off and taxis were driven into.

The incident apparently began when members of the Cata taxi association tried to follow the "gap-gap" system by jumping the queue of waiting taxis, to take on passengers. When the Codeta taxis resisted this action by blocking the road, their minibuses were attacked. Traffic officers and police

rushed to the scene and had traffic flowing again.

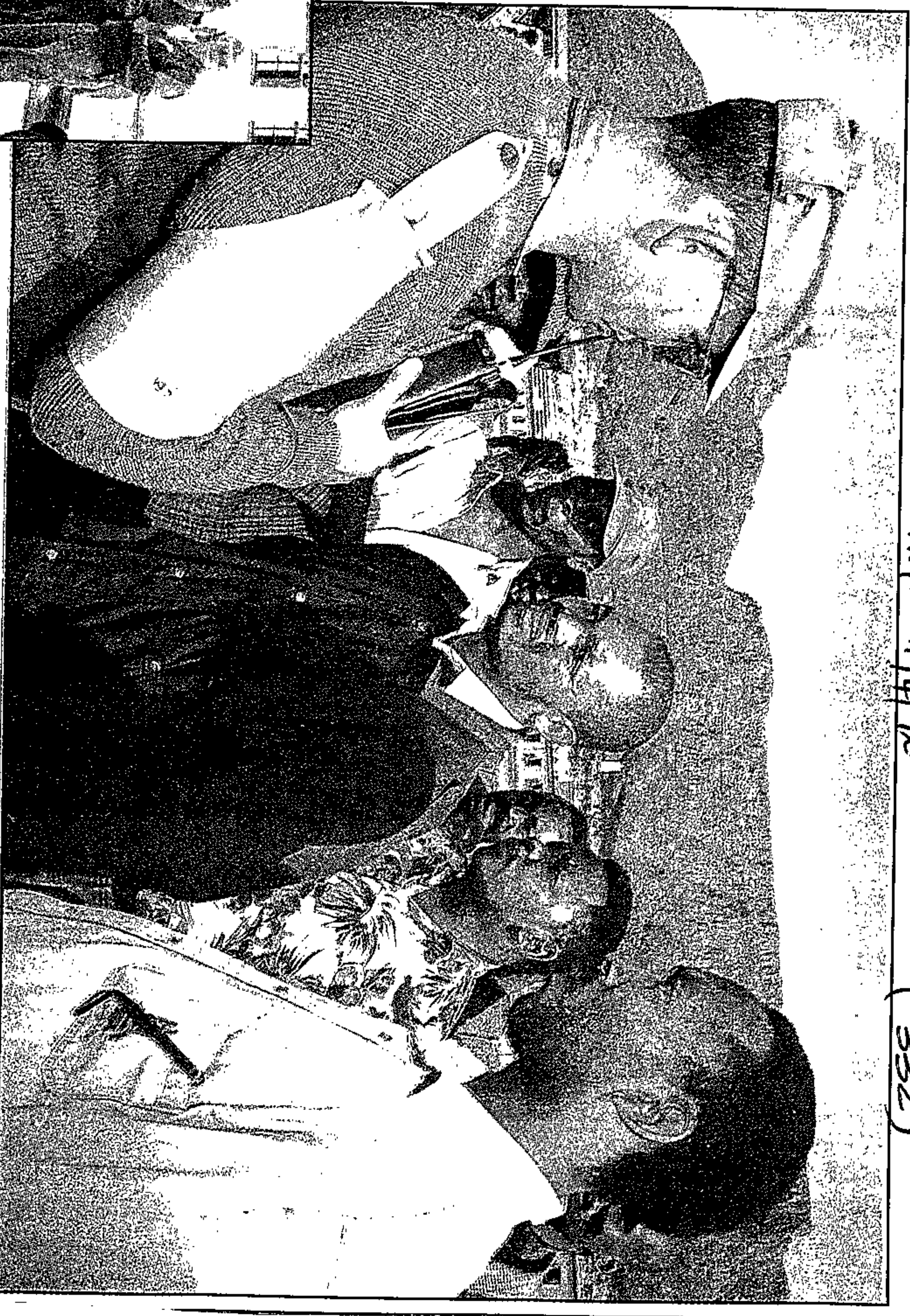
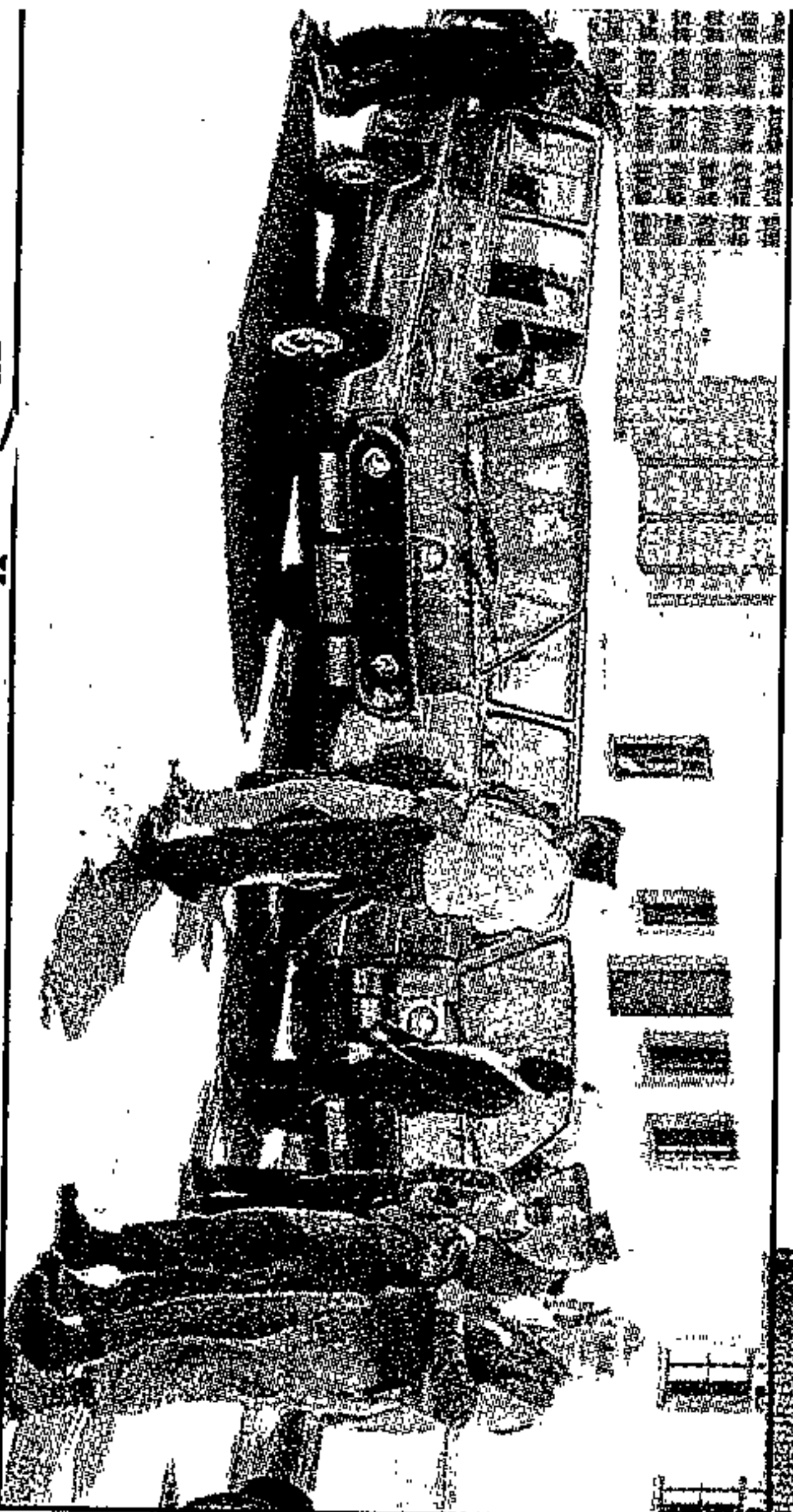
Taxi-owners were visibly shaken by the ordeal. A member of Codeta, Sidwell Moyi, said Cata was to blame. "We only want to work. We want peace".

Fearful of another attack from Cata, Codeta members asked police to escort them back to Khayelitsha.

Police were unable to confirm rumours of a shooting incident at Khayelitsha taxi rank. Shortly after the station incident, members of Cata and Codeta, met at the Civic Centre to discuss the reasons for their conflict.

The monopoly of certain routes and taxi ranks remained one of the key complaints.

Another meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow.



FRIGHTENED: Members of the Codeta taxi association ask police to escort them back to Khayelitsha. Left, Codeta taxis and drivers were attacked when they blocked the road at Cape Town station taxi rank.

Pictures: LEON MULLER, Chief Photographer.

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ARF. 11/4/96

(332)

Council to crack down on city taxis

(332)

METRO WRITER

CT 11/4/96

MR Arthur Wienburg succeeded yesterday in having a resolution cracking down on the taxi industry passed by the City Council.

But fellow councillor Mr Fred Carneson of the Communist Party said Wienburg was "hitting the industry on the head with a sledgehammer" with his motion. Without the taxi industry, the working class would struggle to get to work, or from one place to another, he said.

Wienburg asked that a sub-committee report on appointing a delegation to approach Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj to urge him to revise transport legislation.

He proposed that the local road transport board revoke all radius permits and issue route permits in their place.

He also wants no annual vehicle licences to be renewed or ownership transfers to go through until all outstanding fines are paid.

Minimum wage no remedy for the jobless

PA 9/4/96

CONTRARY to economists' revisionist claims, minimum wage legislation is, in fact, a foolish way to help low-income workers. If the price of a commodity goes up, less of it will be demanded.

The truth of this proposition — maybe the most fundamental in economics — is reaffirmed every day in countless transactions worldwide. If it were not true, economic life would be unimaginably different.

Companies would launch audacious strategies to boost market share by jacking up products' prices.

As, evidently, we do not live in such a topsy-turvy world, economists have traditionally rejected minimum wage laws as either redundant or pernicious.

If the minimum is set below the level established by the free interplay of supply and demand, it is irrelevant. In the likelier case that it is set higher than the market clearing wage rate (at least in some sectors), it will reduce demand for labour while boosting the numbers seeking work.

The inevitable result is involuntary unemployment.

Given the power of this logic, it may seem surprising that minimum wages are gaining in popularity on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the US, President Bill Clinton is pushing hard for an increase in the national minimum from \$4.25 an hour to \$5.15 an hour. Last week

Democrats tried (but failed) to embarrass Republicans by demanding a congressional vote on the issue.

In the UK, Labour leader Tony Blair has promised to introduce a national minimum wage if he wins the next election, although he remains coy about the level.

Until now, the UK has sensibly avoided a national wage floor although wages councils once set minimum rates in several sectors.

Politicians who want to look dynamic and caring are bound to favour minimum wage laws. Yet US congress willingness to increase the minimum used to be tempered by fear that it would raise jobless rates.

The accepted rule of thumb (based on numerous empirical studies) was that a 10% increase would cut youth employment by anything from 1%-3%.

The latest message from academia, however, is that no such inconvenient trade-off exists.

Professors David Card and Alan Krueger of Princeton University recently made a comparison of employment in fast-food restaurants in the neighbouring states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

During the period analysed, the minimum wage rose in New Jersey but not in Pennsylvania. Yet Card and Krueger (who later became chief economist at the US labour department) found evidence of an increase rather than a decrease in em-

MICHAEL PROWSE

ployment in New Jersey.

Their methodology has since been vigorously disputed. The counter-intuitive results were based on a rather vague telephone survey of restaurants.

An analysis of payroll data came to the opposite conclusion — that the rise in New Jersey's minimum wage led to a modest drop in employment relative to Pennsylvania.

Proponents of government intervention have, inevitably, challenged the veracity of the critique. They claimed that several other recent studies have shown increases in minimum wages have negligible (and perhaps even positive) effects on jobs.

They regard the traditional "competitive" model of labour markets as being both outdated and as empirically refuted.

They accuse employers of wielding subtle monopoly powers and hence of imposing artificially low wages on the most vulnerable workers. And — hey, presto — they justify an increase in the minimum wage on the grounds of efficiency as well as fairness.

It would be wonderful if water did indeed run uphill. But I fear some economists are too emotionally committed to higher minimum wages to think clearly.

In reality, the service industries employing low-wage workers are highly competitive. A more plausible explanation of the (apparently) declining cost in terms of lost jobs is that the legal minimum has fallen steadily relative to average wages and is near a 40-year low in real terms.

Obviously if minimum wages are pitched low enough, they can do little harm.

But even those lobbying for an increase in the legal minimum agree that many jobs would be destroyed if it were lifted substantially — say to \$6 or \$7 an hour.

In other words, they do not really dispute conventional economic logic. They can call for a higher minimum now without worrying too much about the effect on jobs only because governments had the sense not to listen to people who had made the same fallacious arguments in the past.

Politicians such as Blair who want to introduce a national minimum should recognise that it will be a perpetual source of social conflict. Pressure groups will lobby endlessly for increases.

The US — an individualistic society — has been fairly successful in resisting such pressures. But the UK is likely to suffer the same fate as its European neighbours, where minimum wage laws substantially increased unemployment.

And for what? A minimum wage is the crudest of social policy instruments. Many people earning the minimum will not be members of poor households: in the US more than 40% are youngsters living with parents; only 4% are single parents.

If the goal is to reduce poverty or flatten the income distribution, a more efficient policy is to target cash subsidies, via either the tax or benefit system, on genuinely poor families. College students who work part-time at Burger King do not need special help.

An even more fundamental objection is that minimum wages involve an element of coercion wholly out of place in mature democracies.

Employers and employees ought to be able to agree any wage rate of their choosing.

If a government rules that no employer may pay less than some arbitrary minimum, it is condemning to permanent unemployment anybody whose productivity is too low to justify such a wage.

Even if a government has majority support it has no right to damage people's life chances in this way.

Minimum wages are the kind of dictatorial measure that one would expect in a totalitarian society.

It is thus deeply depressing that politicians who regard themselves as enlightened are actually endorsing such crude policy measures. — Financial Times.

BOOKS

Taxi forum to be launched

Staff Reporter

(332)
ARLT 12/4/96

THE Wynberg Transport Forum, a body that will implement a programme of self-regulation and self-management for the Wynberg taxi rank, will be formally launched tomorrow.

The occasion will also mark the official opening of the police information centre at the landmark thatched cottage near Wynberg station.

Forum spokesmen Paul Siebritz and Anwar Begg said all community organisations and Wynberg residents were invited to attend the opening that would also feature the Habibia Band and a church band. Taxis will form a motorcade.

The transport forum was "workshopped" in September last year in the spirit of the reconstruction and development programme for people to take responsibility for their own development.

The transport forum was determined to collectively manage the new transport interchange area.

All stakeholders in the area are represented on the forum including various taxi associations, Wynberg and District Civic Association, the Wynberg Hawkers Association the Yusufeyali Mosque Committee, South African Police Services, Inter-site, the Cape Town City Council and business groups.

Major upgrading starts in June.

BMT lane backed, but ...

(332) 19/4/96
JOSEPH ARANES, Municipal Staff

THE Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry has come out in support of the controversial bus and mini-bus taxi (BMT) lane on the N2 freeway into Cape Town, but has urged improvements.

Motorists have complained that the lane is exacerbating already congested conditions during the peak period and many have asked that it be scrapped.

The provincial traffic authority had emphasised that an integrated public transport network with specified lanes was the only way to relieve congestion.

Albert Schuitmaker, deputy director of the Cape Chamber, said the need for bus lanes had long been supported by the organisation.

"Traffic congestion caused by the oversupply of motor vehi-

cles on the road during the peak period can only be combated by motivating commuting motorists to switch to public transport.

"But motorists will only make such a move when they are attracted by a safe, clean and fast public transport network and will be discouraged by the increasing delays caused by traffic congestion on their way to and from work."

He added: "The transport department's experiment with the BMT lane has shown that 50 percent of the people on the N2 are now transported in the dedicated lane during peak hours."

"It is, however, up to the traffic authorities to maximise the benefits of such lanes by carefully assessing their relative position, length and user control."

"We believe the success of the BMT lane needs to be evaluated."

Effort to improve pay, employment conditions in minibus taxi industry

Star 22/4/96 (332)
By MANDLA MTHEMBU

Wages and other terms and conditions of employment in the violence-racked minibus taxi industry are to come under the spotlight of the Wage Board, according to a working document to be made public soon.

After the investigations, the board will make recommendations to Labour Minister Tito Mboweni, who will be persuaded that investigators into the taxi industry should represent operators and drivers to ensure that the industry plays a meaningful role in the process.

This was revealed in a document to be formally made public after being discussed by the National Taxi Task Team.

NTTT special adviser Ashima Singh, who prepared the document, said a division of the board to carry out investigations into the taxi industry was expected to be established soon.

The document has urged a disciplinary code for members of a co-operative (which is expected to replace associations), with a list of offences and appropriate penalties such as suspension or expulsion.

Among the offences would be the failure by taxi owners to register as employers with the Department of Labour so that drivers could benefit from medical aid, pension, unemployment, insurance and accident funds.

Taxi owners would also be charged for failing to pay a minimum wage as set out by legislation. Some drivers currently earn less than R900 a month because they are being paid on commission or per trip.

Singh said the informal nature of the

taxi industry made it difficult for drivers to benefit from the Labour Relations, Employment Standards, Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases, and Unemployment Insurance Fund acts.

She said the investigations would assist the Government to monitor employment practices in the industry as there was no information regarding employers and employees.

"Employment contracts in the taxi industry are usually made verbally."

Singh added that most labour practice disputes arising within the industry were not referred to the Industrial Court for adjudication. "Taxi owners and their organisations do not recognise or bargain with representative unions."

NTTT chairman Dipak Patel said the Government was committed to workers' rights and improving employment conditions.

The South African Taxi Drivers' Union and the Transport General Workers' Union welcomed the plans, hoping they would improve drivers' "appalling" working conditions.

TGWU general secretary Randall Howard said there was no need to make a distinction between a taxi driver and other workers.

SA Commuter Organisation spokesman David Sekobela said drivers were the worst exploited workers, adding this made them turn their anger on passengers. He said the extension of the Labour Relations Act, to be presented in Parliament in June, would help to strengthen relations between commuters and drivers.

Taxi groups hire assassins for R70 000 — police chief

BD 24/4/96

(332)

PRETORIA — Taxi associations paid hit squads up to R70 000 to murder opposition taxi owners and R90 000 to kill police detectives, organised crime unit director Jack van Zyl Roux told delegates at a security conference in Pretoria yesterday.

The intensity of violence in the taxi industry could be attributed to hired killers, often criminals and gang members, who acted as freelance hit men.

"Hit squads are generally controlled and paid by the executive committees of the respective taxi associations," he said. Commuters were often afraid to step forward as witnesses and were bribed or intimidated not to testify.

Roux said the criminals were driven by greed and power, not poverty.

More than 480 organised crime syndicates involving 2 178 primary suspects were known to be operating in SA. Of these, 136 specialised in drug trafficking, 112 in vehicle theft and 85 in commercial crime. "The criminal activities of 125 of these syndicates are at present restricted to sub-Saharan countries in Africa," Roux said.

Syndicates often used gangs for assassinations, kidnappings, distributing drugs and stealing cars and guns.

There were more than 70 gangs in Gauteng alone. Among them were for-

mer self-defence units which had turned to crime when security forces failed to absorb them.

"Many gangs maintain a reign of terror within communities. They force youngsters to join them by ... constant harassment and even assault. These techniques are also used to intimidate communities to abide by their rules."

Some gangs operated across provincial borders. There were clear links between Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape. At least 187 of the 481 organised crime syndicates in SA operated internationally. "Crime networks are so well established that the same channels and networks are often used to smuggle firearms, drugs, vehicles, ivory, rhino horn, precious metals and gemstones," he said.

The main smuggling routes were from Mozambique to Gauteng or via Swaziland and from Angola via Namibia to Gauteng. Goods were also smuggled from Angola via the Caprivi Strip in Namibia, through Botswana to Gauteng, and from Transkei and Ciskei in the Eastern Cape to Gauteng.

Roux said Gauteng was a major market for stolen goods and a safe haven for criminals, taking into account the sizes of Soweto and Hillbrow with their dense populations. — Sapa.

Hired guns are paid thousands by taxi warlords

(332) Star 24/4/96

R90 000 on the heads of police officers investigating the violence between rival associations, says crime unit director

By DEREK RODNEY
Crime Reporter

Hired assassins "freelancing" for taxi associations are being paid thousands of rands to murder members of rival associations.

And some killers are charging up to R90 000 to kill police investigators.

Organised crime unit (OCU) director Jack van Zyl Roux said yesterday that hit squads were playing a major role in the intense taxi violence in the country. They were generally controlled and paid by the executive committees of taxi associations.

Addressing a security conference presented by the Institute for Strategic Studies at the University of Pretoria and the Security Association of South Africa, Van Zyl Roux said opposition taxi owners were targeted for death for about R70 000 a hit.

He said the cycle of violence would not be reversed until w

nesses came forward to testify.

He said the assassins used the latest in communications equipment, ranging from Citizen Band radios and car phones to pagers and cellphones.

Many of the attacks occurred in rural areas where police communications were at their poorest, and gunmen had the opportunity to disappear, sometimes to other provinces, before investigators could arrive.

"Individuals are employed as full-time bodyguards for taxi associations, and many associations make use of external groups from KwaZulu Natal or the Eastern Cape who return to their provinces, making it difficult to identify them," Van Zyl Roux said.

A disturbing trend identified by the OCU was the use of gangs, by organised syndicates, for assassinations and kidnappings or for distributing drugs, and stealing cars and firearms.

"Syndicate leaders hardly ever come into direct contact with

street-level criminals, preferring to use field workers who can tap into an entire criminal network without exposing the leader. Some gangs do not even realise that they are part of syndicate networks," he said.

More than 480 organised-crime syndicates, involving 2 178 primary suspects, were known to be operating in South Africa. The OCU was investigating 62 major syndicates.

Of these, 136 specialised in drug trafficking, 112 in vehicle theft and 85 in commercial crime.

"The criminal activities of 125 of these syndicates are at present restricted to sub-Saharan Africa."

More than 70 gangs had been identified in Gauteng, and among them were former township self-defence units that had turned to crime.

"Many gangs maintain a reign of terror within communities. They force youngsters to join them by constant harassment and assault," Van Zyl Roux added.

Hired killers used to kill taxi opponents'

AKG 25/4/96

(332)

Own Correspondent

PRETORIA. - Hired killers have been blamed for high levels of taxi violence.

But a police spokesman says that although taxi hit squads caused violence, the actual initiative and planning of attacks on drivers and commuters came from taxi association members.

In a paper presented to the Security 96 conference, W van Zyl Roux of the National Crime Investigation Service said that taxi-owners and taxi association executive members often identified certain targets

themselves for the hit squads.

The hit squads were paid vast amounts of money and given vehicles with false registration numbers.

In order to prevent the violation of certain codes, some taxi associations made use of so-called squad patrol cars, he said.

These patrols were well organised with excellent communication capabilities.

Such hit squads were paid up to R70 000 for an operation to kill opposition taxi-owners and R90 000 to kill a police investigation officer.

Commuters were afraid to come forward as witnesses because they were intimidated or bribed not to testify, said Mr Roux, a director.

There was evidence of criminals, including gangs, acting as freelance hitmen offering their services to the taxi industry for money.

Individuals were employed as full-time bodyguards for the taxi associations.

He said many associations made use of external groups from KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, whose return to their provinces made it extremely difficult to identify them.

National strategy needed on crime'

The Argus Correspondent

PRETORIA. - Crime and the related threats are destabilising society and a national strategy is needed, says the Defence Force.

Major General F E du Toit, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (South African Air Force) was speaking at the Security 96 conference which was held at the University of Pretoria.

He said a national strategy for achieving internal security, stability and safety required a two-pronged approach.

"On one hand we need

to demonstrate delivery of the RDP in order to achieve social justice and economic development and uphold democracy.

"On the other we need to employ all the means at the disposal of the government and the private sector to combat the threats that are presently destabilising our society."

On the role of the Defence Force in combating crime, General du Toit said the constitution provided for the Defence Force co-operate with the South African Police Service when the police were unable to manage a

situation on their own.

This had come into effect on July 12 1994 because of the increasing threat to internal security.

He said the Defence Forces goal was to build the capacity of the police to deal with public violence and crime on their own and eventually to withdraw the Defence Force from a policing role.

However, the Defence Force would have to maintain the capability of being deployed in exceptional circumstances, General du Toit said.

'Business has crucial role in fighting crime'

Own Correspondent

PRETORIA - The state

Gauteng through the provision of 100 BMWs to police in the province

lar phones could be made available to the police

Tension 'at breaking point' as man dies in new taxi war outbreak

JOHAN SCHRONEN (332)
Crime Reporter
ARG 25/4/96

A MAN died and about eight people were wounded in another flareup of the Cape Flats taxi war. Police said tension had reached breaking point in the Cape Flats, where rival taxi groups, many of them armed, were gathering at ranks in Guguletu and Nyanga.

Police, including members of the public order and violent crimes units, were backed up by the army early today to monitor popular routes and taxi ranks after a spate of shootings claimed one dead and several wounded yesterday.

A report of another shooting early today in Nyanga could not be confirmed but "tension was mounting", said a policeman patrolling the Nyanga rank. A man believed to have been a passenger in a Code-ta taxi was shot dead in Lansdowne Road, Nyanga, at about 9.30 am yesterday. Three people were wounded in the incident.

At least three vehicles, including a minibus taxi, were damaged when they collided as they tried to escape. Police confiscated a pistol and collected spent bullets and cartridges for ballistic testing.

About 4 pm, two people were wounded in another shootout in Lansdowne Road. At the Nyanga taxi rank, a taxi driver was wounded in a shooting at about 7 pm.

Soon after, in Emms Drive, Nyanga, the driver and passenger of a taxi were also wounded.



Picture: LEON MULLER, The Argus.

TAXI TROUBLE: Minibus driver Mabutie Sihamba checks his vehicle after it came under fire in Lansdowne Rd, Nyanga. One man died and about eight people were injured as the taxi war on the Cape Flats flared again. The Army was called in to support police today in their efforts to curb the violence as members of rival taxi groups, many of them armed, gathered at ranks in Guguletu and Nyanga.

Fare row: Police plan go-slow on Metro trains

CT 25/4/96

METRO RAIL'S DECISION to charge police officers full fare when they travel to and from work seems set to spark protest action. Crime Writer **JACKIE CAMERON** reports.

POLICE have vowed to stop crime prevention patrols and searches of suspected criminals on Peninsula trains unless Metrorail allows them to continue travelling to and from work free of charge.

About 270 angry commuter unit police members have threatened to embark on an indefinite go-slow in protest against the decision that they must now pay full

fare on trains.

Many have called for the disbanding of the unit, and said they would prefer to work at police stations where they can pay R27 for monthly transport on police vehicles — considerably cheaper than paying for train tickets.

Unit members have asked for an urgent meeting with Metrorail and police management tomorrow. If their demands are not

met, the go-slow will start on Tuesday, South African Police Union and Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union spokesmen said yesterday.

Meanwhile, at a highly-charged meeting at Cape Town railway station yesterday, many community policing officers — paid for by Metrorail — said they would join the protest action.

The decision to make all police members pay for their transport on trains is unlikely to be changed and, if police embark on the protest, commuters can expect the crime rate on trains to soar.

Last year on Peninsula trains, at least 20 women were raped, about 23 people were murdered and more than 470 people were robbed, according to police statistics.

Metrorail spokesman for the Western Cape Mr André Harrison said the decision to make all police members pay full fare had been a police management decision.

"We were going to give them a concession rate like we give our own staff. Police headquarters came to us and asked us to keep the current status quo until July, and then make all police members

pay full fare." He said Metrorail in Gauteng had liaised with police in Pretoria about the matter and that he would not be in a position to negotiate with local police.

Harrison said police — the only civil servants permitted to travel free on trains — had been given this benefit with a view to them helping Metrorail fight crime.

"They have not been assisting us. They would all group together on first class coaches and refuse to help out our staff if there was a crime. There have obviously been exceptions."

Harrison said many police members had also abused the benefit by helping friends and relatives to travel free.

Police spokesman Senior Superintendent John Sterrenberg said: "If they want to make us pay, there is nothing we can do. It is a private business, not a state department."

He said it had not come to the attention of provincial police management that protest action was in the pipeline.

Sergeant James Davids, Sapu representative for the unit which polices trains, said: "We will have to pay to get to work on a train

which we will then spend the whole day policing. This is a ridiculous situation."

Other unit members told how they were primarily responsible for controlling unruly crowds returning from protest marches in the city, a task which should be undertaken by the internal stability division members who received a special danger allowance.

Others said they found it "disgusting" that police management made decisions of this nature "when they have made statements that they want to improve our work conditions".

We could end up broke, says minibus driver

MOTLHALEFI MAHLABE

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

Nomathemba Xaba is a taxi driver who is stunned by the prospect that she might not be able to feed her family because of the expected increase in petrol prices.

Xaba's worry is that she could end up working for less reward or without any earnings to take home.

She works from 6am to 7pm after running about seven loads of passengers from Vosloorus into Johannesburg.

A single round trip covers 80km and, Xaba says: "After filling up with petrol for R150, I am left with a daily taking of about R200."

And out of that she must still



Running on empty ... taxi drivers Nomathemba Xaba and Stanley Shongwe.

pay other running expenses.

"It will be difficult to increase the R3 fares as commuters could leave the taxis for buses," says the mother of two.

She indicated that the increasing number of taxis contributed to

the problem, because drivers now had to wait for two hours in order to make loads at Johannesburg's Noord Street rank.

Given the lower number of commuters on Sundays, some drivers say they may stop operating on this day.

"If you are lucky, you could make a taking of about R100 on a Sunday," said Philemon Ndaba, a taxi owner and driver.

"Before I bought my own minibus I thought my boss was making a lot of money.

"But now I know that all the money is taken by petrol and vehicle spares."

Ndaba said drivers who do not own minibuses face disaster as most of them are paid at irregular intervals by taxi owners.

STW 25/4 196

SA General Manager - District Report

We'll be paying through the nozzle

Mar 25/4/96

Angry taxi drivers threaten strike as fuel price poised to rise to over R2 per litre

By NIKKI WHITFIELD

Taxi associations and drivers are threatening nationwide strikes to protest against the 13c-16c petrol price increase, expected to be announced tomorrow and to take effect in May. The increase will push the price to more than R2 a litre.

The threatened strike would affect millions of commuters and cause traffic chaos if taxi drivers also decide to blockade roads and streets, as they have in the past.

Jacob Ledwaba of the Letlhabile Taxi Association, called on all taxi drivers across the country to stand together in protest against the increase which would force taxi owners to increase their fares to people, many of whom "do not earn a living wage".

And, as motorists brace themselves for tomorrow's announcement on the increase, economists have predicted a ripple effect that will further dent the economy.

While petrol is expected to dip back below the R2 mark in July, spin-off increases, which affect the cost of hundreds of petrol-dependent products, from soap powder to paint, are unlikely to fall off.

Filling-station forecourts are expected to charge between R2,05 and R2,06 a litre from May 1.

Central Energy Fund figures show the under-recovery on the fuel price from March 26 to April 22 was 12,88c/litre, which could result in a rise of 13-14c/litre.

But the May price hike could include a further 2c/litre if oil companies are successful in push-

index of 6,5%.

Ledwaba said taxi drivers were fed-up with the Government for promising subsidies and grants and not having delivered.

"The Government told us they would help us, but nothing has happened yet. It's very unfair. While they are all busy talking, something like this happens."

Prices at South African petrol pumps take their cue from several factors, such as fluctuations in the economy, higher oil prices and northern hemisphere seasons.

"When it is winter, the government in the northern hemisphere has an increase in the demand for fuel, diesel, paraffin and petrol," said Transnet economist Mike Schussler. "This last winter was particularly bad in all countries, not just in isolated spots."

"Oil stocks were depleted because of the increase in demand, and also because the world was waiting for Iraq and the UN to sort themselves out."

"Now that there is an agreement with Iraq, stocks are being replenished, and the northern hemisphere summer has started, we will probably see Brent oil prices coming off the highs we've had of \$22 a barrel to closer to \$18."

The fuel tax of 69c South Africans pay on every litre of fuel might sound high but, at around 37% of the total price, was low compared with the tax charged in other countries, some of which took 80%, Schussler added.

"But, of course, it's different there because public transport is

Angry taxi drivers threaten strike as fuel price poised to rise to over R2 per litre

By Nikki Whitfield

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But the May price hike could include a further 2c/litre if oil companies are successful in pushing through a rise in the wholesale margin before tomorrow.

Petrol jumped 8c/litre at the beginning of April to R1,92/litre for 93-octane fuel. Economists have predicted that a 13c/litre hike could add another 0,35% to the producer price index of 6,3% and 0,23% to the consumer price

index of 6,5%.

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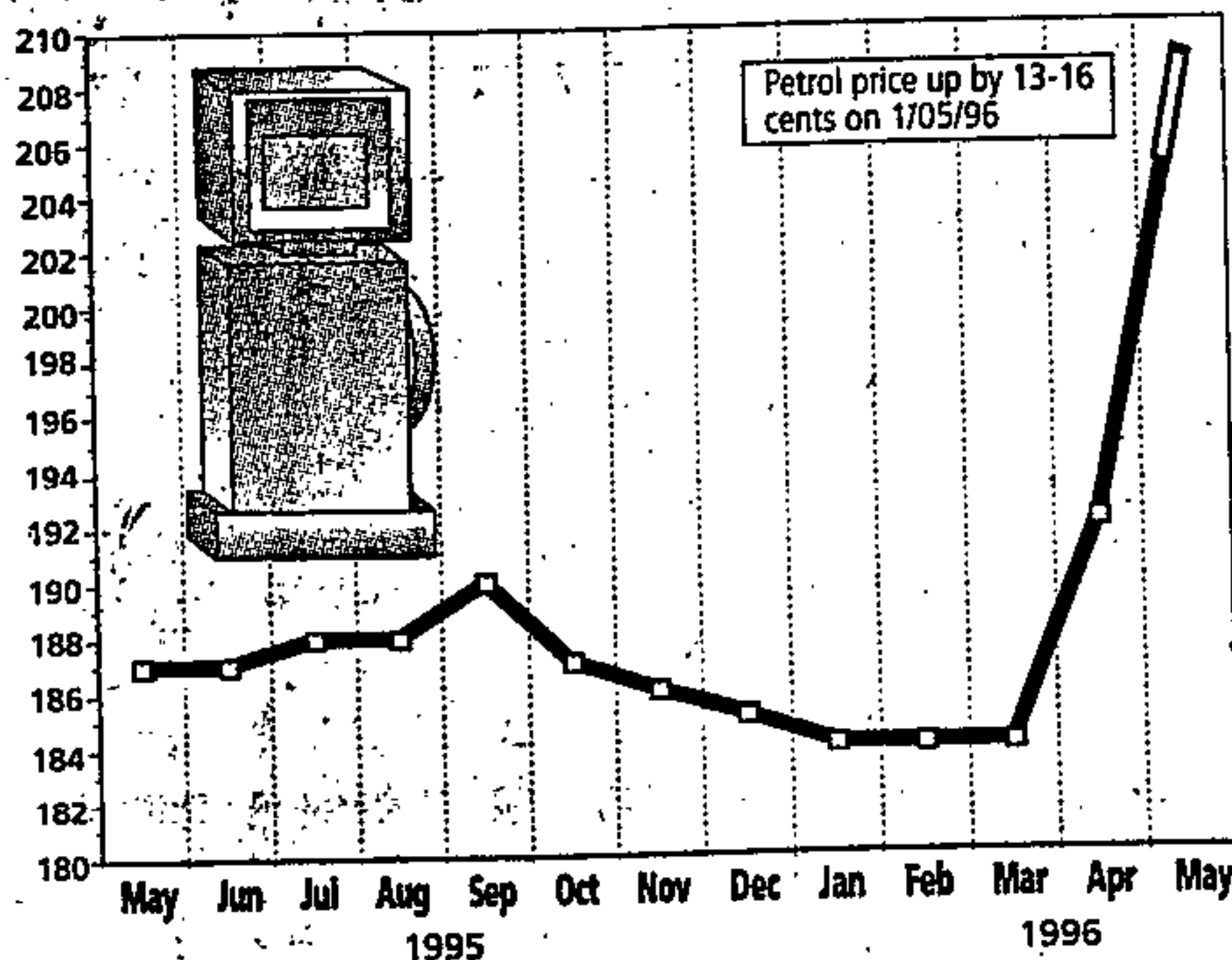
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"But, of course, it's different there because public transport is so much better."

"Here, there is no bus from, say, Kempton Park to the Randburg Waterfront. We are far more reliant on fuel in South Africa. And we earn less."

And while fuel prices could be down by July, it was unlikely other prices would follow suit.



Taxi bodies warn of violence

Theo Rawana

WARNINGS of taxi violence and threats of strikes greeted the planned increase in the price of petrol yesterday as two major taxi associations expressed their opposition to the move.

The Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) and the National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) both condemned the proposed increases which are expected to push the price of petrol to more than R2/l when they take effect on May 1.

LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said his organisation was strongly opposed to the increases, and government would be inviting strikes similar to those staged in opposition to the increase in VAT

if it pressed ahead with them.

He said the petrol price affected the poorest section of the population and "hard-pressed petrol consumers are once again forced to subsidise government patronage of apartheid white elephants such as Sasol".

Nafto general secretary Victor Mogale said the increases would fuel violence as taxi drivers, competing for fares, would ignore agreed loading procedures. Also they would overload vehicles and not maintain them.

He said government would have worked out a mechanism to save taxis from any fuel increase if it was serious about rescuing the industry.

Sapa reports that the Automobile Association of SA said the im-

minent petrol price increase once again called for urgent deregulation of the domestic oil industry.

The AA said it was only in a deregulated market, with competition between oil industry role-players, that the motorist could reap the benefit.

The AA said that research conducted on the association's behalf had shown that — contrary to popular belief — the SA motorist was much worse off than his overseas counterpart, and that petrol in SA was expensive.

With personal disposable income under pressure even though continued growth was forecast for the country's economy, the motorist's role should not be underestimated and overtaxed, the AA said.

Taxi leaders urged to put reform fears behind them

Theo Rawana

TAXI industry leaders were harbouring groundless fears that co-operatives planned for the industry would replace taxi associations and thereby strip them of their authority, the national taxi task team said yesterday.

Team chairman Dipak Patel said the co-operatives, which were meant to help the industry to diversify in government's grand plan to produce businessmen out of taximen, held no such threat, as taxi associations were an integral part of the scheme.

"There is a fear and uncertainty in the industry that the co-ops were designed to replace the taxi associations. The leaders should be assured that their role to keep the industry together through voluntary associations will always be there. It is important that these fears are allayed."

The co-ops were an integral part of the development of the taxi

industry into a viable, sustainable industry which would produce business leaders. "We say the time has come for leaders to rise to the challenge and lead the industry into its new future..."

"This is where the entrepreneurial flair in the black community will emerge. We want to see successful black business people emerge from this sector."

The co-ops were part of the task team's interim recommendations to government, seeking a meaningful role in the economic mainstream for the industry and ending the violence gripping it.

Key recommendations in the package included regulation and control of the industry, its restructuring into more formal business units or co-operatives, and economic assistance through a short-term "survival" financial package.

The team had proposed the development of a skilled and trained industry and improvement of labour relations and traffic safety.

Patel said the process which began with the task team engaging the industry, the different tiers of government and other roleplayers in a series of consultative workshops and provincial conferences, was beginning to bear fruit because implementation of some of the recommendations had already begun.

This had brought about a drop in taxi violence, which had plagued the industry, because of uncontrolled competition for a declining market.

Steering committees and forums had been set up in some provinces and others were still being established, Patel said.

The task team went through 36 public hearings over most of the country and in seven or eight months, had identified urgent issues to be acted on.

Government had considered the recommendations and the process was on the verge of practical implementation, Patel said.

BD 26/4/96

(332)

Running scared

(332)

Taxi drivers fear for their lives in bloody Kwazulu-Natal battle over lucrative routes

AK47 29/4/96

**Argus Correspondent
PAULA FRAY reports
from Durban.**

HIT squads, with suspected Johannesburg links, are systematically murdering taxi owners in the volatile Durban and District Taxi Association.

At least six deaths have resulted from this bloody power struggle for control of Kwazulu-Natal's multi-million-rand, long-distance taxi industry. It has reached terrifying proportions as a vicious feud between two rival families intensifies.

An investigation by Independent Newspapers has revealed a complicated web centring on a conflict between "Big Ben" Ntuli, association president and founder member, and the Gcaba family, ex-Johannesburg-based taxi bosses now in the DDTA.

It has turned the busy rank next to Durban central railway station - an established pick-up point for passengers to centres throughout the country since the '70s - into a battle zone.

Taxi violence was made a national priority crime two months ago under the Priority Crime Unit.

The unit says several warrants of arrests are out for key role players in the violence, but the killing continues.

Heavily armed police in a casspir maintain a high profile at the rank and have said more officers would be stationed there.

Nineteen DDTA members have

been targeted in just three months since the murder of powerful taxi boss Jacob Gcaba, according to sources within the association.

Twelve of them are dead, although police have identified only six DDTA-linked murders.

The Durban association's 87 members are all taxi owners.

Now ordinary drivers and taxi managers fear for their lives, particularly after the recent murder of Johannesburg-Durban rank manager Fano Ngcobo.

He was killed outside Durban station on Tuesday by a man who sped away in a white Johannesburg-registered Camry.

The atmosphere at the rank has become extremely tense, particularly after Ngcobo's killing.

"Yes, we are frightened. It could be me next," said a taxi driver who did not want to be identified for fear of his life.

The surviving association members who have alliances to either family, are running scared, some with prices on their heads.

"Big Ben" Ntuli has been in hiding, thought to have run overseas, since earlier this month. He said he had a R100 000 price on his head.

A private security company has been hired as bodyguards after Gcaba senior's death in February. He was gunned down in an ice cream parlour near the rank in February.

His death came a month after the shooting of DDTA member Ketli Mwalose, attacked and wounded outside his beach-front flat.

Percy Xulu, chairman of the

DDTA, was killed outside his house in Avoca last month.

"We don't know when they will attack again," he said prophetically, in an interview shortly before his death.

He said hired professional killers had been brought into the taxi war from outside Durban, referring to the first of two Sunday afternoon attacks at the rank in March.

Association member Jabulani Mthali and driver Mziwaki Ndlovu were killed and five bystanders wounded.

Xulu said the AK47-toting gunmen fired into crowds waiting to board taxis.

Gcaba's three sons, Mandla, Moses and Frank, have a temporary Durban Supreme Court interdict allowing them to be absent from the rank as they fear they will be killed.

"We cannot stand at the same place where our father was killed," said a Gcaba family member.

The rules of the association state taxi owners have to be present in person at the rank, unless they have special permission.

At present none of the family's taxis is "loading" in Durban and 20 mini-buses have been hidden.

In spite of contradictory stories from both sides, the common thread appears to be that the war stems from a jostling for control of the extremely lucrative business between the arch rivals.

Ntuli has almost 80 taxis running between Gauteng, and the rest of the Kwazulu Natal.

The Gcabas have 46 on the same

route.

They both claim to be the victims in the war but the police, who launched a weapons swoop at the rank assisted by the South African National Defence Force recently, believe both sides are paying for hits on their enemies.

One AK47 was recovered with 120 rounds of ammunition and a man was arrested.

Fifteen people had been arrested for DDTA taxi violence-related reasons during the past two months, said the Priority Crime Unit.

Six of them were picked up for having unlicensed firearms, the others were alleged hitmen.

Eight AK47s, nine nine-millimetre pistols and one sub-machine gun have been recovered.

Members of the unit also claim to be victims as they have frequently been accused of taking sides and "dragging their feet" to end the war.

The provincial head, Senior Superintendent Johan Booyesen, would not go on record for just this reason, preferring to defer official police comment to the Durban police spokesman Bala Naidoo.

The police were faced with a minefield of unsubstantiated facts, hearsay and wild accusations between the groups, said Director Naidoo.

Hard evidence was not easy to come by as people were too frightened to come forward.

"If I say we haven't looked at the Gcaba's and the Ntuli's then I would be lying. We are looking at a very sensitive issue here."



Picture: LEON MULLER, Chief Photographer.

Urgent peace bid as taxi war claims another life

(332)

JOHAN SCHRONEN
Crime Reporter

ARG 29/4/96

A COMMUTER has been killed and another seriously injured in renewed Cape Flats taxi violence.

As the taxi war continues, Western Cape Police Minister Gerald Morkel is today meeting members of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) in a bid to resolve the violence in which two people have been killed in the past week. At least nine people have been wounded.

In the fatal drive-by shooting yesterday, a woman was shot dead while getting out of a taxi at the Nyanga rank. Early today another passenger was wounded on the Terminus Road side of the rank.

The woman who was killed, T Hanise, of Nyanga hostel, died before help could

arrive. The name of the commuter who was injured today was not known.

Several other shootings were reported this morning at and around Crossroads, Nyanga and Guguletu taxi ranks. Police collected nine spent cartridges.

In Lansdowne Road, Crossroads, police reported a shootout between occupants of two taxis.

National Crimes Investigation Services chief, Attie Trollope said the latest flare-up was due to internal disputes between leaders in one of the factions.

"Police mediators are involved in negotiations and we hope this will bring a speedy end to the violence."

Police said tension was at breaking-point and they summoned reinforcements to boost their presence at taxi ranks. A helicopter was standing by.

TAXI WAR: Police and South African Defence Force personnel collect cartridges at the scene of a taxi shootout in Lansdowne Road, Crossroads.

New taxi industry policy soon

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

(332)
ARL 30/4/96

THE government and the provincial administration have been hammered for doing little to end the taxi war, which claimed two lives this week in the Western Cape.

But, the province is drafting a new policy on the taxi industry, due to be completed late next month, which could help alleviate the crisis.

A meeting between one of the rival taxi organisations, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), and

Western Cape Minister of Police Gerald Morkel has been arranged, but its effectiveness has been questioned.

A spokesman for the Centre for Conflict Resolution in Cape Town said yesterday the taxi industry needed a proper policy.

Western Cape Minister of Transport Leonard Ramatlakane agreed the industry was suffering from a lack of policy and said the long-term solution lay in a policy declaration, now being drafted by the ministry of transport in the Western Cape, to be completed at the end of next month.

Attempt to improve driving skills of minibus taxi operators

Star 30/4/96
In an effort to improve driving skills in the taxi industry, Castrol will today embark on a three-month defensive driving course for 100 taxi operators from Rustenburg, Brits, Ga-Rankuwa and Mabopane.

The course, which will end on

July 25, will be divided between in-class, theoretical aspects of safe driving and on-the-road, practical measures of traffic management.

Castrol managing director Martin Dando said participants will learn how to better visualise traffic

(332)
flows and road hazards and to make appropriate driving decisions based on that information. This includes correctly estimating time gaps for passing and turning, as well as proper techniques in gear selection, braking and steering. - Staff Reporter.

Accusations fly as operators fight bloody war over premium routes

Star 30/4/96

(332)

Both sides claim to be 'angels' in feud which has turned rank into battle zone

By KAREN JACKMAN
Investigative Unit

Hit squads with Johannesburg links are suspects in the murder of at least six taxi owners in the Durban and District Taxi Association (DDTA) as a power struggle for control of the long-distance taxi industry intensifies between two families.

An investigation by Independent Newspapers has revealed a web centred on a conflict between "Big Ben" Ntuli, the association's president and founder member, and the Gcaba family, both formerly based in Johannesburg, but now taxi bosses in Durban.

The taxi rank next to Durban central railway station has been turned into a battle zone.

Taxi violence was made a national priority crime two months ago under the Priority Crime Unit.

The unit says several warrants of arrests are out for key role players in the violence.

Heavily armed police in a Casspir maintain a high profile at the rank.

Nineteen DDTA members have been targeted in just three months since the murder of taxi boss Simon Gcaba, according to sources within the association.

Twelve are dead, although police have only identified six DDTA-linked murders.

The Durban association's 87 members are all taxi owners.

Now the ordinary drivers and taxi managers fear for their lives, particularly following the recent murder of Johannesburg/Durban rank manager Fano Ngcobo.

He was killed outside Durban

Station on April 22.

The surviving association members, who have alliances to either family, are running scared.

"Big Ben" Ntuli has been in hiding, thought to have run overseas, since earlier this month. He said he had a R100 000 price on his head. A private security company has been hired as bodyguards after Gcaba senior's death in February. He was gunned down near the rank in February.

His death came a month after the shooting of DDTA member, Keith Mvalose, outside his beachfront flat.

Percy Xulu, chairman of the DDTA, was killed outside his house in Avoca last month.

"We don't know when they will attack again," he said prophetically, in an interview shortly before his death.

He said hired professional killers had been brought into the taxi war from outside Durban, referring to the first of two Sunday afternoon attacks at the rank in March. Association member Jabulani Mthali and driver Mziwakhi Ndlovu were killed and five bystanders wounded.

Xulu said the AK47-toting gunmen fired into crowds waiting to board taxis.

Gcaba's three sons, Mandla, Moses and Frank, have a temporary Durban Supreme Court interdict allowing them to be absent from the rank, as they fear they will be killed.

The rules of the association state taxi owners have to be present in person at the rank.

At present none of the family's taxis are "loading" in Durban and 20 minibuses have been hidden.

Despite contradictory stories from both sides, the common thread appears to be that the war stems from a jostling for control of the extremely lucrative business between the arch rivals.

Ntuli has almost 80 taxis running between Gauteng, and the rest of Kwa Zulu Natal.

The Gcabas have 46 on the same route.

They both claim to be the victims in the war, but the police, who recently launched a massive weapons swoop at the rank, assisted by the South African National Defence Force, believe both sides are paying for hits on their enemies.

One AK47 was recovered along with 120 rounds of ammunition and a man was arrested.

Fifteen people had been arrested for DDTA taxi violence-related reasons during the last two months, said the unit.

Eight AK47s, nine 9mm pistols and one submachinegun have been recovered by the unit.

The unit also claims to be victims as they have frequently been accused of taking sides. The provincial head, Senior Superintendent Johan Booysen would not go on record for just this reason, preferring to defer official police comment to the Durban police spokesman, director Bala Naidoo.

The police were faced with a minefield of unsubstantiated facts, hearsay and wild accusations between the groups, said Naidoo.

Hard evidence was not easy to come by as people were too frightened to come forward.

"If I say we haven't looked at the Gcabas and the Ntulis then I

would be lying. We are looking at a sensitive issue. People are being killed and it would be stupid of the investigator to lay his cards on the table before the perpetrators are arrested," he said.

"If we can make a breakthrough in the DDTA dispute, for people who have similar ideas elsewhere, I think it might serve as a deterrent. Just six weeks ago we had a meeting with all the groups. Everyone left happy and that same weekend Jothan Ntuli, a DDTA member was wounded in a shooting."

In an interview before he went into hiding, Ntuli claimed attempts at reconciliation were in vain.

"We've talked to the family involved and offered to let bygones be bygones and start afresh. We are at our wits end."

A member of the Gcaba family, who says he is in hiding and does not want to be named, believes there is also a price on his head.

The Gcaba's moved to Durban 1991 and initially worked amicably together with other taxi owners at the Durban rank.

The family member said tensions arose because of attempts to push the Gcabas out.

Police arrested five men for an attempt on Mandla Gcaba's life at his home outside Durban in March.

Said Naidoo: "There is constant pressure on the investigators to arrest people. But we need evidence in the form of sworn statements ..."

"Our vision is to stop taxi violence. What counts in the end is the evidence we can acquire."

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VIP dies in taxi shooting

Staff Reporters

ARG 1/5/96

(332)

TENSION was mounting at Cape Flats taxi ranks today after a member of the ANC Women's League executive committee in the Western Cape was killed in Langa and four people were seriously injured in the latest outbreak of the taxi war.

Western Cape ANCWL chairperson Bulelwa Tinto said 42-year-old Olga Ncivata was shot dead when rival taxi factions exchanged gunfire close to the Ikapa Town Council offices about 3pm yesterday.

Mrs Ncivata was in a taxi ferrying people back from the Cosatu march on parliament during yesterday's national strike.

She is survived by her husband, who is employed by the SA National Defence

Force in Port Elizabeth, and by four children.

At Nyanga taxi rank today police formed a human barrier between Codeta and Cata members. A police spokesman said reports of heavily armed men heading for the taxi rank in five minibuses had added to the tension.

Chaos broke out in the township late yesterday when taxi drivers randomly opened fire on pedestrians and citizens in shooting incidents.

One of the injured is a traffic officer who was shot in the neck and was taken to hospital. Another victim was a 16-year-old girl who was shot in the leg.

The other victims also had gunshot wounds and were taken to hospital.

Unity against 'joint taxi foe'

Constantia councillors speak as one on 'the problem'

(332)
ARLT 2/5/96

Southern Reporter

CONSTANTIA'S emerging "taxi problem" temporarily united councillors in the Metropolitan Substructure and led to two maiden speeches at the monthly meeting.

Usually tempers in this sombre, purple-upholstered chamber are stirred at trees being felled illegally or applications to own extra horses. Most of the debate is left to two or three of the 11 councillors.

But in this instance the PAC, ANC, Wecusa and non-aligned councillors were united against a common foe - Constantia's new "taxi problem".

Two members who have scarcely uttered a word in the nine months they have been paid on the council - the National Party's Prince Gobinca, and the ANC's Lorraine Nonkeneza - were formally congratulated by Councillor Ron Gaylard on their belated maiden speeches.

It was a high-tech, star wars type meeting. Officials arrived with a video screen and recorder and played a jumpy scene of taxis driving, stopping, parking on red lines and performing illegal U-turns on Constantia Main Road opposite Pick 'n Pay.

Traffic officer Curt van Niekerk said that one day taxi drivers had banded together, sur-

rounded and shaken the car of a traffic officer who was issuing tickets to offenders. Drivers recently formed their own "rank" on the roadside. Up to 20 taxis sometimes parked along the road, waiting for customers.

"It's an eyesore," said Mr Van Niekerk.

He said it was recognised that taxis were an "essential service". Fines would not solve the problem.

"We don't want gunfire," he said. "We must negotiate and sort out the problem."

He did not have a solution, but proposed that some sort of rank be built to accommodate up to three taxis. Traffic officers have met drivers' leaders and negotiated an interim agreement not to clutter the road, but they have appealed to council to come up with a solution.

Mr Gobinca (Wecusa) warned that this was an "unfinished story". If three were allowed in others would follow, and then "people will start shooting because of lack of space".

He warned that blockades could result, as had happened elsewhere.

Mr Vic Fowler (PAC) said that taxis were a "law unto themselves".

Ms Nonkeneza (ANC) said that if a rank was built for the Constantia taxis, another would have to be built in Southern

Cross Drive for the Hout Bay taxis.

"This is the beginning of the fight," she said. "And once it starts, no-one will stop it."

Mayor Andrew Ross-Munro steered the debate into calmer roads, saying: "If they can work among themselves, surely we can work with them. Let's not be entirely negative."

A suggestion that the Alphen Clinic parking lot be used was rejected as unwise and dangerous.

Mr Gobinca suggested that the owners of Constantia's Pick 'n Pay be approached to find parking in their parking lot.

A team of councillors - Yvonne Wood, Jeanette Shapiro, Prince Gobinca, and Lorraine Nonkeneza - as well as planner Henry Aikman, metropolitan traffic and transport chief Chris Atkins, Pick 'n Pay centre manager Athol Swanson, police liaison officers from Wynberg and Diep River and CPOA chairman Neil McCarthy, have already met taxi leaders at the Alphen Centre.

Negotiations will continue.

One of the problems to emerge from the meeting was the discovery that many of Constantia's taxi-men were "pirate" operators.

Police say these include some who do not conform to codes of conduct.

of the masters man

'Local government must take control of the taxi industry'

(332)

ANDREA BOTHA

Staff Reporter

ARG 4/5/96

TAXI associations are not ready for peace; it's now up to local government to take control of the taxi industry.

This is the view of Western Cape Minister of Transport, Leonard Ramatlakane, who said the time had come for local government to take responsibility for the crisis in the taxi industry.

Addressing a meeting of Metro councillors yesterday, he said the South African National Defence Force would assist the police in patrolling taxi ranks and protecting citizens from incidents of random violence, such as the one last week in which prominent ANC Women's League executive committee member Olga Ncivata was killed.

He called for greater police visibility and praised operations like the recent clamp-down on a Nyanga taxi rank, in which 14 guns were confiscated.

Mr Ramatlakane said control of the streets should be taken back from the taxi operators. He said he had so far been the only one dealing hands-on with the problem and that greater co-operation between departments and councils was needed.

'WE WERE ALL SCARED'

Why police returned taxi drivers' guns

CT 6/5/96 (332)

TAXI CONFLICT IS SO INTENSE in the Western Cape that some policemen, fearing for their lives, have handed back weapons and released suspected killers to defuse a tense confrontation, writes Crime Writer **JACKIE CAMERON**.

AT LEAST 50 taxis were parked around the police station. Dozens of intensely angry men were inside the Langa charge office, some toyi-toying, others shouting at the police. Outside, police vehicle tyres were being slashed.

Some taxi drivers were threatening to blockade the N2 and cause havoc at Cape Town Airport if seven men suspected of violent crimes were not released from custody immediately — and nine confiscated firearms returned.

The men had been arrested in connection with drive-by shootings in which one woman passenger was killed and two taxi drivers injured, in Langa earlier in the day.

It happened last Tuesday, when it looked to everyone as if the police had surrendered.

"We had no choice. We were all scared," one national priority crimes unit detective said after the incident.

"Some threatened to kill us when they see us the next time we are working on an investigation in their township. They mistakenly think we favour the rival taxi organisation."

Death threats by taxi-violence agitators cannot be taken lightly. Since the beginning of the year, taxi wars have claimed 24 lives and left 73 people injured — many maimed for life — around the Peninsula.

Some attacks have been well-planned killings, bearing the hallmarks of professionally trained hit men.

Others are more random, spon-

taneous revenge killings, in which it is not always clear who fired the first shot.

These are the incidents in which passengers and innocent bystanders are often the victims.

Attackers are brazen and appear to have no fear of the law, often opening fire within sight of the police on major commuter routes.

Some police members fear that the authorities have lost their grip on taxi-related violence, but their superiors are more optimistic.

The Western Cape's national priority crimes unit chief, Senior Superintendent Attie Trollip, has this to say about the clash between police and taxi drivers at Langa police station: "We did not lose control of the situation. There was a choice. We could either use maximum force, with the chance that the situation could turn extremely nasty, or we could use minimum force."

So the suspects were released and the firearms were returned.

Last Thursday police seized 13 firearms and arrested at least three men in connection with taxi-related crimes, in a planned operation at the Nyanga taxi rank.

They hoped to regain some of the firearms seized and returned two days earlier.

The confiscated firearms have been sent for ballistics testing to determine whether they can be linked to any of the attacks.

Meanwhile, the heart of the taxi conflict remains the fight for routes and ranks.

"The industry needs proper reg-

ulation. New legislation is not in place yet. We have been told that it is at a national level that these things are being discussed," Trollip said.

"Rival taxi groups continually make agreements with one another about how they will share their routes but there is no-one to see that these agreements are complied with."

Taxi leaders hold regular meetings with police and non-governmental organisations and "reach wonderful agreements, but the implementation of these is impossible".

"Each rank has its own problems. A lot of the violence may stem from the frustration that these problems cause."

Trollip said many of agreements could not be enforced by law. For example, a ban on people carrying firearms in taxis had been discussed.

Police could not enforce this because people are allowed to carry firearms for their own protection.

Police, meanwhile, cannot solve the problem. "They can only keep it under control," Trollip said.

National priority crimes unit detectives, who are carrying about 100 dockets in connection with taxi-related crimes committed since the beginning of the year, are trying to bring the perpetrators of the violence to book — but they have difficulty persuading witnesses to shootings to testify in court.

"We offer substantial rewards to encourage people to come forward and make statements," Trollip said.

● Anyone with information about any taxi-related violence, particularly a shooting on the R200 in Kuils River last Monday, is asked to contact Inspector Herman Beckman at 951-1353.

Taxis in fuel price demand

THE Western Cape taxi industry wants the government to help set up a national committee to discuss the fuel price increases within 48 hours.

About 150 members of the Cape Metro Fuel Crisis Committee gathered outside the gates of parliament yesterday to present a memorandum to Finance Minister Trevor Manuel.

It said the fuel price was being increased unilaterally and Reserve Bank governor Chris Stals was allowing the rand to collapse to the benefit of big business and to the detriment of the poor.

Mr Manuel said the taxi industry did not fall under his ministry and it would not be possible to respond in 48 hours. The memorandum would have to be discussed with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj. - Sapa.

(332) ARG 7/5/96

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(332) ARG 7/5/96

Driver dies as taxi battle rages

332

7/5/96 ARG

Staff Reporter

GUGULETU has been turned into a battleground in Cape Town's taxi war, with one taxi driver being killed and another wounded in Guguletu in taxi-related violence so far this week.

The latest victim, Zwelivunile Kaza, 30, was shot dead last night. He was travelling alone down the NY1 in Guguletu at the time.

A police spokesman said several unknown gunmen shot at Mr Kaza's vehicle near the corner of NY111 and NY1. He was hit in the chest and legs and died at the scene.

Arrests have not been made.

Earlier this week Zolani Feni of Langa was wounded in the legs and back.

The shootings are being investigated by the National Priority Investigating Unit in its probe of taxi violence.

Anybody with information can contact Inspector Schmidt from the unit at 951 1353.

Council urges rival taxi bodies to resume talks

Mduduzi ka Harvey

(332)

BD 7/5/96

JOHANNESBURG's council is more determined than ever to encourage the various parties involved in taxi violence to return to the negotiating table to end wasteful injuries and waste of life, often involving innocent members of the public.

Council acting CEO Karen de Beer said in terms of current legislation the council had the sole right to establish and allocate ranks and to specify which organisations or associations would operate from those ranks.

She said it was an error to believe that any other group had ownership of the ranks and the right to control these. The council also had the sole right to specify particular routes, within Johannesburg, to be used by taxis.

De Beer also pointed out that the same right that gave council the right to determine routes, also empowered it to remove ranks and routes in circumstances which called for such decisions.

A metropolitan planning department spokesman said allocation of ranks and routes were decided on in consultation with traffic authorities, the taxi organisations concerned and transportation planners within the Regional Taxi Forum.

The establishment of these ranks needed to be agreed upon by council and the public. Land and business owners near the ranks had, especially, to be given the opportunity to comment.

Unofficial private arrangements and agreements between taxi associations to use the same or legally established ranks or routes were discouraged as they were unofficial and would lead to congestion. At the same time the setting up of illegal ranks could not be condoned. The council would not tolerate solving disputes by violence.

CT 10/5/96 (332)

Five held after shots at taxi drivers' protest

CRIME WRITER

POLICE arrested five people after gunmen in a crowd of taxi drivers protesting against the petrol price hike shot at them on the Station Deck in the city yesterday.

At least 30 cartridge cases were recovered after the lunchtime shooting incident, police spokesman Senior Superintendent John Sterrenberg said.

The protesters dispersed after the incident.

Sterrenberg said gunmen affiliated to a taxi organisation had earlier shot at protesting taxi drivers gathered at Athlone Stadium. Two men had been injured and taken to hospital for treatment.

Later, taxi drivers had formed blockades on several major routes into the city, causing major traffic delays. But the drivers had sped off

before police could arrest them, he said.

In Claremont, a taxi had forced a detective's vehicle off the road, causing it to crash into another vehicle, but no one had been injured.

Taxis had also blockaded the entrance to the Huguenot tunnel, but had disbanded after police negotiated with them, Sterrenberg said.

Lizard stack

No end to taxi strife in sight

(332) M+G 10-16/5/96

Rehana Rossouw

THE Western Cape government has been blamed for the failure to defuse the taxi violence in Cape Town which has claimed seven lives in the past month.

Taxi organisations and mediators say that in the past two years, the provincial government has failed to promulgate regulations or legislation for the industry, creating opportunities for thugs to operate above the law.

The reasons for the outbreak are murky: nameless factions of the two major taxi organisations in the Cape, the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) and the Cape Taxi Association (Cata) have been blamed for fuelling the violence in an attempt to wrest control

of lucrative routes.

Codeta chairman James Mafuya said the delay in promulgating regulations to govern the industry was stymieing attempts to mediate between warring groups.

Mafuya said he believed the taxi sector required special protection from government to minimise the barriers they faced to making a profit.

He called for an end to the violence and assured commuters that Codeta's office bearers were trying their utmost to end it. He said he was concerned about reports that commuters were planning a taxi boycott as this might fuel the violence.

Western Cape police representative Superintendent John Sterrenberg said the SAPS had a "contingency plan" to deal with the violence. "The minute it breaks out,

we call UMAC (the Unrest Monitoring Action Committee) and the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) to facilitate negotiations.

"To get everybody involved around a table is extremely difficult and these two organisations can do it better than we can."

CCR mediator Normagcisa Sipoyo said her organisation and UMAC decided they would no longer rush to the scenes of violence to mediate as it served no purpose.

"We've done our best to keep the parties in discussion, believing that if they were negotiating they were less problematic. But without guidance from government, without legislation controlling the industry, there is nothing we can achieve," she said.

Sipoyo said UMAC and the CCR held a meeting with all the law enforcement agencies this week and warned them that mediation is slowly collapsing.

No fare hikes - taxi body

By JEFFERSON LENGANE

THE LETHLABILE Taxi Organisation (LTO) yesterday achieved a first in the taxi industry when it successfully convened a strategic conference that resolved not to hike fares and to work towards establishing a single taxi organisation.

The conference, sponsored by Shell, was attended by various taxi organisations and stakeholders in the industry.

On the agenda were the latest petrol price increase, possible fare hikes, the lack of a subsidy for the industry and agreement on a decisive, democratic and united proposal to put to the government.

To implement resolutions taken at the conference, a five-member interim organising committee, comprising members of different organisations, was elected.

The conference resolutions were:

- To brief and mobilise taxi organisations that were not present;

- To appeal to government to exempt the taxi industry from the recent petrol price increase;

- To work on a ceasefire of all hostilities in the industry and towards the formation of one taxi organisation; and

- To establish communications with the National Taxi Task Team.

After the conference, the interim organising committee warned that it had adopted a two-fold strategy to deal with government – dialogue and confrontation.

“Where dialogue succeeds, it will be a feather in our caps; but where it fails we have to map out strategies to push our points,” it said.

Taxi industry moves to solve its problems, but wants exemption from petrol price rise

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

The taxi industry has set up an interim organising committee to examine its problems, including ongoing taxi violence.

The five-member committee, elected at the weekend's taxi conference in Midrand, will soon be replaced by a 32-member committee that will include national taxi associations and community organisations.

Spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said the interim committee would approach the Government this week to demand that the industry be exempted from the latest 14c/litre petrol increase.

"It would be unfair for the Government to resist the proposal as it was making more than R15-million a month from the recent increases."

Ledwaba said the conference, attended by taxi and Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) representatives, also undertook to delay fare increases until the Government had responded to its proposals.

Although the industry has backed down on its threat of a two-day national strike, it warned it had adopted a two-fold strategy to deal with the Government - dialogue and confrontation.

Ledwaba said the interim committee, which would be in contact with the National Taxi Task Team, would work to resolve conflicts in the industry and for the formation of one taxi body. He said it was time for the industry to resolve its problems as "people were using the industry to further their aims".

■ Four taxi drivers and two passengers were shot dead in separate attacks on minibus taxis in the Western Cape at the weekend.

Two drivers were also injured.

A police spokesman said yesterday the killings were linked to continuing rivalry between the Cata and Codeta taxi organisations.

He said a Cata driver was killed in the first attack on Friday. Three Codeta drivers and two passengers were shot dead in three attacks on Saturday. - Sapa.

*29. Dr A P JANSE VAN RENSBURG—Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. [Question standing over.]

Mortgage Bond Indemnity Fund: granting of loans

*30. Mr M G MASHER asked the Minister of Housing:†

- (1) Whether her Department has granted any loans from the Mortgage Bond Indemnity Fund yet; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) how many and (b) what is the total value of the loans so granted;
- (2) whether she or her Department has laid down any guidelines whereby loans are granted; if not, why not; if so, what guidelines;
- (3) whether she will make a statement on the matter?

N568E

The MINISTER OF HOUSING:

- (1) No. Mortgage Indemnity Fund does not grant loans. It is a guarantee scheme which guarantees financial institutions against political risk in areas where the due process of law has collapsed.

The basis of mortgage lending is that a loan is granted against the security and value of a fixed asset (residential property). Where, in the case of default by the borrowers, the lender cannot exercise its contractually entrenched right to attach and dispose of the property due to a breakdown in the due process of law in a specific area, the state (MIF) will buy in affected properties at fair market value, subject to certain restrictions. This scheme has been introduced as a short term, temporary measure in order to facilitate an early re-entry by mortgage lenders into areas where measures taken to stabilise and normalise the environment, are taking effect. Cover will only be provided to accredited lenders whose credit considerations have been approved by the MIF and adhered to in lending practices.

As a matter of principle, the state should not get involved in covering or indemnifying against normal commercial risks undertaken by private sector institutions such as banks and building societies, in the

course of their business activities. The MIF clearly excludes normal commercial risks.

- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable.

Health plan for prisons

*31. Mrs E J CHAIT asked the Minister of Correctional Services:†

- (1) Whether he or his Department has drawn up a health plan for prisons; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, who was involved in the drawing up of the plan;
- (2) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

N570E

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES:

- (1) Yes.

The current health care plan which is based on the Correctional Services Act, 1959 (Act No 8 of 1959), Regulations promulgated in terms thereof and Departmental policy, was evaluated by a Work Group appointed by the Commissioner: Correctional Services, during 1995. This Work Group recommended certain adaptations to the current health care plan which is presently under consideration.

Delegates from the following Departments/Organisations formed part of the Work Group and were thus involved in making recommendations for a new health care plan:

- Department of Correctional Services
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- Gauteng Provincial Administration (Medical Legal Section)
- Chief District Surgeon
- Part-time District Surgeon
- South African Nursing Council
- Department of National Health
- Lawyers for Human Rights and
- Transformation Forum on Correctional Services

- (2) I will be making a statement on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Work Group Report in due course.

Minibus taxis: subsidy

*32. Mr Z D MNGUNI asked the Minister of Transport:†

- (1) Whether he or his Department has allocated a subsidy in respect of minibus taxis; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what does this subsidy amount to;
- (2) whether he or his Department has laid down any guidelines about how this subsidy is to be spent; if not, why not; if so, what are these guidelines?

N571E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

- (1) No subsidy has been allocated to the minibus taxi industry.

The question of economic assistance does not stand alone. It is part and parcel of a comprehensive strategy to resolve the issues affecting the taxi industry, and therefore the commuter, in a sustainable way.

I, as Minister of Transport, have steered a proposal through Cabinet, as a result of which resources to the tune of R39,5 million have been approved for this financial year to fund the implementation process.

- (2) Clear guidelines have been laid down as to how this economic and financial assistance will be applied. It would be useful here briefly to outline the context within which these guidelines have emerged.

The National Tax Task Team (NTTT), was established to help solve the problems experienced in the taxi industry. The NTT followed a consultative process to identify the critical problems and to seek concrete solutions. Resulting from this process, recommendations were made to me as Minister of Transport and to MINCOM.

The three essential areas covered by the recommendations are:

- regulation and control measures;
- training and skills development; and

— economic sustainability and industrial structure.

These have been accepted as the basis for addressing the fundamental problems of the taxi industry. Government has now also convened three working groups which will present implementation guidelines within the next few days.

I can also report that the provinces are all on board and have already started giving effect to many of the proposals. Most notably, taxi offices have been established in the provinces to help the industry build capacity and Provincial Registrars offices for the regulation of taxi associations and operators are in the process of being set up.

Proposals to be implemented very soon are:

- Legislation of illegal operators using sound and responsible criteria
- Amendment of existing permits to normalise taxi operations
- A comprehensive training strategy and programme for operators and drivers
- A draft standard constitution and code of conduct is nearly completed and the taxi industry will then be consulted about it.
- Co-operatives have been approved by Government both as a mechanism for the economic development of the taxi industry and as the most appropriate structure for channelling financial assistance to it. Other forms of assistance will also be made available to the taxi associations.

Unemployment figure

*33. Mr D W MAKHANYA asked the Minister of Labour:†

- (1) Whether he or his Department has an unemployment figure for the past financial year; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what is the figure;
- (2) whether he or his Department has any strategies or plans to reduce this figure drastically; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

Taxi operators warned against blockading roads

CT 15/5/96

(332)

STAFF WRITERS

THOUSANDS of Peninsula commuters will be forced to find alternative transport today, as the taxi industry embarks on a day-long strike in protest against the recent petrol hike.

About 500 taxis are expected to meet at Athlone stadium this morning and drive along the N2 to the Cape Technikon, before taxi owners and drivers march on Parliament to protest against the fuel price rise.

But Roads, Transport and Works MEC Leonard Ramatlakane warned the taxi fuel crisis committee yesterday that if they tried a highway commuter blockade today police would use "whatever force they need to unblock any blockade — including impounding offenders' vehicles".

Mitchells Plain taxi forum spokeswoman Ms Nesha Mohamed said the taxis would use the special taxi lanes on the N2 and would not blockade it.

Taxi operators want a rebate of 50 cents a litre for public carriers, and say this will benefit commuters.

Yesterday Golden Arrow Bus Service said it supported the Western Cape Taxi Industry Forum's appeal to government to consider ways of limiting the effects of fuel price increases on the transport industry.

However, it could not support any action that "disrupts the ability of commuters to get to where they need to be", and intended running normal bus services. It appealed to the taxi forum to "allow everyone their democratic right to make their own decisions".

Mohamed said: "There will be no intimidation of those who do not support our struggle."

The Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry came out strongly against today's proposed strike saying actions that prevented people from reaching their places of work was "totally irresponsible".

Angry taxi drivers protest over killings

(382) /ran 16/5/96
BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

Traffic came to a standstill on KwaThema's main road yesterday as about 500 taxi drivers marched on the Springs police station, while hundreds of minibus taxis slowly followed behind.

The operators, protesting against the ongoing killings and hijacking of taxi drivers, warned they would take the law into their own hands if the problem was not addressed by the end of May.

This follows the murder of two drivers and the hijacking of "dozens" of minibuses since the beginning of the month.

A memorandum calling for more police involvement in addressing the escalating crime was handed over to Supt Louis Diedricks, who promised that investigations would be conducted in consultation with the taxi industry.

Springs Local and Long Distance Taxi Association chairman Bafana Magagula said drivers were angry that police were failing to arrest suspects and that those handed over by drivers were easily given bail.

He added that there should be visible patrols on all the main roads and the matter must also be brought before Gauteng commissioner Sharma Maharaj.

Scattered incidents as taxi strike draws blank

ET 16/6/96 (332)

TAXI OPERATORS who went on strike yesterday and sent a delegation to Parliament to discuss fuel price relief with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj failed to get any satisfaction from the meeting, writes **LISA TEMPLETON**.

THERE were scattered acts of violence yesterday when angry taxi drivers poured on to the Cape Flats after a heated meeting with Transport Minister Mac Maharaj ended in deadlock.

Earlier the Western Cape Taxi Industry Forum led a cavalcade of about 170 taxis along the N2 into District Six and then led a march of about 400 taxi operators to Parliament, where they sent 12 delegates to discuss the latest fuel price hike with Maharaj.

The 12, led by Mr Achmat Dyason, sought a solution that would keep fares down, either by freezing the fuel price or paying a subsidy of 50 cents a litre to commuter carriers.

One delegate from Paarl walked out midway through the 2½-hour meeting, which failed to find a solution.

"The fuel price has increased dramatically and must be frozen," said Dyason. "There are rumours of another increase on June 5. As businessmen we are forced to put up our fares and it is the community that suffers."

The delegates, who came from such areas as Bonteheuwel, Manenberg, Heideveld, Park City and Paarl, complained that taxis had never received money from the government, whereas buses enjoyed a rebate.

They also complained about a

lack of communication between operators and the taxi task force team established by the cabinet to liaise with operators.

The minister said he was unable to help operators as long as many of them remained unregistered. He estimated that only 7 000 of the 14 000 operators were registered.

Maharaj undertook to discuss the fuel price problem with Finance Minister Trevor Manuel and Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha.

He said fuel prices depended on the international oil price and the rand/dollar exchange rate.

He also told the forum that his door was always open and that they need not take to the streets to get his attention.

"Today we had to deploy 175 police staff, 40 traffic officers and have a police helicopter on standby. These are the costs to the taxpayer that such a march incurs," he said.

While the talks continued inside Parliament the 400-odd operators waited outside for the outcome. Emotions ran high when Dyason came out of the meeting and reported that fuel prices would not come down.

Elsewhere, the day was marked by sporadic acts of violence.

Stones were thrown at buses in Paarl East early yesterday morning,

and three taxi drivers were arrested in Mowbray for reckless driving.

A Cape Times employee reported that stones had been thrown at a Golden Arrow bus by passengers riding in a taxi in Woodstock.

Mitchells Plain became a hub of activity, with about 50 taxis blockading Klipfontein Road and Vanguard Drive.

Golden Arrow general manager Mr Hannes Grebe said buses were forced to stop on the outskirts of Mitchells Plain and drop passengers off at Westgate Mall.

"It is unfortunate that some people had to walk a long way to get home, but we feared for the safety of passengers and drivers," he said.

There had been separate incidents of stone-throwing and tyre-slashing, and shots had been fired near Manenberg terminus, he said.

Yesterday thousands of commuters were late for work because of the strike. The railways reportedly carried 15% more passengers than usual.

● Taxi associations Cata and Codeta signed a resolution yesterday condemning the shootings in the recent taxi violence.

They pledged to work towards forging peace and stability in the taxi industry and called for a cessation of "shootings or killings".

They appealed to all taxi drivers and operators to resume their normal work today.

The ANC's Western Cape branch has condemned the intimidation and disruption by certain taxi drivers yesterday.

Multibillion-rand master plan released for SA's nine major airports

By John Spira

Johannesburg. — Several billion rands will be spent and thousands of new jobs created under the Airports Company's master plan for South Africa's nine major airports, released yesterday.

The projection covers 34 years, with about R1,2 billion in capital expenditure earmarked for the next five years. Half this sum will be spent on Johannesburg, Inter-

national Airport, Dirk Ackerman, the managing director of the company, said yesterday that the Johannesburg airport would have to cope with 40 million passengers by the year 2030, compared with 7 million last year — a million more than in the past year.

"Total aircraft movements (take-offs and landings) at (the airport) have increased by 16,83 percent for domestic and 4,13 percent for international during the year to March

1995. This translates into a remarkable 97 259 aircraft movements a year, or 266 a day.

"There are 75 scheduled passenger airlines now operating from (the airport) compared to just 21 carriers in 1990."

The master plan includes the construction of four new hotels at Johannesburg.

The company also plans to set up extensive retailing facilities at the airport such as those at

Heathrow, Vienna and Schiphol. "Our long-term objective is to reach a situation in which non-aeronautical revenue comprises 70 percent of our income. The existing figure is a low 22 percent."

Kevin Cockcroft, the company's general manager of asset management, declined to say how the master plan would be financed.

"We are involved in talks with merchant bankers and expect to unveil some innovative financing

schemes in the near future," he said. Until three years ago, the Airports Company was state-owned and managed by a group of civil servants.

Then a new management team drawn from the private sector took over. In the year to March 1994, the company registered a loss of R56 million, but in the year to March last year it achieved a taxed profit of R80 million.

The figures for the 12 months to

March this year will soon be released. Cockcroft said they would be substantially better than the past year's figures.

"We're no longer a drain on the taxpayer. In fact, since we pay tax at full corporate rate, we're actually putting money back into taxpayers' pockets. The public is no longer subsidising South Africa's airport infrastructure."

See Business Watch, Page 18

CT(BR) 17/5/96

22 (332)

Bid unveiled to end taxi violence

Sowetan 13/5/96
By Wilson Ramothata

IN a bid to end taxi violence, national taxi operators at the weekend resolved to appoint a 32-member committee from different organisations within the industry to work towards achieving peace.

Speaking at the peace conference in Midrand, Lethlabile Taxi Organisation spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba said the committee would work towards a ceasefire and a formation of one taxi organisation.

He said the committee would visit and conduct hearings in troubled areas in the nine provinces.

Taxi organisations are expected to submit the names of their representatives later this week.

Each organisation would have a chance to submit two names, Ledwaba said.

He said the peace conference was also aimed at bringing unity to the industry.

The conference which was attended by various taxi organisations and commuter representatives also appointed a five-member interim committee to brief and mobilise other organisations that were not present at the conference.

The committee was mandated to appeal to Government to exempt the taxi industry from the recent petrol hike.

'Regulate industry'

"The Government should come in to regulate the industry in order to make it viable to commuters," Ledwaba said.

However, taxi organisations agreed in principle not to increase fares because this would financially damage the industry as people would resort to other means of transport.

Taxi organisations will meet again on May 21 and 22 at the World Trade Centre to formulate further strategies to clean up the industry.

Taxi peace bid becomes a war of words

By ADAM COOKE

A conference aimed at bringing peace to the war-torn taxi industry turned sour yesterday when two associations nearly scuttled the initiative.

The conference of the National Taxi Transitional Committee (NTTC) at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park was attended by about 60 delegates representing 17 national taxi organisations.

The initiative sprang from government and industry efforts to try to bring about peace in the embattled industry and to work out a strategy for its development.

But about 100 taxi association members claiming to represent two major taxi groups – the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) and the South African Long Distance

Taxi Association – said the meeting was illegitimate as they had not been properly consulted.

After a heated debate, LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba walked out of the conference, followed by other delegates who begged him not to leave. He twice threatened to leave, which would have left the initiative in tatters.

He was objecting to the inclusion in the conference of James Chapman, a consultant to the NTTC, who was accused of having prepared the agenda without prior consultation.

But Chapman was confident of a positive outcome.

"If we are to resolve the years of animosity, which was fuelled by past administrations, we need to keep all the big organisations on board," he said.

Taxi unity conference gets off to stormy start

(332) BD 22/5/96
A NATIONAL taxi unity conference had a stormy start at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park yesterday with fighting talk and slanging matches between delegations, and threats to walk out.

SA's 12 most powerful taxi organisations were represented at what was billed a two-day taxi unity conference, sponsored by a major oil company.

But in the first session the agenda was ignored as delegates argued among themselves and with Pretoria transport consultant James Chapman, who was running the conference secretariat.

Newly formed Transitional United SA Taxi Council organiser Jacob Ledwaba, who claimed to represent numerous taxi organisations, called for a conference boycott and for Chapman to be booted out.

After a heated argument Ledwaba walked out, but was persuaded to return later. Another organisation threatened a walkout because they said they were not properly invited. The walkout was stopped when a letter from their association, accepting the invitation and naming delegates, was produced.

The conference followed a taxi peace conference in Cape Town in February, where Transport Minister Mac Maharaj urged leaders to end rivalry and violence and form one united body. A 10-member National Taxi Transitional Committee was elected to organise a unification conference.

Referring to the heated debate, Chapman, a consultant to the taxi industry for 17 years, said this was to be expected. "You have the leadership of the whole taxi industry in this conference and there are people who have not spoken to one another for five years.

"They were divided by the previous government and violence was encouraged. Now they are sitting down and talking ... About 300 000 people are employed in the industry and if they can form a united body, they could become the biggest microeconomic force in the country." — Sapa.

Dissent follows meeting's call for united taxi body

(332) Star 23/5/96
By MANDLA MYHEMBU

The two-day national taxi transitional meeting ended yesterday on yet another sour note when the SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) distanced itself from the resolutions of the initiative.

The conference, held at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, moved to form a united taxi body "to speak with one voice for the industry".

But Saldta spokesman Sonke Siweya said the de-

cision was premature as "members on the ground had not been consulted".

"People who are affected by this taxi violence know nothing about these peace initiatives," said Siweya, arguing that "peace should begin on the ground where it is most needed".

Saldta also objected to the manner in which the organisation would be represented on the united taxi body.

North West Province national taxi task team member John Mboweni

pointed out there were also other associations that were not part of the resolutions, but he said the management committee had been given a mandate by delegates from all provinces and major taxi associations to implement recommendations adopted at the convention.

The proposals included drawing up a constitution; policy issues; budgets and source of funding; powers to convene meetings; and liaison with government ministers.

Taximen unite to end hostilities

MORE THAN 90 percent of South Africa's minibus taxi groups yesterday united in an attempt to halt violence associated with the industry and to get Government transport subsidies.

"This development is viewed as historical within the taxi industry and marks the bridging of the enormous rifts in the industry," the national taxi management committee (Manco) said after a two-day, tense negotiating conference in Johannesburg.

According to police, 224 people died in minibus violence last year and 390 were injured – a 10 percent increase from 1994.

The groups hope Manco will help to quell violence often sparked by drivers competing for routes and passengers.

"The industry is going to start rolling up its sleeves," said Mr Joe Bowen, a taxi representative from Gauteng.

Another goal the statutory body – the first of its kind for the industry – hopes to

tackle is getting government transport subsidies that have typically gone to train and bus commuters.

According to the taxi group, minibus taxis transport more than 56 percent of South Africa's commuters and should be eligible for government subsidies and aid.

"We see the way government subsidies have been dished out as a violation of the very letter of the Constitution," Bowen said.

Taxi representative Mr Boeti Letsoela said the unified body would be in charge of regulating the industry, forming policies and liaising with the Government.

The South African Long Distance Taxi Association was reportedly the only minibus taxi organisation which did not join the unified body.

The group said Saldta disagreed with the way provincial leadership for the body would be set up.

"We will still have negotiations with them," Bowen said. – Sapa.

Taxi talks off again

Staff Reporter

(332)
A MEETING described as "vital" between the African National Congress and the Western Cape Taxi Alliance has been postponed again.

It is unclear why discussions were not held in Mitchell's Plain this week.

A spokesman for the Western Cape Taxi Alliance, Junaid Peters, said none of the relevant participants had arrived. But an ANC spokesman said the purpose of the meeting had merely been to arrange another meeting for later this week.

The meeting was called to consider an accusation that the taxi alliance, which organised a protest against the fuel price rise, supported the National Party.

"This is a slap in the face. We want to clear our name," said Mr Peters.

He said the taxi industry in Mitchell's Plain had a problem with the government rather than with the ANC.

An ANC spokesman confirmed the meeting would be held later.

ART 23/5/96

Wynberg taxi men sign pact

(332)

ARG 23/5/96

Code of conduct agreed by all

Southern Reporter

A CODE of conduct, drawn up jointly by taxi associations using the Wynberg transport forum, has been accepted at a meeting attended by 80 taxi marshals.

Steve Brito, chairman of the forum, said: "We felt the taxi industry had such a bad name we wanted to turn it around and through the code we hope to achieve this."

"The code has been drawn up to promote management and control of the rank from within," he said.

The new system offered commuters the opportunity to lodge complaints - and compliments - with the marshals.

These responses could be assessed and attended to at management level, he said.

"The marshals will be at the forefront of the new system," Mr Brito said.

"They have been drawn from all taxi associations using the rank and will supervise the implementation of

the code.

Taxi associations using the rank include Route Seven, Hanover Park, Grassy Park, Parkwood Estate, and Lotus River.

The marshals' responsibilities will be to curb abusive language, loitering, gambling, the misuse of facilities in the area and traffic violations.

Councillor Mansoor Jaffer said: "The Transport Forum identified problem areas, which included dangerous driving in Ottery Road and noise from the rank near the mosque, which disturbs prayer."

Inspector George Matfield, community policing officer for Wynberg, said the Transport Forum had been a great success.

He said that since its formation in April no crimes had been committed at the rank.

"Crime has dropped completely and we have brought several criminals to book including an illegal liquor dealer," Inspector Matfield said.

Taxi talks put off yet again

332
Staff Reporter

ARG 23/5/96

A VITAL meeting between the African National Congress and the Western Cape Taxi Alliance has been postponed yet again.

It is unclear why discussions failed to get under way in Mitchell's Plain this week.

A spokesman for the Western Cape Taxi Alliance, Junaid Peters, said all the relevant participants failed to arrive. But an ANC spokesman said the purpose of the meeting had merely been to arrange another meeting for later this week.

The meeting was called to consider an accusation that the taxi alliance supported the National Party. The alliance organised the recent anti-fuel price protests.

"This is a slap in the face. We want to clear our name," said Mr Peters.

He said the taxi industry in Mitchell's Plain had a problem with the government and not with the ANC.

An ANC spokesman confirmed a meeting would be held again later this week.

Taximen warn Maharaj on transport policy changes

By Thabo Leshilo

Johannesburg — South Africa's taxi bosses yesterday warned Mac Maharaj, the transport minister, not to go ahead with proposed changes to the country's public transport policy, which could be detrimental to the multimillion-rand industry.

Speaking at the end of a two-day peace and unity conference at the World Trade Centre, the captains of the taxi industry said they would support the Transport and General Workers' Union in its planned protests against Maharaj's plan to introduce competitive tenders for the provision of bus transport.

The taximen said the introduction of competitive tenders would drive their members out of business as they would not be able to compete with large bus companies for government contracts.

"We won't accept the government saying we should compete with big business. We are still toddlers," said Joe Mboweni, a representative of taxi bodies in North West Province and a member of



IN DEPTH Gaby Magomola, standing, an adviser to the transport ministry, confers with provincial taxi association representatives, left to right, Stimela Mabaso, Johannes Morolong and Julias Kapeng, at the taxi peace and unity talks

PHOTO: SELWYN TAIT

the national taxi task team set up by Maharaj to investigate problems in the industry.

Although the taximen did not spell out what action they would take, Mboweni hinted at a fuel boycott. "As businessmen, we will not toyi-toyi (like the union) but will do it in a way that the econo-

my will suffer," he said.

He said competitive tenders would lead to increased unemployment in the taxi industry because one bus driver could do the work of four taxi drivers.

The taximen were also angry because they still did not receive government subsidies, despite the

fact that they transported at least half of the commuting public.

The government has allocated R840 million in subsidies for bus companies for the fiscal year.

Mboweni accused the transport department of having ignored the input from the taxi industry in drawing up the Green Paper on transport.

The department is drawing up a White Paper to be tabled in parliament in July.

The meeting decided to form a united taxi body to enable the industry to speak with one voice and promote peace. A management committee was appointed to draw up a new constitution, consider policy issues, prepare budgets, source funding and liaise with the government.

The taximen hailed the move towards unity as a historic moment that would help restore its profitability and significantly reduce violence.

The SA Long Distance Taxi Association expressed reservations about peace prospects, saying the new initiative did not involve taximen at grassroots level.

Five hurt in taxi war

332 Sowetan 24/5/96
By Themba Sepotokele

THREE of five victims of a taxi shooting yesterday at Fourways, north-west of Johannesburg, are fighting for their lives at Johannesburg Hospital and the other two are in serious but stable conditions.

Hospital spokeswoman Mrs Trudie Schutte told *Sowetan* yesterday that three male victims were in the intensive care unit while the other two were admitted at the theatre.

The fighting by the rival

Bryanston Taxi Association (BTA) and the newly formed Diepsloot Taxi Association (DTA) was sparked by a dispute over routes.

Chief of the CID in the area Captain Johan Koegelenbere said both groups claimed the other was operating illegally.

Police intervened members of the BTA threatening to attack an alleged "hitman" said to belong to the DTA. They later arrested three men in connection with the shooting and confiscated three firearms.

A member of the BTA, Mr

Sampie Masopha, claimed the DTA had forged permits to operate on the route.

He said trouble started when the DTA tried to "hijack" the rank. "They shot at our cars on three occasions and are now forcing passengers out of our taxis," he claimed.

A spokesman for the DTA said they had permits to operate on the route but were being prevented from doing so by members of the BTA.

Police were yesterday monitoring the situation.

Taxi industry buries the hatchet to forge pact

332 Star 25/5/98

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

After a stormy start and fighting talk, South Africa's volatile taxi industry has stitched together a historic pact uniting more than 90% of the country's taxi groups into one body.

The national taxi unity conference at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park this week was almost a non-starter when slanging matches erupted between delegations over the agenda and some taxi organisations threatened to walk out.

South Africa's 17 most powerful taxi organisations got together at a two-day taxi unity conference sponsored by a major oil company. The gathering was attended by about 60 delegates.

This followed a taxi peace conference in Cape Town in February, when Transport Minister Mac Maharaj urged leaders to end rivalry and violence and form a united body. Maharaj

gave the taxi organisations an ultimatum to unite or else forfeit government transport subsidies. The Government had previously promised the taxi industry R40-million in development aid and R14-million for training in the 1996 financial year if it agreed to form a united body.

A 10-member national taxi transitional committee was then elected to organise a unification conference. But in the first session, the agenda was ignored as delegates argued among themselves and with Pretoria transport consultant James Chapman, who was running the conference secretariat.

Jacob Ledwaba, organiser of the newly formed Transitional United SA Taxi Council, who represented the powerful Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) and the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta), called for a conference boycott and for Chapman to be expelled. After a heated argument, Led-

waba walked out, but was persuaded by other delegates to return. He twice threatened to leave, which would have derailed the peace talks before they had even begun.

Chapman, a consultant to the taxi industry for 17 years, said heated debate was to be expected.

"You have the leadership of the whole taxi industry in this conference and there are people who have not spoken to one another for five years."

"They were divided by the previous government and violence was encouraged. Now they are sitting down and talking. About 300 000 people are employed in this industry and if they can form a united body, they would represent the biggest micro-economic force in the country."

On the second day of the conference, the officials decided to end the war of words and form a united body to enable the taxi

industry to speak with one voice and promote peace. A national taxi management committee (Manco) was elected to draw up a new constitution and a taxi policy, to source funding and to liaise with the Government. The committee was intended to be a statutory body, making it the first of its kind for the taxi industry.

"This development is viewed as historical within the taxi industry and marks the bridging of the rifts in the industry," Manco said after the conference.

Taxi groups expressed the hope that the new organisation would end the violence sparked by drivers competing for routes and passengers.

"The industry is going to start rolling up its sleeves," spokesman Joe Boveni said.

Manco said minibuses, taxis transport more than 56% of South Africa's commuters and should be eligible for government subsidies and aid.

Another peace deal – then another shooting

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

The ink had hardly dried on a peace agreement signed by taxi organisations around the country, committing them to ending the taxi violence, when three people were injured in a taxi shooting in William Nicol Drive, Sandton, on Thursday morning.

Police blamed the Bryanston (BTA) and Diepsloot (DTA) Taxi Associations for the attack, which took place less than 24

(382) Star 25/5/96
hours after the peace pact.

Police spokesman Inspector Andy Pieke said a taxi driver was shot in the leg and a passerby in the shoulder and leg. Another person in a car was also shot and injured. Men seen rushing from the scene in a red minibus with false number plates were said to be behind the attack.

Three men believed to be connected with the shooting were later arrested and three

firearms confiscated.

Captain Johan Koegelenbere, police crime and investigations division chief in the area, said both groups had accused each other of operating illegally.

And police had to stop Bryanston taximen assaulting a man they alleged was a "hit-man" from the DTA.

Sampe Masopha, a spokesman for the BTA, accused the DTA of forging permits to operate on the route. Police were yes-

terday still keeping a watchful eye on the area.

Boetie Letsoela, chairman of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association, said in response to the shooting that the taxi industry needed to be regulated properly if violence was to be eradicated.

Meanwhile, police said figures showed that 224 people died in minibus taxi violence last year and 390 were injured – a 10% rise from 1994.

Three people injured as shootings blast taxi peace accord

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

Own Correspondent

332
ARG 25/5/96

JOHANNESBURG - The ink had hardly dried on a peace agreement signed by taxi organisations around the country committing them to ending the taxi violence when three people were injured in a taxi shooting in William Nicol Drive, Fourways, Johannesburg.

Police blamed the Bryanston (BTA) and Diepsloot Taxi Associations (DTA) for the attack on Thursday, less than 24 hours after the peace pact. Police spokesman Andy Pieke said a taxi driver was shot in the leg, and a passerby in the shoulder and leg in the incident. A third person in another vehicle was also shot and injured.

Men in a red minibus with false number plates seen rushing from the scene were alleged to be behind the attack.

Police crime and investigations division chief in the area Johan Koegelenberg said both groups accused each other of operating illegally. Police had to stop Bryanston taximen assaulting a man they alleged was a "hitman" from the DTA. Three men believed to be connected with the shooting were arrested and three firearms were confiscated.

A spokesman from the BTA, Sampie Masopha, accused the DTA of forging permits to operate on the route. Police were still keeping a watchful eye on the area yesterday.

Chairman of the SA Long Distance Taxi Association Boetie Letsoela said in response to the shooting the taxi industry needed to be properly regulated if violence was to be eradicated from the industry.

Meanwhile, police said 224 people died in minibus taxi violence in 1995 and 390 were injured - a 10 per cent rise from 1994.

'Riding shotgun', warning to taxi men

(332) AR 25/5/96

GLYNNIS UNDERHILL
Staff Reporter

ILLEGAL "pirate" taxis are allegedly employing armed men to ride shotgun on some Cape Town routes.

While taxis in the Western Cape might be carrying legal arms, they were not "riding shotgun", according to Faek Ariefdien, secretary on the Western Cape Taxi Task Team. A taxi which was spotted with a man "riding shotgun" in Sea Point must have been a pirate on the road, which was operating without a municipal permit, he said.

Witnesses were recently stunned to see a man leap out of a taxi with his gun cocked and usher passengers into the minibus on Sea Point Main Road.

However, Mr Ariefdien said his team had been quite adamant in putting across the message to leave guns at home. It was the "illegals" without municipal permits which were driving around with arms, said Mr Ariefdien.

"But let's face it, most of society is armed with legal weapons, some own four or five or even 10," he said.

■ Taxi operators brandishing weapons without reason can be arrested and charged, according to police.

Sergeant Robert Cant of the police firearm licensing department said taxi operators could be arrested and charged if they were seen to be wielding weapons without necessity.

"They can be charged for pointing a firearm in anybody's direction. Even if the weapon is legal, it is there for the sole purpose of necessity," he said.

"Monitoring squads" consisting of legal taxi operators were checking up on routes to keep tabs on the illegals, said Mr Ariefdien.

The traffic department was not helping in keeping these taxi operators off the routes, he claimed.

"They only concentrate on the taxis which they know are legal because they can give us heavy fines for traffic violations," alleged Mr Ariefdien.

The Western Cape Taxi Task Team, which was appointed by a ministerial committee, is looking at many aspects of the taxi industry, including peace issues.

There are now about 100 taxi

associations in the Western Cape, all governed by constitutions and codes of conduct.

Mr Ariefdien, who is also the provincial representative on the National Taxi Task Team, believes many people prefer to project an image of the taxi industry in chaos.

As an organised unit, taxis would eventually wield as much power as the trade unions' Cosatu, he said.

"We move the bulk masses of people, at least 50 percent of the population, to and fro from work," explained Mr Ariefdien.

The petrol price increase had come as a blow, but the government was looking at ways to subsidise the taxi industry, he said.

He believed much of the taxi violence was set-up.

"Quite honestly there is not really a taxi war. What better place to stage a killing than a taxi rank. The police and media then just attribute this to the 'taxi war'," he said.

Taxi drivers overcome stormy start to pact

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE
Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. - After a stormy start and fighting talk, the volatile taxi industry stitched together a historic pact this week, uniting most taxi groups into a single body.

The national taxi unity conference at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park was almost a non-starter when slanging matches erupted between delegations over the agenda, and some taxi organisations threatened to walk out.

The country's 17 most powerful taxi organisations got together at the two-day event.

It followed a taxi peace conference in Cape Town in February where Transport Minister Mac Maharaj urged leaders to

end rivalry and violence and form a united body.

Mr Maharaj gave the organisations an ultimatum to unite or forfeit government transport subsidies.

In the first session of the conference, the agenda was ignored as delegates argued among themselves and with transport consultant James Chapman, in charge of the secretariat.

Mr Chapman later said the heated debate was to be expected.

"You have the leadership of the whole taxi industry in this conference and there are people who have not spoken to one another for five years.

"They were divided by the previous government and violence was encouraged. Now they are sitting down and talking.

"About 300 000 people are employed in the industry and if they can form a united body, they would be the biggest micro-economic force in the country."

A national taxi Management Committee (Manco) was elected to draw up a new constitution and a taxi policy, source funding and liaison with the government.

Manco is intended to be a statutory body, the first of its kind for the taxi industry.

Manco said the minibus taxis transported more than 56 percent of South Africa's commuters and should be eligible for government subsidies and aid.

"We see the way government subsidies have been dished out as a violation of the very letter of the constitution."

New Codeta leaders vow to seek taxi peace

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

TAXI organisation Codeta's new leaders have committed themselves to peace and stability in the industry.

After months of internal conflict, a new, seven-strong executive council was elected yesterday by a managing council at the offices of Codeta's lawyers.

They are George Skade, Gilbert Mtsotso, Jafta Magoda,

Charley Doda, Howard Dyubeni, Reggie Malimba and chairman David Jezile.

Spokesman Howard Dyubeni said yesterday: "We are very happy. The people have spoken."

"Finally people can stop asking who the leaders of Codeta are and who is representing the people," he said.

Uncertainty over the leadership of Codeta has caused much conflict and unrest recently in

the industry.

Negotiations with taxi organisations have repeatedly failed because of the lack of clarity over who was representing the organisation.

Last week the Supreme Court ordered that a general Codeta meeting be held.

At this meeting Codeta members unanimously voted the old executive out and elected a new council, from which the executive council was chosen

yesterday. Mr Dyubeni said the new executive council was committed to the Codeta constitution and would address its members tomorrow at a mass meeting.

He said that unlike the old executive, the new executive council would work closely with its members.

On Friday the council will have a meeting with Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlhakane.



NEWLY ELECTED: The new leadership of the taxi organisation Codeta are determined to help stop violence in the taxi industry. They are, from left, Reggie Malimba, Howard Dyubeni, Charley Doda, Jafta Magoda, Gilbert Mtsotso and George Skade. The seventh member, David Jezile, was not present.

Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

Six banks to pay taxi owners R2-m

Samuelan 30/5/96 (332)

By Themba Sepotokele

Financial Research Foundation blames the banks for taxi violence

THE HUMAN RIGHTS Commission has asked six banks to repay R2 million owed to 182 taxi owners after a probe by the Financial Research Foundation (FRF) revealed that these institutions were overcharging owners on interest, illegal fees and insurances.

According to a statement released by FRF chairman Mr Dave Thomas this week, his organisation has uncovered a massive scam over the past year.

He attributed the ongoing taxi violence to financial institutions, saying they were the "root cause of the taxi unrest".

Thomas said the FRF was investigating over 1 000 hire purchase accounts of taxi owners and found

that they have been overcharged by amounts over R100 000 per hire purchase account.

The FRF has met with Trade and Industry Minister Mr Trevor Manuel, Justice Minister Mr Dullah Omar and the Human Rights Commission about the issue.

Rescinded judgement

After the meeting, the attorney general agreed to prosecute the banks, the Commercial Crime Unit and leading financial institutions, Thomas said.

He said the FRF had a previous judgment against a taxi owner rescinded.

The magistrate ruled that the

bank had charged 30 percent when it was only allowed by the Usury Act to charge 28 percent.

The organisation has also requested the National Taxi Task Team to investigate allegations that the cause of the ongoing taxi violence is that banks are overcharging taxi owners on interest fees and illegal insurance.

Thomas said the transport department is presently seeking alternatives to this massive problem.

However, head of the Human Rights Commission Dr Barney Pitsoa Moleketi refused to comment on the issue saying the matter was at a sensitive stage.

He said his organisation was in a "delicate" stage with the banks.

Taxi industry needs rescue package

(332) CTC(BR) 3/6/96

By Thabo Leshilo

Johannesburg — The transport department has been urged to speed up the implementation of its R40 million rescue package for the minibus taxi industry to soften the blow to the depressed industry of the 13c a litre petrol price rise, to come into effect on Wednesday.

James Chapman, a transport consultant, said the rescue plan, which included reducing the cost of finance, insurance and fuel, could save taxi operators, whose margins had been under pressure.

"The petrol price increase ... could be the straw that will break the camel's back," Chapman said.

He said the industry, which gets

no government subsidy despite transporting more than half the country's commuters, had become less profitable because costs had risen sharply.

Peter Rabali, the president of the National African Federated Transport Organisation, said the taxi industry would be forced to increase fares.

Petrol drags inflation up in its

(32)
With fuel at its highest level yet,
taxi drivers threaten strike action

By STAFF REPORTERS

South African transport fuel costs increased to their highest price ever at midnight, and motorists, fleet managers and commuters woke up this morning with the prospect of being poorer from higher running costs.

The price of petrol went up a further 13c/l after the last increase and economists said the hikes would inevitably have a knock-on effect right down the consumer line.

Added to last month's 14c/l price rise,

the fuel cost has now risen to a record high of R2,19 a litre. Diesel went up by 5c/l to R2,02. Although many motorists queued up at filling stations until late last night to save a few rands a tankful, most seemed resigned.

Users of public transport will also feel the bite, bus companies and taxi organisations saying they would review and most likely increase their fares soon.

The Automobile Association said today it saw the soaring cost of petrol as an opportunity to "revisit the whole question surrounding the deregulation of the oil industry as a matter of urgency".

Spokesman Robin Scholtz said: "It is only in a deregulated market that the motorist can reap any benefit from economies of scale that such a market-driven industry would bring."

The South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) warned today it was considering national strike

► **Fuel price blow**
Business Report

customers.

Spokesman Reggie Mutsi said Sabta was angered that it had not been involved in discussions about the price. "Ours is one of the largest industries affected by the cost of fuel and we should have been consulted before any decisions were made," he said.

National African Federated

► To Page 2

Taxi Organisation secretary-general Victor Mogale confirmed the rise was forcing the industry to raise fare prices: "We are really suffering because it's not only petrol that has gone up but the price of spare parts has also increased with the devaluation of the rand."

However, Mogale added that Nafto was not supporting any strike action, but wanted to negotiate with the government.

Coastal's parliamentary office chief in Cape Town, Neil Coleman, warned the increase would have a disastrous effect on the economy and consumers: "We cannot behave as if the situation is normal. We will be approaching Government to find some mechanism to deal with the situation and avoid the devastating effects the price increase may have."

National Congress of Trade Unions deputy general secretary Mahlomula Skhosana said: "The latest price hike has come at a time when unions are just about to begin their annual wage and conditions of employment negotiations. Unions are not expected to respect the current rate of inflation following the petrol price increase." Federation of South African Labour spokesman Dannhauser van der Merwe said: "There is no doubt the Government must take some of the blame ... the consumer has been paralysed again."

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(183) (153)

18 Jan 5/6/96

ARG 10/6/96

Taxman has a plan to take on the taximan

Political Staff

332

THE taxman is taking on the taximan.

Commissioner for Inland Revenue Trevor van Heerden has told parliament that taxi operators are among a burgeoning number of entrepreneurs who should be paying tax and aren't.

Briefing the joint standing committee on finance on the activities of the SA Revenue Service (SARS), Mr Van Heerden

said the service had devised a plan to collect tax in the informal sector.

Closing in on the informal sector would be part of the revenue service's overall efforts to recover an outstanding R9 billion in unpaid revenue.

The SARS was expecting to employ 320 investigating officers during the next five years to net millions of rands a year which were currently lost and to ensure that local industries were protected.

Bus, taxi fares set to rise

Rail services expected to benefit

LINDSAY BARNES
Staff Reporter

WESTERN Cape commuters will be hard hit this month by an increase in bus and taxi fares as a result of soaring fuel prices.

Golden Arrow Bus Services, Codeta and Cata all confirmed their fares had risen or were to rise again to absorb the shock of the recent increases in petrol and diesel.

On Wednesday last week petrol rose 13c a litre to R2,09, while diesel went up 5c a litre to R1,92. Unleaded fuel rose to R2,09 a litre.

This followed a 14c increase for both at the beginning of June, and amounted to a jump of 32c a litre for diesel and 35c a litre for petrol since January.

The reason for the shocking new prices was the under-recovery of petrol sold between April 26 and May 25, the plummeting rand and a rise in international oil prices, according to the Central Energy Fund.

Cape Metro Rail Services, whose fares have remained unchanged since September last year, look set to benefit as many taxi commuters are expected to opt for the cheaper rail option.

Spokesperson Riana Jacobs said no fare rise was imminent. "At this stage we haven't been notified of any imminent increase," she said.

Bus fares are set to increase between 10 and 20c a trip from July 1 following the latest increase in diesel prices, Golden Arrow Bus Services announced last week.

Diesel is to increase for the eighth time in successive months, pushing up the bus company's operating costs.

While the increases will not affect all its 99 routes, the company will only announce towards the end of

the month which are in the spotlight, general manager Hannes Grebe said.

He was confident the company would not lose commuters, due to an anticipated rise in taxi fares, too.

"The whole of the Western Province will be affected. In some instances the taxis haven't put up fares in four years," he said.

Golden Arrow's fares rose by about five percent in July last year and again in January.

While a further increase had not been expected until January 1997, the 32c rise in diesel so far this year forced the company's hand.

"That added R4 million to our expenses and we have to try to recoup some of that," Mr Grebe said.

The next increase was scheduled for January but this could be moved forward if the petrol price went up in the interim.

Cata president Stephen Williams announced that fares charged by its members were to rise by 50c a route today.

The fare from Nyanga to Claremont/Wynberg would now cost R3, from central Cape Town to Khayelitsha R4,50, and from Wynberg to the Foreshore R4,50.

Cata's last increase was two years ago and this week's jump was unavoidable as a result of the recent petrol price increases, Mr Stephens said. The taxi fare increase could have a detrimental effect on taxi owners as many commuters may seek cheaper options.

"A lot of people won't take taxis anymore. They will take the trains as most of them (rail commuters) don't pay," he alleged.

James Tafa of Codeta confirmed its fares would also rise by 50c. This increase followed one of 50c in December and came earlier than anticipated.

(332)
(234)

ARG 10/6/96

Taxi industry 'should be encouraged to use diesel'

By James Lamont

INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

Johannesburg — The government should adjust its fuel tax regime to encourage the use of diesel in the booming taxi business, Peter Bartlett, the general manager of Engen, said yesterday.

Bartlett told the Sub-Saharan Oil and Minerals conference that the minibus taxi industry, which attracted the bulk of the population around South Africa, consumed petrol, but it was in the interest of the country for the tax on diesel to be reduced to encourage its use.

He said the move would encourage economic growth fundamentals.

The price of petrol stands at R2,19 a litre in Gauteng, while diesel costs R2,02 a litre in Gauteng, and R1,92 a litre at the coast. The price of diesel has increased 32c a litre since the beginning of the year.

Bartlett urged the governments of the Southern African Development Community to develop regional integration that could determine the location and use of shared resources like oil refineries and storage facilities, and to use taxation and its revenue responsibly.

In a presentation on behalf of Rob Angel, Engen's managing director, Bartlett said the way forward for state involvement worldwide in the oil industry was for less regulation and less equity holding.

Governments, which had traditionally taken a heavy-handed approach to oil supply and demand, should concentrate on maintaining an equitable policy environment, he said.

Governments should restrict

The economy suffers inefficiencies from misallocated resources

Bartlett said that although the state commonly held majority holdings in the top, upstream oil and downstream oil companies, the government was now retreating from its involvement because it realised that the free market was more effective in promoting growth.

He said price control — where in some cases the government took as much as 50 percent of the oil price — and strategic production of synthetic fuel in countries like South Africa, Brazil and the United

States had led to distortions in local markets.

Synthetic fuel producers like Sasol had invariably led to higher capital costs, protection that encumbered the economy and market distortions that affected other investors.

The insulation of synthetic fuel producers from the international market had led to fewer incentives to become efficient.

"The economy as a whole suffers inefficiencies from misallocated resources," he said.

Robert Selwyn, the managing director of Mobil in Zimbabwe, said sub-Saharan governments should articulate clear investment and energy policies.

There should be straightforward rules on the repatriation of profit and consistent policies, because international investors have a wide range of choices where to place their capital.

Metered taxi industry may soon get national grading system

CT(BN) 12/6/96 (332)

By Stuart Rutherford

Durban — The unregulated metered taxi industry in South Africa might soon get a national grading system, if proposals by the metered taxi working group, a subsidiary body of the national taxi task team, were accepted.

Faye Freedman, the KwaZulu Natal committee member, said they were proposing that three grades be established: tourist, standard and shared ride.

"We'd like to improve the image of the industry and upgrade standards so that taxis, which deal with tourists, are of an international taxi standard."

She said criteria for the grades and the system would be issues discussed at workshops in Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Gauteng this month.

Freedman said workshop delegates would also discuss the escalating input costs, high crime rates and the training of drivers and other people in the industry.

"There will be a working document

available at the workshops detailing problems, issues and recommendations that we have been working on," she said.

These proposals had come out of four meetings of the working group, which was established in March this year by taxi operators, government officials and transport experts from around the country.

She said the establishment of a national grading system would help bring quality standards to the industry, which previously had no internal regulation. "We want to encourage a more taxi-friendly industry like London and New York," she said.

Freedman said that the proposed body should administer the grading system and be representative of the metered taxi industry and tourism bodies like Satour, Fedhasa and the greater Durban marketing authority.

Freedman said once input had been received from the workshops, the working group would formulate final proposals and hand them over to the national taxi task team in the middle of next month.

Sun Air staff agree to ~~332~~ privatisation

CT (BR) 13/6/96
By Audrey d'Angelo

Cape Town — Staff of the state-owned regional airline, Sun Air, have all voted in favour of privatisation and are keen for it to go ahead, Johan Borstlap, the managing director, said this week.

Borstlap said he thought Sun Air, which was not part of Transnet, would be privatised soon. The government was talking to Cosatu and he hoped for an announcement in about a month.

Sun Air started out as Bop Air. Its main business for 14 years was ferrying tourists between Johannesburg and Sun City.

Since the abolition of the Bophutatswana government it has achieved rapid growth and now offers scheduled services linking the Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban triangle and carries tourists between Sun City and Victoria Falls.

Borstlap believed all the airline's 320 employees, 50 percent of whom are black, would be allocated shares. Sun Air is proving a strong competitor to South Africa's second airline, the 50-year old, unlisted Comair.

Yesterday, Comair announced a franchise agreement with British Airways.

Borstlap said Sun Air might form a similar link with a foreign airline after privatisation.

Taxi subsidies mooted

Star 19/6/96 (332)

They may be the only solution for an industry that is not sufficiently viable and is not operating in a level playing field, says Gauteng transport MEC

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

The taxi industry could receive direct subsidies when transport subsidy allocations are transferred from the national government to the provinces next year.

Warning that continuous demands by the taxi industry for subsidies could not be ignored, outgoing Gauteng Public Transport and Roads MEC Olaus van Zyl said "more direct subsidies may be the only solution" if the formation of co-operatives did not address taxi problems.

"The playing field is not level for them," he said. "The industry must become financially more viable."

Speaking during the presentation of a R415-million budget in the Gauteng legislature, Van Zyl said the department would also receive

about R1,2-billion for public transport subsidies (R810-million for rail and R380-million for bus transport) as part of the Government's plan to transfer subsidy allocations to provinces as from April 1 1997.

Although it was still difficult to organise subsidies for taxis, Van Zyl said the industry would be assisted through the reduction in vehicle capital, operating and insurance costs, and an increase in income "through more realistic tariffs and extra work".

"If we do not succeed with this, more direct subsidies may be the only solution," he said.

He also stressed the need for regulation and control of the industry, saying about 40% of taxis were unregistered. This represented about 20 000 of the 50 000 taxis in Gauteng.

A process of registering the taxis

was expected to begin in the next month or so.

"Before this, we will have to register associations so that they could play a role in the registering of taxis, which needs to be done voluntarily and also in such a way that no newcomers slip into the already over-supplied industry," Van Zyl said.

He also announced stiff law enforcement to reduce the overloading of heavy vehicles, which caused more than R400-million damage to the roads, and to cut down on the number of traffic accidents, which cost the province R4-billion a year.

On funding, Gauteng supported the Government's proposal to increase its fuel levies for a dedicated road fund, but Van Zyl said some of the funds should "come down to the provinces rather than drawing up more roads to the national level".

Two hurt in new taxi violence

Staff Reporter

A TAXI driver and a passenger have been injured in a new outbreak of taxi violence in Khayelitsha.

Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) chairman Stephen Williams said shots had been fired at Cata taxis in two separate incidents yesterday.

In Makaza, a passenger had been

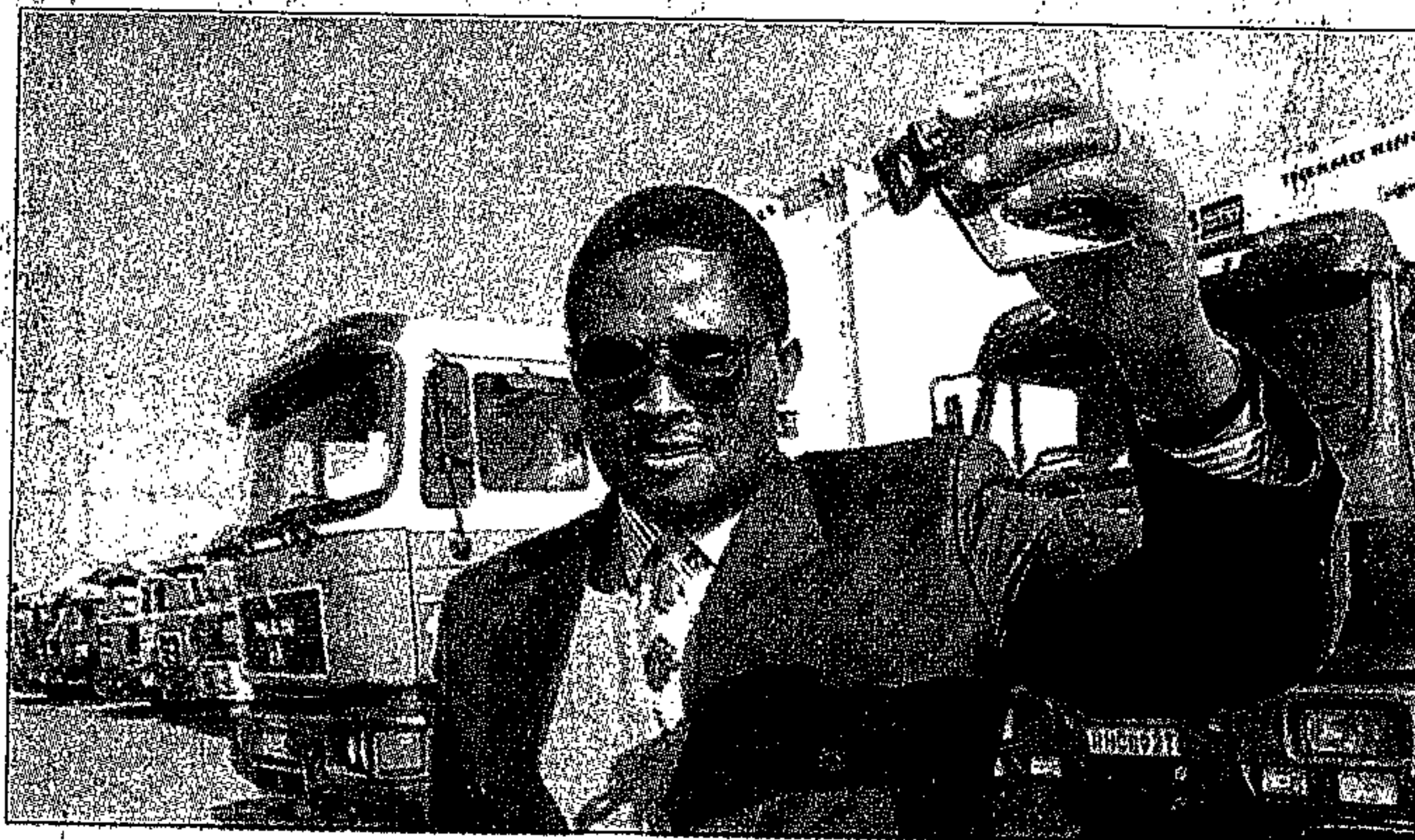
injured when shots smashed the rear window of a taxi.

In the other incident a driver was injured by shots fired at his taxi.

Mr Williams said he had contacted the office of Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane for an urgent meeting to discuss the violence.

Police have said that a major problem was the excessive number of taxis.

ARG 19/6/96 (332)



ON THE MOVE Peter Mageza, the chief executive of Autonet, displays the keys to his chunk of Mainline Carriers, Laser Transport Holdings' troublesome subsidiary

PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

Autonet swallows a slice of Mainline

By Marc Hasenfuss

CAPE EDITOR

Cape Town — Autonet, Transnet's road transport arm, emerged yesterday as the surprise buyer for a large slice of Laser Transport Holdings' troublesome subsidiary Mainline Carriers.

Transnet, a transport parastatal, is a strong contender for privatisation.

Autonet will buy 235 vehicles from Mainline Carriers for about R29 million. The deal also includes refrigeration and general cargo contracts worth about R29,5 million.

Mainline Carriers will not disappear from the Laser stable because its profitable remnants will continue operations.

Laser bought Mainline in May 1994 for R11 million, but Mainline's under-performance proved too costly for its bottom line.

Peter Mageza, Autonet's chief executive, believed Laser's proposal was competitive because Autonet's infrastructure allowed the incorporation of the Mainline fleet at low costs.

He said the Mainline deal was a strategic move in line with Autonet's policy of expanding in identified markets.

Tony Williamson, Laser's recently appointed chairman, said the sale of Mainline's fleet was part of the company's programme to reduce debt.

Laser has also sold the multi-axle division of Frasers Machine Moving and Rigging for R6,75 million, resulting in a surplus of R5,5 million not recorded in the income statement.

The company showed a small R50 000 trading profit in the year to March 31, but headline earnings increased 17 per cent to R3,4 million after adjustments on the sale of assets.

□ See Business Watch, Page 14

CT (BR) 20/6/96 (332)

Debate on schools for the disabled

ADELE BALETA
Staff Reporter

THE sensitive question of whether mentally and physically disabled people can be taught in mainstream schools, universities and colleges is the subject of heated debate and is only likely to be settled when the government makes a policy decision.

While lobbyists for a single inclusive education system are opposed to "banishing" disabled children to special schools, other groups believe that educating disabled children in classes with children with no disabilities would be disastrous for everyone.

The Ministry of Education is to appoint a National Commission on Special Needs in Education to review the principles and policies regarding special education.

Two committees have been set up to investigate and research the issue, one of which - the national curricula committee - has already accepted inclusive education in principle, according to well placed sources.

The pro-inclusion groups say it's a human rights issue and believe that sending children with special education needs to ordinary schools, with the necessary support systems to meet their needs, is the most effective way of fighting discriminatory attitudes towards the disabled, creating welcoming communities and building an inclusive society.

Supporting their position with a proclamation from a world conference on special needs education held in Salamanca in Spain in 1994, these groups - which include the South African Federal Council on Disability - believe an education system should be designed and programmes implemented to take into account each child's unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs.

Different styles and rates of learning and different language needs - in the case of deaf learners where their first language is sign language - would have to be accommodated.

The anti-lobbyists believe inclusion, which they say "sounds good in principle",

■ The recently integrated education dispensation is facing a contentious new challenge to open the doors of mainstream schools to physically and mentally disabled children.

is an unattainable ideal for an education system that is already in crisis and underscored by high pupil-teacher ratios and teacher retrenchments. This system, therefore, does not meet the needs of those children currently in mainstream schools.

They do not believe that South Africa can afford it in the short or long term.

There is also the fear that children with disabilities would suffer cruel attacks in the mainstream school system and question whether the rights of those without disabilities will be respected.

Many raised concerns that, because of the high pupil to teacher ratio, there would be heavier burdens placed on teachers who would have to worry about children with special needs.

One of the strongest opposers of inclusion comes from the deaf community.

Social worker for the Deaf Community of Cape Town Wilma Niewhoudt says: "Access to information for deaf children is best via sign language. The best place for this in special schools for deaf children, with full sign language being used in the classroom."

She adds that a deaf child in a hearing school, even with an interpreter, "will not receive full information that is needed for the psycho-social development and well being of the deaf children".

Deaf Federation of South Africa PRO Carol Corey, who has a deaf daughter, says that deaf people - whether they communicate through sign language or lip/speech reading - require specialised and intensive teaching.

"Inclusive schooling for the deaf would confine these brilliant and courageous people to untold frustration, isolation and a break down in confidence."

She adds that children who are not disabled can become aware and sensitive to disabled children by being in contact through school sport, theatre and exchange visits, but to include deaf students in hearing schools would sacrifice their education and the "costs would be too much to bear".

Washiela Sait, the national co-ordinator of the Disabled Children's Action Group who has a disabled child currently in a special school, says: "Inclusive education cannot happen overnight. It's a vision for a future education system and a paradigm shift from the segregated system that we have now."

"We are not looking for quick fix solutions and we understand what the problems of the current education system are, but we believe inclusion is the only way that people's fear of disability will be reduced."

"We do not want our children pushed into special schools in a system which has failed them. We are also not advocating dumping children into mainstream schools if they cannot cope. We need to have an inclusive system that caters for all needs. Inclusion has to be an option."

"We are also not advocating the closure of special schools, which are expensive, but that they become resource centres where adult basic education is taught, for example. Outreach programmes should be conducted from them, and parents with disabled children need to be drawn in and allowed to participate."

Mrs Sait says that staff with specialist skills, like occupational therapists, need to go to ordinary schools and give advice to teachers on how to deal with children with disabilities in their classes.

She added that it was time that parents had a say in where their children should be placed.

It should not be left exclusively to doctors, social workers and church workers.

Project co-ordinator of the Cape Mental Health Society Ekin Kensch believes in taking a "rational middleground" on the issue.

She said the society was already in the process of giving preschool teachers the support and training they needed to cope with disabled children from an early age.

"I think it's important that parents can get to the point where they can take their mentally or physically disabled child onto the bus and not feel ashamed."

She believes the worst case scenarios would be to dump children who are not coping into mainstream schools, but at the same time there are also problems with the opposite view of keeping disabled children separate from the community.

The important aspect was to begin training teachers at the earliest level possible to cope with disabled children.

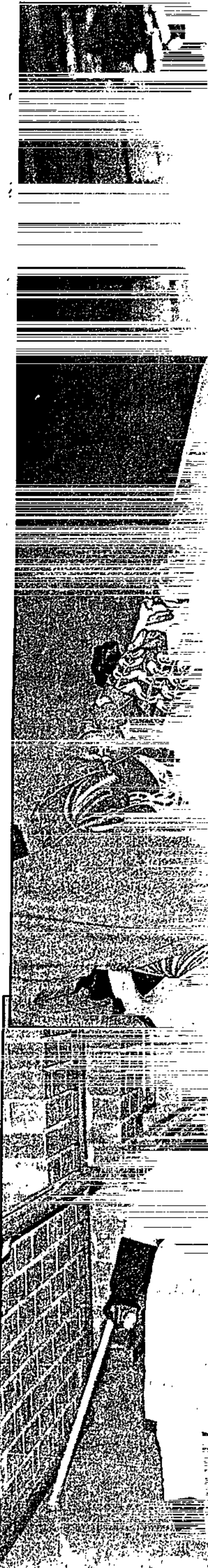
According to Vista Nova psychologist Jean Du Plessis, the critical issue in the debate is the rights of the individual child and not the implementation of a policy which sounds good.

"It would be cruel and insensitive to put a child in a situation where he or she is not coping. There are stresses in the mainstream which could cause some disabled children to crumble. We place people in the mainstream in a very careful way and usually on a trial basis," he said.

In spite of the divergent views, there is consensus that the issues need to be debated and concerned parties at all levels of education need to be consulted before policy decisions are made.



SPECIAL CARE Teacher Monica Maria gives 13-year-old Ayandi Mill special attention during a lesson on vowels.



Unions, taxi bodies to protest at fuel price hike

(332) 21/6/96 STAN
BY MANDLA MTHEMBU

Many commuters could be stranded next week when transport organisations embark on a national protest action against the fuel price.

The protest action, called by the SA Independent Trade Union Confederation and the Transitional United SA Taxi Council (Tusatco), will be held at the offices of the Departments of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Transport and Finance countrywide.

The organisations have also called on all motorists to stop for 15 minutes, regardless of where they may be, to protest against the increases.

The action follows this week's meeting between

the organisations and the Government at which Tusatco demanded that taxis be exempted from petrol price increases.

The increase in the price of petrol so far this year amounts to 35c/litre, from a price of R1,84/litre in January.

Although the Government has made it clear that economic constraints made it difficult for taxis to be exempted, Tusatco spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said the body was opposed to "all unilateral petrol price hiking".

Ledwaba claimed the "pump price fixing and generous, guaranteed profits" for oil companies had been designed to reward them for defying international oil sanctions.

Snarl-up likely over protest

OWN CORRESPONDENT

(10) (332)
THOUSANDS of commuters and motorists could be stranded on Thursday when transport organisations embark on a national protest action against the fuel price rise.

Next week's protest action, called by the South African Independent Trade Union Confederation (Saituco) and the Transitional United South African Taxi Council (Tusatco), would be held country-wide outside the offices of the departments of Mineral and Energy Affairs, Transport and Finance.

The organisations have also called on all motorists to stop for 15 minutes, regardless of where they may be, to protest against the

CT 21/6/96
increases. The action follows this week's meeting between the organisations and the government in which Tusatco demanded that taxis be exempted from petrol price increases. The total increase for the year so far amounts to 35c, up from a price of R1.84/litre in January.

Warning that the increases are going to provoke "a series of protests", Tusatco spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba criticised the government for continuing to increase petrol prices as "it south Africa is still hit by sanctions".

However, Mineral and Energy Affairs Ministry spokesman Mr Ronald Darroll challenged the organisations to come up with a plan to help the government to address the situation.

Business and taxi industry join to offer better Soweto service

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

For the first time, business and the taxi industry have reached an agreement which will see the improvement of taxi facilities and services at Soweto's Dobsonville shopping centre.

About 200 Soweto taxi drivers met there at the weekend to con-

clude a special arrangement with the centre's management regarding the upgrading of facilities and support for the industry.

Sanlam Properties presented the Dobsonville-Johannesburg Taxi Association with a patrol car and a fully equipped office.

Sanlam Properties spokesman Wren Mat-Ingle said the agree-

ment, believed to be the first of its kind, could set the pace for taxi associations around the country, and would enable taxis to use the centre as a depot so that the association could enhance its services to passengers.

The association welcomed business assistance, saying this would clear the congestion at the

main junction, near the centre.

The local traffic department will be offering ongoing driver training workshops and road safety seminars, and will also work closely with the association from the centre.

The centre will soon also house the first full-scale traffic training department in Soweto.

Star 24/6/96

Rival taxi groups to hold urgent talks on flare-up

(332) ARG 21/6/96
ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

AN urgent meeting of rival taxi organisations Cata (Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association) and Codeta (Cape Organisations for a Democratic Taxi Association) is to discuss a new outbreak of taxi violence.

Earlier this week a passenger was injured in a shooting incident in Khayelitsha.

Police could not confirm the allegation by Cata president Stephen Williams that a driver had been injured in a second shooting incident the same day.

Since Codeta elected a new executive at the end of last month no incidents of serious intimidation or violence have

been reported to the police.

A new executive committee was unanimously elected last month after the Supreme Court ordered the old leadership to hold a general meeting.

At the meeting the old leadership was asked to step down and the new committee was elected.

But peace between the two taxi rivals appeared short-lived after Monday's shooting.

Codeta spokesman Howard Dyubeni said his organisation wanted to meet Cata urgently to discuss the violence.

He could not confirm that Codeta members had been responsible for the shootings, but said tension was mounting again at taxi ranks.

New taxi body is launched

(332)
Mboneni Mulaudzi

20 25/6/96

THE newly formed taxi organisation Transitional United SA Taxi Council will work to "eradicate" taxi violence.

The body, made up of five of the eight national taxi associations, was launched in Johannesburg at the weekend.

The council resolved to form a five-member committee which would visit all nine provinces to promote peace, council co-ordinator Jacob Ledwaba said.

Ledwaba said disputes would be investigated in conjunction with the warring taxi groups in a bid to solve problems.

The council also resolved to appeal to government to exempt the taxi industry from the latest petrol price hike.

The council, in conjunction with the SA Independent Trade Unions Confederation, has organised a march to the mineral and energy affairs ministry in Pretoria on Thursday.

Feuding taxi groups vow to negotiate

332
BY SEPATI SENTLE

Star 25/6/96
Taxi owners of the Brits United Long Distance Taxi Association (Bulta) have vowed to engage in peaceful negotiations with their local rival.

The promise was made at the burial of Bulta member Herman Ramontsho at Madikwe Village in the North West Province at the weekend.

Bulta PRO Mike Mangene said that, despite the killing of Ramontsho and Bulta chairman Gabriel Moekwena in what he described as the worst taxi violence in the Letlhabile and Brits areas, they would exhaust all mechanisms to solve their taxi feud.

He said the killings last week followed Bulta attempts to operate on the Brits-Johannesburg route, which was only operated by their rival - the Brits Local and Long Distance Taxi Association (Blalto).

"We have been negotiating with Blalto to share the route since 1993. We feel it is our right to operate on that route," he said.

Mangena added that a meeting with a delegation from the Department of Transport in the North West Province, Blalto, the Brits Civic Association and the police would be held in two weeks' time in a bid to solve their problems and the ongoing taxi violence in the area.

Meanwhile Maurice Bokaba, secretary-general of the South African Taxi Union (Satu) condemned the killings and urged different taxi associations in the area to seek peaceful negotiations.

Bokaba said Satu would implement short-term taxi regulations in conjunction with the Ministry of Safety and Security such as deploying policemen at taxi ranks in the Letlhabile and Brits area.

He added that taxi permits should also be reviewed to facilitate the professional services in the embattled taxi industry.

Conflict at Langa rank as Peninsula taxi war flares again

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

(332)
ARL 25/6/96

TWO taximen belonging to the Cata group have been arrested at the Langa taxi rank and police had to escort a member of the rival Codeta taxi group leadership out of

Langa for his own safety.

This follows an upsurge in intimidation and threats of violence at the taxi rank which have fuelled fears of a new round in the simmering Peninsula taxi war, despite a recent peace agreement.

An explosive situation devel-

oped at the Langa taxi rank yesterday when members of Cata took control of the rank and chased Codeta taxis away.

A spokesman at Langa police station said the two Cata men were arrested on charges of trespassing and theft.

Many taxi fares don't cover operational costs, says MEC

Star 26/6/96

(3M)

Cost indicator and a booklet about revenues and fares should help to bring industry to profitability

By MANDLA MTHEMBU

Although the taxi industry does not receive any government transport subsidies, the industry has been subsidising commuter fares to compete against fares of other subsidised modes of transport.

Speaking during the launch yesterday of two innovative management aids for taxi operators, outgoing Gauteng MEC for Public Transport and Roads Olaus van Zyl said many taxi fares charged did not cover operational costs and this had led to a "lack of maintenance and unroadworthy and unsafe vehicles".

In an effort to provide operators with "simple and useful operational

aids that will assist them in running their businesses", Van Zyl said the management aids – a "taxi-cost indicator" and a booklet about revenues and fares – were developed by the Gauteng Taxi Initiative.

"The aim is to bring the taxi industry into profitability," he said.

These aids had evolved from work aimed at assessing the costs of keeping a taxi on the road. Inputs to a computer program for this purpose included costs of fuel, lubrication, servicing, maintenance and tyres for vehicles used as taxis.

As Gauteng had more than 50 000 taxis run by about 30 000 owners, operators "need to know what their real costs and revenues are", Van Zyl said.

About 2 000 copies of the aids,

printed at a cost of about R60 000, would be distributed in Gauteng through metropolitan taxi forums.

Accepting the models on behalf of the industry, SA Long Distance Taxi Association president Thulani Kubheka urged operators to use the aid, adding that "commuters should also know how much we have been subsidising them. We are operating at a loss," he said.

Other Gauteng Taxi Initiative projects so far are: training of more than 1 000 operators, drivers and association officials; setting up a provincial taxi office; production of a taxi maintenance and operations safety book; taxi road safety programmes; as well as pilot projects on the introduction of planned taxi co-operatives.

ANC steps in to stop another taxi war

ANDREA BOTHA (332)
Staff Reporter

ARG 26/6/96
THE African National Congress has arranged an emergency meeting today between taxi associations Cata and Codeta to prevent another taxi war between them.

A peace meeting between Cata and Code-ta themselves failed yesterday when Cata refused to give up the Langa taxi rank.

Since Sunday, Cata has taken control of the rank and is allegedly intimidating and chasing away all other taxis.

The deadlock over the crucial Langa taxi rank, from which all long-distance taxis run, has raised fears of another outbreak of violence.

CT 27/6/96

332

Taxis,

COMMUTERS tell the Cape Times that taxis are cheaper, faster and more reliable than buses, writes **LISA TEMPLETON**.

THERE has been a mini revolution in the city's transport: Commuters have abandoned the lumbering bus service for zipper, cheaper taxis.

Last week the Cape Times took to the terminuses to compare the two services on major routes from the city and to canvas commuters.

I started with a nine-minute wait in the chilly, deserted Golden Acre terminus for the Camps Bay bus, which leaves hourly. It cost R2,50 and took 38 minutes to lumber over Kloof Nek with some 18 passengers in the 82-seat double-decker.

"I always catch the bus, sometimes it's late, but I don't like the taxis because I have seen all the accidents and they (the drivers) can be so rude," said Mrs Janet Evans.

Waiting at the bus stop in Camps Bay was an insurance consultant who catches a bus daily from Tamboerskloof to the city centre to avoid parking problems.

"It is a terrible frustration — the buses are never, ever on time.

"The transport system here is abysmal compared to cities such as Budapest and London where you can get anywhere, anytime. We will have to do something if we are to host the Olympics," she said.

The bus back to town was eight minutes late, but three domestic workers who boarded said they normally found it reliable, and never more than 10 minutes late.

There are no taxis on this route.

The bus to Sea Point leaves half hourly, costs R1,30 and takes 33 minutes to reach central Sea Point through Mouille Point.

I waited 30 seconds before flagging down a taxi to take me back to

buses in commuter test

CT 27/6/96

(332)



ZIPPIER: Taxis sometimes provided a hair-raising ride with passengers squeezed four to a seat, but were much more popular with commuters who found them cheaper, more regular and faster than buses.

PICTURES: THEM BINKOSI DWAYISA

town. It was rather cosy after the spacious bus. It had plastic sheeting for a missing window and a system of wires to open the door, which was worked by the passenger sitting closest. It cost R1 and zipped to Cape Town in 13 minutes.

"I prefer the taxi because the bus takes for ever and the fares are much higher. Taxis from Manenberg are available every few minutes and take 20 minutes to get to town, but the bus takes an hour," said Mrs Maria Jonas.

All those canvassed by the Cape

Times at the topdeck taxi terminus above Cape Town station agreed that taxis were quicker, cheaper and more regular than buses.

From the station deck I paid R3 for a freeway taxi which avoids Salt River and races somewhat hair-raisingly along De Waal Drive to Rondebosch in 10 minutes.

The strip of Main Road between Mowbray and the city was packed with taxis which come by every few seconds, charging R1,50 for the trip to town which takes 15 minutes. (The bus goes approximately

every 10 minutes, costs R1,80 and takes 35 minutes).

I was taken under the wing of the passengers on the taxi, who told me the price of the trip to town and where the best place to disembark was. One woman amiably escorted me off the topdeck.

Taxi drivers said the government should subsidise the taxi industry. "We are not expecting handouts, but we need a subsidy to help with running costs and for shelters to be erected and improved. They subsidise the buses but to us they just

make promises," taxi owner Mr Ismail Mohamed said.

He pointed out that the bustling Mowbray taxi rank had no shelter, unlike the bus terminus.

"If you keep the commuters happy it is good for business."

He said his taxi, which does an average of 10 trips a day between Bonteheuwel and town, made approximately R300 a day — of which R150 went to the owner, R120 was spent on fuel and the driver and conductor were still to be paid out of the remains.

Olaus's aids for taxi-men

Mbonepi Mulaudzi

GAUTENG MEC for public transport and roads Olaus van Zyl launched this week "innovative management aids" for the taxi industry which were the brainchild of the Gauteng Taxi Initiative.

The taxi initiative was formed last year and mandated to come up with recommendations to deal with the problems in the taxi industry in the province.

Van Zyl said the aids — a taxi cost indicator and a booklet of tables for revenues and fares — were developed to assist taxi operators in running their businesses, and in establishing per-kilometre costs.

Van Zyl said that the main objective of the aids was to assist operators to determine their real costs and revenues.

The aids will be freely distributed to the taxi operators in the province through the metropolitan taxi forums.

Van Zyl stressed that most taxis were run at a loss because in many instances fares did not cover costs.

Benefits of Jo'burg budget 'unlimited'

Ingrid Salgado

THE greater Johannesburg metropolitan council's first post-apartheid budget reflected a commitment to improving service delivery, particularly to areas that were neglected under the apartheid order, council executive committee chairman Collin Matjila said yesterday at the debate on the council's 1996/97 R7,2bn budget.

This would be achieved through shifting capital expenditure and creating a uniform rating system across the metro, Matjila said. Although a uniform tariff system and assessment rate policy would be a "bitter pill to swallow" for some, long-term benefits were "immeasurable" and would remove remnants of the apartheid era.

The provision of basic services through the extension, upgrading and maintenance of municipal infrastructure and fiscal discipline would underpin the budget.

The budget was opposed by the DP, which failed to pass a motion rejecting a R438m levy that the eastern metropolitan substructure would pay to the council and R4m payable by the northern substructure.

DP councillor Mike Moriarty said he accepted the need for a uniform valuation role for greater Johannesburg's area, but rejected the size of the levies payable by the eastern substructure.

Areas such as Sandton and Randburg, and the regional services councils, would pay sizeable levies to the council, which would subsidise areas such as Soweto, Diepmeadow, Alexandra, Johannesburg and Orange Farm.

Sandton would pass on more than R320m of income totalling R659m to the council, effectively subsidising Soweto's R348m deficit. Soweto's R512m expenditure could be fed only in part from its income of R163m.

Matjila said the budget would shift its resources from operational to capital expenditure. The council would borrow between R600m and R700m to finance capital expenditure of R1,6bn.

The salary bill was reduced to 31,2% of operating costs from 33,1% last year. The cut was based on 7% salary increases while workers were demanding 17% raises. Council CEO Nicky Padayachee said expenditure cuts were on the cards should the salary bill rise.

Moriarty said the budget was the product of a power struggle between the council and the Gauteng government. Local government had the power to draw income from citizens, but the provincial government had to rely on "handouts" from national government.

ANC councillor Eugene Robson said there was nothing more equitable than sharing greater Johannesburg's total revenue base among residents. The NP said the budget was a balanced one.

Taxi task force arrests suspects

(332)
Sowetan 13/7/76
By Rafiq Rohan
Political Correspondent

SEVERAL people have already been arrested since the Government started taking extensive steps to curb continuing taxi violence which has claimed many lives in the past year.

Safety and Security Minister Mr Sydney Mufamadi said a non-governmental task team had been commissioned to end taxi violence that had become a feature of urban living.

Last year 84 people were killed in violent taxi conflicts and in the first four months of this year 37 people died along the Durban-Johannesburg and Durban-Nongoma routes, the South African Police Service has revealed.

"This task team was also appointed to act as mediator during taxi-related disputes in an attempt to solve problems before violence erupts," Mufamadi said.

National priority

In the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal taxi violence has been declared a national priority crime and in these areas a specialised police unit and taxi coordinator had been appointed to investigate taxi violence-related cases, he said.

In the Western Cape, discussions were held with the attorney general for the setting up of a centralised court for taxi violence cases.

"Provision has been made for overtime pay for SAPS ballistics experts so that all seized firearms can be scientifically examined as soon as possible," Mufamadi said.

He said particulars of people and vehicles involved in taxi violence were being circulated to all police stations.

He said the priority crime unit used specialist investigators for all projects to investigate ongoing violence.

"Numerous arrests have already been made and further arrests will be made in the near future," he said.

Many injured

In addition to the high number of deaths that have been attributed to taxi violence, a large number of people have been injured, police figures revealed.

Most injuries also occurred along the Durban-Johannesburg and Durban-Nongoma routes. Last year about 112 people were injured while in the first four months of this year 76 injuries were reported.

Mufamadi said one of the more pressing problems police encountered was the lack of equipment and facilities required for them to effectively carry out their tasks.

Police accused of fearing taxi war criminals

(332)
ANDREA BOTHA

Staff Reporter

ARL 8/7/96

POLICE have been accused of lacking the courage to arrest known perpetrators of taxi crimes.

Spokesman for the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) Reggie Malimba accused police of being unwilling to make arrests and properly investigate charges.

Tension in the industry has been mounting because of increased intimidation and harassment at ranks all over Cape Town.

The latest incident of intimidation was at Nyanga taxi rank on Friday where the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) had taken control and chased Codeta taxis.

"Members of Codeta had to run for their lives," said Mr Malimba.

Trouble at the Langa rank resulted in the arrest of two men on charges of trespassing in an earlier incident.

But this wasn't enough, said Mr Malimba.

"The same people are responsible for the intimidation at the different ranks but police never arrest them," he said.

Group head of the Taxi Investigative Unit Theo Kleynhans denied allegations of police cowardice. "It's untrue," he said.

"A new permit system is needed to clearly identify taxi routes and areas. This is the responsibility of local government departments," Superintendent Kleynhans said.

Sun Air studies deal with Virgin ahead of decision on privatisation

By Audrey d'Angelo

Cape Town — The state-owned regional airline Sun Air has been discussing a possible alliance with Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic, Johan Borslap, the airline's managing director, said yesterday.

Borslap confirmed industry speculation that Virgin Atlantic, which is due to start services to Johannesburg in October, was among those he had been talking to about a possible alliance and buying an equity stake in the company.

But no deal can be struck until the government decides when to privatise Sun Air, which was inherited by the government when Bophuthatswana ceased to exist.

At the time, Bop Air, as it then was, flew only between Johannesburg and Sun City.

Sun Air is not part of Transnet and was included in a list of parastatals that the government has said will be privatised. Borslap said his workers, who expected to receive shares, were in favour of privatisation as this would lead to further expansion.

But he said: "We cannot get down to serious discussions with anyone until the government makes an announcement and gives a time-frame."

"Until then we are just wishing they would get on with it."

If the deal happens, it will strengthen Virgin's competitive position, particularly against British Airways, of which Comair has become a franchise holder.

"We have commercial agreements with almost every foreign airline flying in here, for add-on fares," Borslap said. "Several of them have made approaches to us."

Meanwhile, Borslap said the recent announcements that Comair had bought a British Airways franchise and that SAA had increased its stake in SA Express were good for the industry.

In addition to introducing more competition it had strengthened public confidence in the domestic airline industry.

"Confidence was shaken after the collapse of Phoenix," he said.

Since the demise of Bop Air, Sun Air had become a profitable airline with scheduled services connecting the Johannesburg-Cape Town-Durban triangle. It also flies to Victoria Falls.

CT(MR)10/9/96

(332)

Missing the bus — four times over

Philippa Garson

MTG 12-18/96

(332)

A SMALL TIME bus company owner claims he has been ruined by Transport giant Putco for daring to compete with it.

Sam Joga, owner of Jika Bus Services, has the police and Putco after his blood and a team of mineworkers and criminal lawyer Lawley Shein on his side.

Joga claims he has been put out of business for lowering his fares when Putco began running the same route recently, and says he has the support of the West Rand mineworkers he has been transporting for the past eight years to rural villages in the Eastern Cape.

Joga's business based in Pelzvale, west of Johannesburg, ground to a standstill early last month when his buses and truckloads of equipment were confiscated, allegedly with the help of Putco, whose removal vehicles were used. Some of the seized equipment was initially housed at Putco's premises before being moved to police premises.

Police claim the four buses were stolen from Putco and say they have substantial evidence to prove they are the same four stolen within

months of each other in Johannesburg recently.

Joga, who has yet to be charged, says he bought the four buses and various parts from Putco and "other people" and has the evidence to prove it. He told the *Mail & Guardian* he, like many other small-time operators, has been buying equipment from Putco for several years.

Joga said he could not deny there was stolen property on the market but he maintains his innocence.

"I bought those buses and I have the receipts to prove it. If police have the evidence they claim to, then why haven't they charged me? This has nothing to do with stolen property. Putco is doing this because they want my route and they want my passengers. They saw I was doing well around the mines, they saw I was an obstacle to them," he said.

He has accused the police of taking bribes from Putco and is threatening to take his case to the minister of safety and security, if necessary.

Putco spokesman Frederick Vorster refused to comment, saying Putco would argue the matter in court.



Bus owner Sam Joga: Claims Putco and the police are edging him off the road to success PHOTO: HENNER FRANKENFELD

Superintendent Chris Landman from the Krugersdorp Vehicle Theft Unit said the case would be forwarded to the public prosecutor when completed. Landman said there was plenty of "positive evidence" to suggest the buses had been stolen.

Joga said his buses had been through many border controls taking mineworkers to Mozambique, and had been repeatedly checked.

The trouble began, he said, when Putco applied to the Road Trans-

portation Board to ply the route he has been running for years. He then lodged an objection with the board on grounds there were insufficient passengers for another bus company to run the same route.

His objections were dismissed and Putco began running the route at the end of May. Joga said he realised he could not compete with the Putco buses which were in better condition than his, and he lowered his fare from R90 to R80.

Shortly after this, his business premises were raided by police in the company of Putco officials.

Shein said his client had good reason to be suspicious of the timing of the police action against him. "The police and vehicle theft units do not have a good record and lack credibility in the eyes of the public," said Shein. Police reporting officer Jan Munnik confirmed he was conducting a "full investigation" into the allegations of police misconduct.

Taxi industry urged to solve its problems

Bonile Ngqiyaza

BD 12/7/96 (332)
THE taxi industry must act quickly to solve its problems if it wants to attract investment and reap the benefits of privatisation, Transnet deputy MD Saki Macozoma said yesterday.

Speaking at the seventh National African Federated Transport Organisation (Nafto) AGM in Johannesburg, he said there was no business which could thrive in an unstable environment.

"Privatisation will release a lot of assets that will be used for empowerment. If Nafto were able to facilitate the acquisition of (those) state assets, it would have helped to deracialise the transportation industry," he said.

The industry could only attract investment if it provided a cheap and reliable service, was customer oriented and invested in the security of the public and goods it carried, Macozoma said. It had also to invest in research and the development of both products and human resources.

At the conference ANC MP Winnie Madikizela-Mandela said private taxi operators needed assistance from the state in order to maintain a safe, efficient and affordable transport system.

She warned, however, that state assistance would mean taking into consideration consumers' interests.

Presently, she said, neither the private nor the public sectors had met these requirements. "The cost of transport in both these sectors is much too high, taking into consideration the wage structure."

She urged various taxi associations to find an umbrella body to which all of them would be affiliated. "Let us get rid of the petty jealousies among ourselves," she said.

Bus firm gives employees 'ultimatum'

Indebted firm demands handover of pension funds

By Françoise Botha

Cape Town — Golden Arrow Bus Services, the debt-ridden former Tollgate subsidiary, has invoked the rage of its employees with an ultimatum that they hand over R85 million of pension fund money to revitalise the company.

The move flows from union demands that the company set up a provident fund.

The company said that it was in no position to meet the union demands, given its debt of R79 million.

"The situation was exacerbated by accumulated losses of R39 million as a result of outside factors such as violence, rising costs and inflation in the industry," the company said in its in-house magazine.

A pensioner said yesterday that the company had offered the members of the fund two choices and, essentially, an ultimatum.

The first option offered to continue the existing pension fund sys-

tem with small inflation-linked yearly increments. The second would dissolve the pension fund to provide enhanced benefits, a plan that would gain the company R85 million to reduce its debt burden.

The second option would allow the pension fund, now valued at R348 million, to be used to buy a lifetime pension for existing pensioners.

The pensions would account for R148,6 million of funds and include a 20 to 40 percent boost to pensions based on the number of years in retirement plus one month's pension as a bonus.

Employees have been offered the choice of transferring to either of two new funds — a provident or a defined contribution fund — also offering a minimum of 20 percent boost. That plan would take R108,9 million of the fund's assets.

The company proposed that the remaining R85 million of assets should revert to it.

(332) CT(MR)12/7/96
Representatives of the five unions said that the management had threatened them with the closure of the business should the money not be made available.

A pension fund member who asked not to be named said: "The company is in dire financial straits and for that reason it is winding up the pension fund."

"The pensioners I have spoken to feel it's extortion. We are being held to ransom. Either we give them the money or we do not get a decent increase in our pensions," he said.

"Some of us are prepared to grant an interest-free loan if it makes the difference of the company surviving," he said.

A spokesman for the Transport and General Workers' Union said: "We don't want to grant it because they are not entitled to it. We are really going to give them a fight."

Management and union representatives plan to meet today to negotiate a solution.

Free training course for Gauteng taxi operators

(332) (109)
Sowetan 15/7/96

By Themba Sepotokele

UBUNTU Forum, a free and compulsory training course for taxi operators in Gauteng aimed at eradicating violence in the industry will spread its wings to other provinces next year.

This was disclosed at the weekend by the director of Norite Educational Holding, Dr Jeeva Naidoo, in Florida at the certificate presentation ceremony of six taxi operators who had completed the course.

A four day course assists taxi drivers to relate positively with commuters and other drivers, alleviate the level of violence in the industry and manage their business professionally.

The Government funded the course, which is a brainchild of the Gauteng Taxi

Initiative (GTI), formed by the former transport MEC Mr Olaus van Zyl.

The course is also aimed at bringing to an end pirate taxi operators, and since the course is free and compulsory, taxi operators who fail to enrol will not be issued with permits and some would not be renewed.

Norite senior training officer Mr David Finda said the course aims to promote the spirit of reconciliation.

"It also assists them to exercise healthy debates when petrol is increased and not to vent their anger by blockading the streets," Finda said.

Taxi operators who were presented with certificates were Mr Archieboy Morrison, Mr Moses Doods, Mr Dick Trompettes, Mr Dallie Dawood and Mr Ernest Joseph.

Bus company negotiations reach deadlock

By Françoise Botha

Cape Town — The management of Golden Arrow Bus Services and representatives of five unions reached a deadlock on Friday in negotiations surrounding the distribution of the employees' pension fund surplus.

The company earlier gave the Golden Arrow Retirement Plan members an ultimatum to accept an offer for the restructuring of the fund, which would lead to R85 mil-

lion of the surplus reverting to the company. The funds were designated for the reduction of the company's R79 million debt burden.

Unions involved in the negotiations include the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu). The five unions proposed that R85 million be made available as an interest-free loan. They included 5 percent of the fund's asset value, which was to be invested in shares in the company.

(332) CT(BR), 5/7/96
The company's management rejected the proposals.

"They want R85 million as a gift, as if it belongs to them. But, the company has taken pension contribution holidays since it was taken over in 1992," a Towu spokesman said yesterday.

"Those directors are the biggest shareholders of the company. They will be enriching themselves. They cannot do that because it is the workers' money," he said.

The fund surplus is estimated to

be worth between R120 million and R170 million. The company directors claim that they are entitled to the funds since they are guaranteeing them.

The spokesman said the directors had no right to do that, as they would have to sell off assets and put jobs at risk to raise the funds.

The unions agreed on the minimum increases in the current pensions, which would range between 25 percent and 45 percent, depending on the year of retirement.

BLACK TAXI INDUSTRY

HIGH TITHE

Private-sector bus operators have come out strongly against the payment of R40m to the violence-torn taxi industry.

They see the cash, promised by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj, as a donation to taxi owners, who don't pay taxes.

The influential bus operators' lobby, which itself receives R800m a year in government subsidies, is objecting to what it perceives as "blatant discrimination" in favour of an industry that cannot regulate itself. They argue that the only form of tax levied on the black taxi sector is that paid at petrol pumps.

SA Bus Operators' Association executive manager Eric Cornelius says at least the scheme does not involve the payment of direct subsidies. Were that to happen, it would be an invitation to anyone able to buy a minibus to become a taxi operator.

"There are already too many taxis and that would aggravate the problem," says Cornelius. "If there weren't so many operators, taxis could charge more cost-related fares and wouldn't have to ask government for help."

But Dipak Patel, the Department of Transport's chief director of manage-

ment services, doesn't view the R40m as a donation. Patel, who also chairs the National Taxi Task Team, says the funds will be used to legalise illegal taxi operators and establish how the team believes the Road Transportation Act should be amended.

"The cost will be minimal because government capacity will be deployed. In the short term, it may need additional structures, which may cost money — but not much." Educating and informing beneficiaries of the R40m will incur extra costs. Before applying to the Road Transportation Board, they will have to prove they have been operating illegally for a year.

Each application will have to be supported by an affidavit from a taxi association and two legal operators, a requirement that, observers say, has the potential to open a Pandora's Box of graft, extortion and corruption.

Not yet approved is a plan that will see government opening funding offices in each province for two years. These will install control and accounting mechanisms at a cost of roughly R400 000 a year each — a total of R3,6m a year — and will be run by the taxi industry.

Registrars of taxi associations and operators will be appointed at provincial level. They will absorb R450 000 a year each, a total of R5,4m a year.

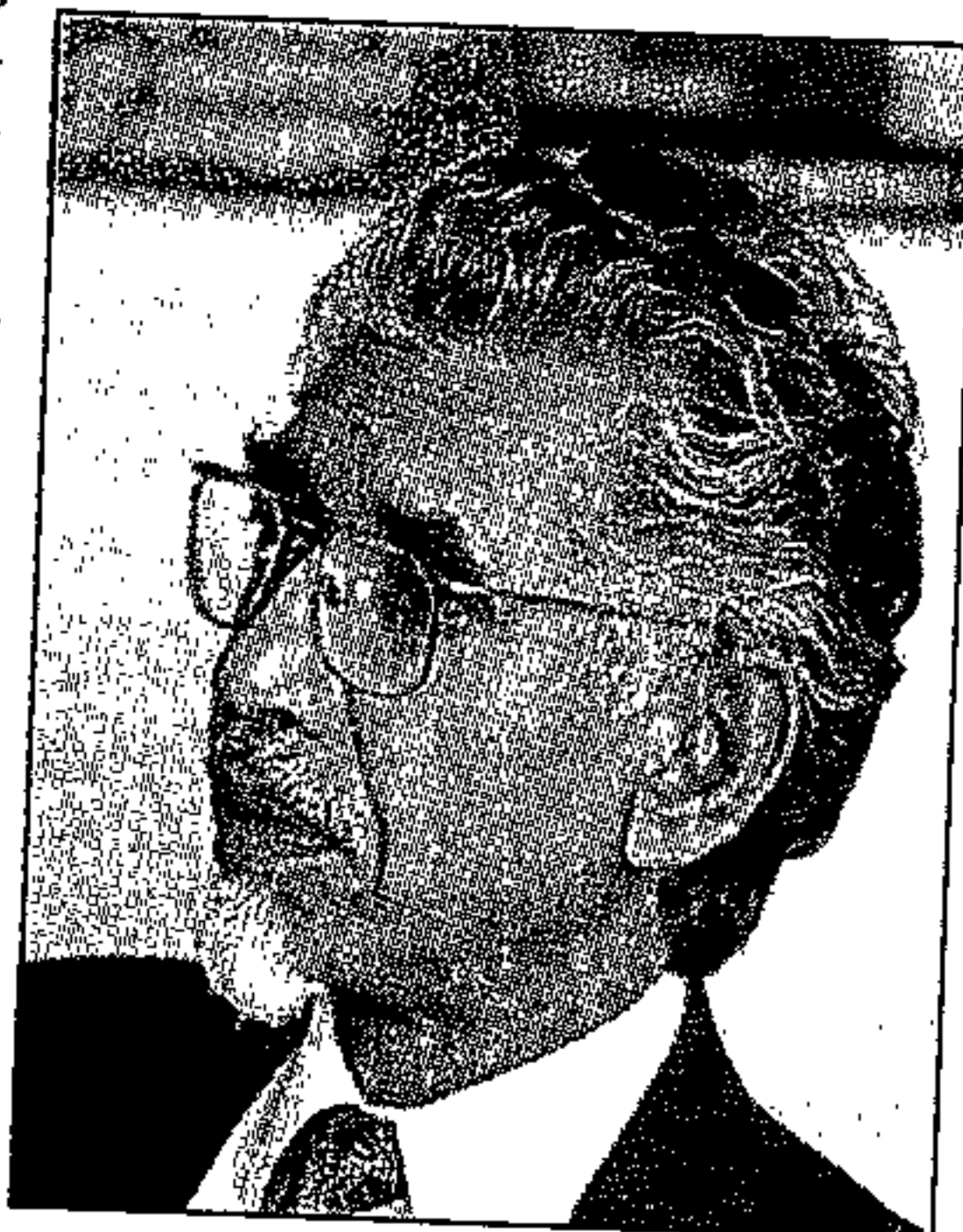
Training of association officials, operators and drivers will be implemented at provincial level and will absorb R10m.

Another R20m will be allocated in the first year to economic assistance, "not be dished out as hand-outs," because, says Patel, "the taxi industry is a black economic sector that can be transformed into a success story."

Economic assistance includes creating co-operatives that will include a number of in-

come-generating allied businesses, such as filling stations, panel-beating shops, spares and tyre outlets.

Though the cost must be borne by the taxpayer, whatever steps are taken, if proven satisfactory, may introduce some sanity into an industry racked by indiscipline and violence. ■



Mac Maharaj

Fears of renewed taxi war after shooting

(332) By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT
ST(CM) 21/7/96

FEARS of renewed taxi violence were sparked by the killing of yet another taxi driver in Crossroads early yesterday morning.

Although considered an isolated incident, police yesterday expressed concern that the shooting could set off further clashes between two rival factions in the taxi industry, in which the Congress of Amalgamated Taxi Associations (Cata) and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) are engaged in a territorial war.

Police spokesman Inspector Virna Simon said the man was driving with two passengers when the occupants of a parked vehicle fired several shots at the taxi and killed the driver, a Codeta member.

Police believe the shooting follows the pattern of other taxi-related killings.

Later yesterday, a group of about 500 Codeta members marched to the provincial parliament, demanding government intervention to stop the killing and intimidation of their members.

Codeta's vice-chairman, Howard Dyubeni, described the march as a desperate attempt to put an end to the violence, which sometimes caught innocent passengers in the crossfire.

Codeta claimed policing in the township had become "insufficient and ineffective".

"When our members complain about harassment from Cata members they get told (by policemen) to join Cata," he said.

While his organisation was committed to resolving the dispute, members did not see any need to join a rival taxi faction.

"We are tired of running away from earning our bread and butter," he said.

Codeta taxis have always operated in Langa, but recent clashes have seen operators aligned with the association moving to other areas.

"Our members are sick of the violence and just leave when they are intimidated," Dyubeni said.

He claimed the territorial battle was fast spreading to other areas.

NEWS NATIONAL



Executive members of the newly formed Greater Alberton Taxi Association pose for a picture after a media briefing to announce the amalgamation of Tokoza and Eden Park Taxi Associations at the weekend. The merger is seen as a milestone that will bring investment and stability to Alberton.
PIC: LEN KUMALO

New peace move in taxi industry

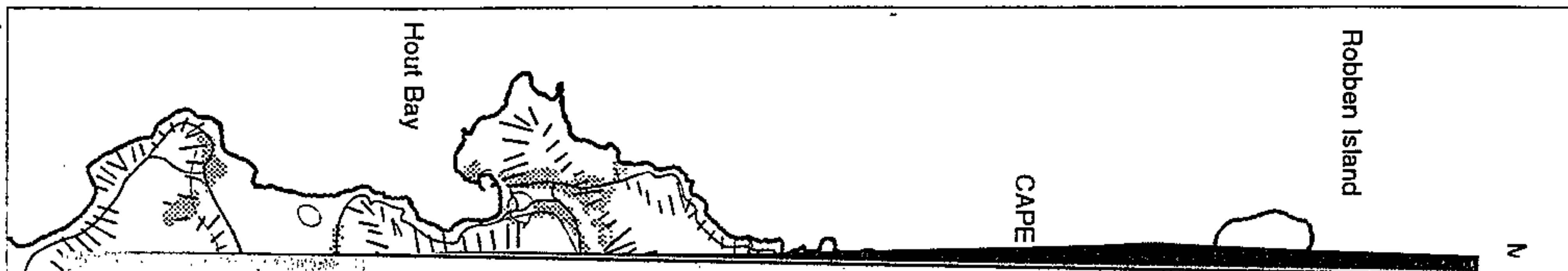
By Themba Sepotokele

THE LAUNCH of the Greater Alberton Taxi Association last week was a milestone that would ensure peace and stability in the taxi industry. Briefing the media on Friday, deputy mayor of Greater Alberton Mr De Lange said the amalgamation of the Tokoza and Eden Park taxi associations on the East Rand was the best way of bringing everlasting peace and investment to the city. Lange said the violence that had wrecked the East Rand had delayed

initiative will 'ensure peace and stability and also attract investors'

investment and derailed peace which people had been preaching in the industry. "After finding stability in our area and having one taxi association in one town, we will ensure that investment comes," Lange said. The amalgamation of the two taxi associations heralded the drawing up of a code of conduct for taxi operators. Disciplinary measures will be instituted against anyone for breaching the code. Executive chairman of the new association Mr George Martins appealed to commuters to understand the financial problems that forced them to increase taxi fares. The taxi industry is not receiving a government subsidy. Among those who attended the launch was Gauteng services Council executive Mr Sias Zietsman.

(332) Sowetan 22/7/96



DRIVERS SHOT IN KHAYELITSHA

City braces for new taxi wars

(332) CT 22/7/96

CODETA MEMBERS are to meet acting MEC for Police Mr Lampie Fick today to plead for tough measures to curb the bloodshed in its battle with Cata over taxi ranks and routes. Three drivers were killed and several taxis shot at during the weekend. **DALE GRANGER** reports.

CAPE TOWN is bracing itself for another round of taxi violence after two Cata drivers were shot dead in Khayelitsha yesterday in apparent revenge for the slaying of a Codeta driver on Saturday.

At the heart of the swift reprisals and the simmering tensions that fuelled them is the battle for control of four ranks in Langa, Guguletu, Eyni and Philippi.

Codeta chairman Mr David Jezile laid the blame for the violence at Cata's door last night. He accused it of muscling in, threatening Codeta drivers and trying to chase them away from the ranks.

Hundreds of Codeta drivers met in Mitchells Plain last night to discuss the violence.

A meeting has been called for today between the acting MEC for Police, Mr Lampie Fick, and Codeta. This follows demands by Codeta drivers — who gathered outside the Western Cape legislature on Saturday — to see the MEC for Police, Mr Gerald Morkel. They had hoped to press him to introduce tough measures to stamp out the violence. Morkel is overseas.

On Saturday in Lower Crossroads, Codeta driver Mr Jongilaka Zabandiya was pursued by sedan taxis from which gunmen fired at his taxi.

When Zabandiya's taxi came to a halt in the firing, gunmen leapt from the cars and shot him more than 20 times.

Police found the body of a Cata driver lying next to his taxi on Lansdowne Road in Khayelitsha just after noon yesterday. He had been shot in the head.

A wounded man was found lying about 100 metres from the taxi. He was taken to hospital.

Five minutes later, at the Kuwait rank in Khayelitsha, another driver was found slumped next to his taxi. He had been shot in the back.

Taxis in Lansdowne Road came under fire just before and just after 2pm, but no one was wounded.

Forty minutes later police found a taxi riddled with bullets 300m from the Mitchells Plain turn-off on the N2. They found the driver, who was wounded in the leg and had fled, hiding in a nearby shack.

Jezile warned Cata: "If they are going to attack our people one thing is for sure: We will not stand still."

He said tensions had reached boiling point last Tuesday when heavily armed Cata members began moving in on the ranks.

On Thursday they annexed the route from Nyanga to Philippi.

Jezile claimed Cata's "warlord", known only as "Sam", had told Codeta members to leave the ranks or pay the R7 000 "fee" and team up with Cata.

The fee Codeta charged affiliates was R2 500 and its members outnumbered those of Cata, Jezile said.

Codeta taxis had been smashed, but he claimed it was futile to lay charges with the police as senior policemen had told Codeta: "We can't do anything."

"We were marching (on Saturday) to try to let people know the position we are in and then hopefully the police will protect us," Jezile said.

"We don't want to live like this because revenge attacks will get us nowhere. If things go right at the meeting (with Fick), we will stop everything. But even tonight or tomorrow, we never know what is going to happen."

Cata president Mr Steve Williams failed to return calls from the Cape Times last night.

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Police to call on mediators in bid to end city's taxi war

Staff Reporter

(372) ARG 22/7/96

POLICE are to enlist the help of independent mediators to end the latest outbreak of the taxi war on the Cape Flats in which five people - four drivers and a passenger - were killed at the weekend.

Police spokesman John Sterrenberg said today police would contact mediators as part of the effort to establish a lasting peace between warring taxi factions Codeta and Cata.

Codeta members are meeting acting provincial police minister Lampie Fick today. It is understood they are demanding that he introduce tough measures to stamp out the violence.

Yesterday two Cata drivers were shot dead and several injured in apparent revenge for the slaying of a Codeta driver on Saturday.

Yesterday's first incident occurred at 12.30 pm on the corner of New and Lansdowne Road in Khayelitsha where a driver was found lying dead next to his taxi. He had been shot in the head.

Five minutes later, another driver was found shot dead at the Kuwait rank in Khayelitsha.

Sapa reports that a driver and a passenger were shot dead outside Stellenbosch between Khayamandi and Mfuleni late yesterday.

A 20-year-old passenger, Lucy Metebe, was also shot dead and two passengers were wounded.

PEACE-OR-ELSE ULTIMATUM

Taxi ranks 'will be closed'

TALKS BETWEEN RIVAL taxi associations aimed at ending the violence and settling the fight over routes failed yesterday, leading to an ultimatum to the groups to settle their differences or be shut down. **CHRIS BATEMAN** reports.

ACTING Western Cape Police Services MEC Mr Lampie Fick has threatened to close "every taxi rank in the Peninsula" on Friday unless warring organisations Codeta and Cata reach and implement a peace agreement by then.

Fick delivered his ultimatum at a Wale Street press conference attended by senior police officials, lawyers and the Codeta hierarchy after police-brokered peace talks between the warring organisations "failed to deliver" earlier in the day.

Late last night, SABC radio news reported that Codeta chairman Mr David Jezile had called for a consumer boycott of taxis from today. Attempts to reach Jezile to confirm this were unsuccessful.

Fick said seven people had been killed at the weekend in violence connected to demands for exclusive use of taxi ranks by the warring factions.

"I intend to give them time to reach a solution and to implement it by Friday," Fick said.

"If they are unable to end the

violence and killings we'll consider closing all taxi ranks in the Peninsula until the three parties (police being the third) have reached an acceptable agreement which results in a halt to the violence."

Fick intends to meet Cata today and is to inform both sides in writing of his intentions. Tomorrow has been set as truce-making day.

Jezile said all ranks "can be closed if there is no peace in the townships" and that his members would accept the sanction if talks failed.

Fick said if the taxi industry failed to meet his deadline "then they shouldn't complain if the government steps in and does what has to be done".

He appealed for understanding

(332) ~~740~~ 23/7/91
by commuters, who would be hit hardest, but said the choice between inconvenience and human lives was clear. Also, there was "alternative transport".

He declined to be drawn on how police, with their limited resources, would implement his threat or on whether the army would be called in as a back-up.

"Let us rather assume reasonable people can implement reasonable solutions by Friday."

Fick said the taxi industry had been given repeated opportunities to resolve the crisis.

Superintendent Attie Trollip of the public violence investigative unit said yesterday's meeting between the factions had "not delivered what we expected it to".

CT 23/7/96



GET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER: Acting MEC for Police, Mr Lample Fick, addresses Codeta members in his office after the killing of three taxi drivers at the weekend.

PICTURE: THEMIBINKOSI DWAYISA

Codeta calls for boycott of all city taxis

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

(332)

ARG 23/7/96

THE Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), which is locked in a bloody war with its rival Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), today called for a boycott of all taxis by commuters in the Western Cape.

David Jezile, chairman of Codeta, said the decision had been made last night.

"We won't get a peaceful solution while other taxis are still moving. All taxis must stop", said Mr Jezile.

He said the boycott was to ensure that Cata attended tomorrow's meeting to work out a peaceful solution to the crisis-stricken minibus industry.

Meanwhile, police have warned that the province's threat to close Peninsula minibus taxi ranks unless warring factions signed a peace accord, could worsen tensions in the taxi war, which claimed at least five lives at the weekend.

They were reacting to acting Western Cape police minister Lampie Fick's ultimatum that all taxi ranks be closed by Friday unless a peace agreement was signed by Cata and Codeta.

Codeta has welcomed the ultimatum while Cata has not reacted to it.

Mr Fick issued his ultimatum late yesterday after meeting Codeta members who had marched to his offices earlier to ask for government involvement in the taxi crisis.

The intervention of the provincial government in the taxi crisis comes after emergency meetings between Cata and Codeta taxi drivers failed yesterday.

Fick to meet Codeta, Cata in peace bid

(332)
CT 24/7/96
WILLEM STEENKAMP

EFFORTS to broker peace in the minibus taxi industry will continue this afternoon when acting provincial Safety and Security MEC Mr Lampie Fick meets representatives from Codeta and Cata.

Ministerial spokesman Mr Armand le Roux yesterday stressed that the government's goal was to "find a solution to the benefit of all concerned", and said that a statement by Fick that he would close taxi

ranks on Friday if the violence did not end was a "worst-case scenario".

Codeta chairman Mr David Jezile confirmed that a Codeta taxi had been shot at by Cata members in Mandalay, saying it showed that Cata spoke about peace but acted differently. But Cata's legal representative, Mr Reuben Liddell, said that the shooting did not have the approval of the Cata leadership.

Police could not confirm the Mandalay shooting.

Fick steps in as rivals meet to seek end to taxi warfare

(332)
ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

ARL 24/7/96
THE WARRING Peninsula
minibus taxi organisations, Cata
and Codeta, are due to meet
today to find a peaceful solution
to their taxi conflict before Fri-
day, or else face the closure of
all their taxi ranks.

This follows the deaths of
five people during taxi warfare
at the weekend.

The provincial ministry of
police confirmed that acting
minister Lampie Fick would
chair the meeting.

Yesterday, Cata president
Steven Williams had called on
Mr Fick to mediate between
the two warring groups.

On Monday, Mr Fick deliv-
ered an ultimatum to both
organisations to resolve their
conflict by Friday or face the
closure of all taxi ranks in Cape
Town and the disruption of
their business.

Codeta was delighted at the
hardline attitude taken by Mr
Fick, but Mr Williams ex-
pressed "disappointment" with
Mr Fick's stand.

"He only listened to Codeta,
he didn't even find out what
we were thinking," he said.

Mr Williams said Cata want-
ed Mr Fick to mediate so that
he could decide for himself
who was speaking the truth.

He said the main problem in
the minibus taxi industry was
that Codeta was demanding its
own taxi ranks.

"We can't allow Codeta to
operate alone," he said.

However, he did extend an
invitation to Codeta to "come
back" and work with Cata.

But Codeta yesterday asked
commuters to boycott all taxis
in an attempt to force Cata to
negotiate.



ALL'S FORGIVEN: Cata president Mr Steve Williams (left) and Codeta chairman Mr David Jezile after a meeting with acting MEC for Police Mr Lampie Fick yesterday in which they agreed to a ceasefire in the taxi war.

PICTURE: THEMBINKOSI DWAYISA

Ceasefire declared in city taxi war

CT 25/9/96 (332)

DALE GRANGER

A CEASEFIRE was declared in the taxi war between rival factions Codeta and Cata yesterday after a two-hour meeting with acting MEC for Police Mr Lampie Fick.

Sitting between Mr Steve Williams, president of Cata, and Mr David Jezile, chairman of Codeta, Fick said there was tension at the meeting but a "very good spirit" had prevailed and the two organisations had finally reached a watershed agreement whereby

they will share the ranks on condition that the taxis are legal.

At a further meeting today Cata and Codeta will decide how many taxis may operate at each specific rank. It was also agreed that the police would patrol the ranks and routes to protect the agreement.

Fick said taxi war incidents created a negative international reputation for the country.

"There is little point in our President receiving a hero's welcome in Paris a week ago while we at home give no support in promoting our

country's image. We have very little future if we create the impression we are barbarians killing one another."

Williams said: "We will come back tomorrow to finalise the agreement.

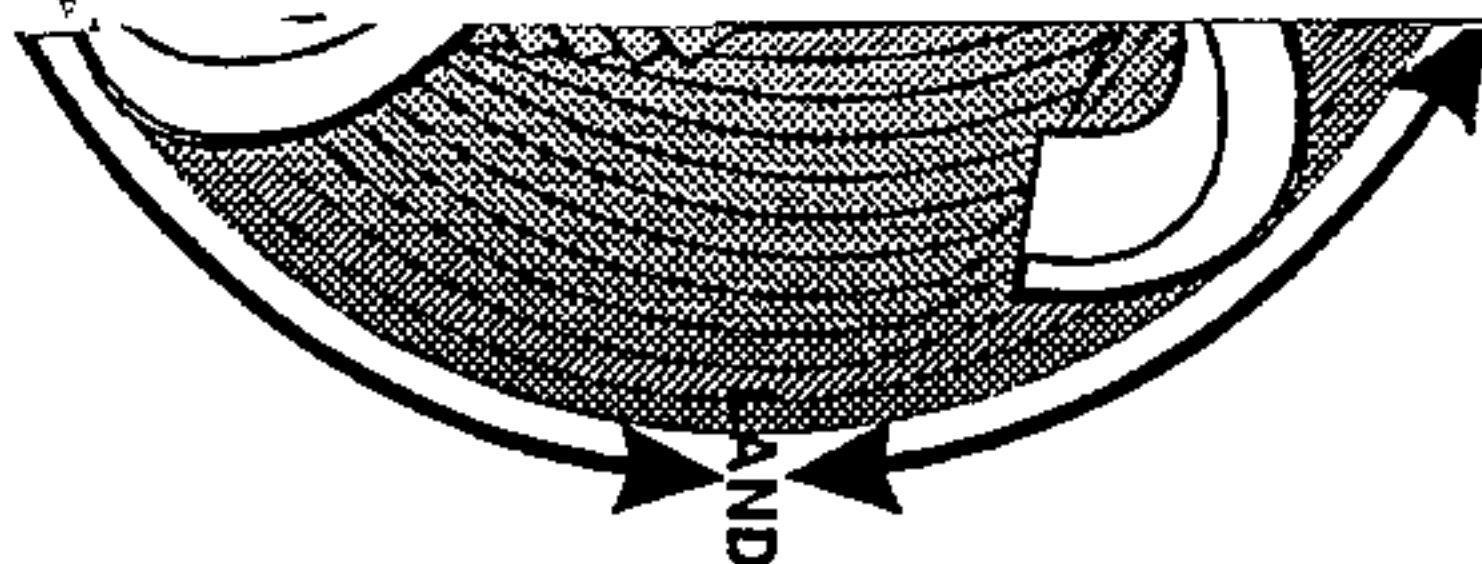
"I agree tensions were a bit high but it is because we met that we can shake hands as brothers."

Jezile said: "I am very sorry for the people who always die in these actions and hope it doesn't happen again. Seven died."

The leadership of both organi-

sations committed themselves to ensuring their members would toe the line but the question on everyone's lips was: What guarantee was there for a lasting peace?

"Nobody can give a guarantee when it comes to human action," said Fick. "But I was impressed with both sides, which gives me hope that with police support we have something that can work. I sense a difference in that both sides realise the seriousness of the situation and the dire consequences for the future of our country."





Picture: DOUG PITHEY, The Argus.

PEACE TALKS: Acting Western Cape Police Minister Lampie Fick is the man in the middle at peace talks between Cape taxi association chiefs Steve Williams of Cata, left, and David Jezile of Codeta.

ARG 25/7/96 New police plan to curb taxi violence

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

POLICE are devising a new plan to control minibus taxi violence.

This emerged after the Peninsula's warring taxi associations reached a tenuous peace deal yesterday.

After the truce, police disclosed that a new strategy for the taxi industry was being discussed and would soon be made public. It could involve informal regulation of taxi routes.

Rival taxi associations Cata and Codeta reached a fragile peace under the watchful eye of mediator Lampie Fick, acting Western Cape Minister of Police. But no final agreement was reached between the two bodies and a further meeting was scheduled for later today.

"The meeting was conducted in good spirit, but I would be lying if I was saying there is no tension", said Mr Fick.

"But both organisations have accepted that all taxi ranks are free to operate for all permit holders and that no one will interfere in any way with those who operate the routes legally," said Mr Fick.

Police had pledged their support to any new agreements reached by the taxi associations. But Mr Fick said there was no guarantee that any agreement between the organ-

isations would mean an end to the violence.

After last night's peace meeting, both organisations were cautious about the success of the meeting.

Cata president Steve Williams did not want to comment on the feasibility of a peace agreement today, saying: "I don't want to count my chickens before they've hatched."

Codeta president David Jezile said: "It looks good."

But the organisations have a long way to go to reach an agreement that will end the conflict, which claimed seven lives over the weekend.

Two senior officers from the Priority Crimes Unit, which deals directly with the taxi violence, were also at the meeting.

"Whether they reach a peaceful agreement or not, police will be out in full force," an officer said, disclosing that a vital meeting was being held today with police commissioners, station commanders and traffic officers to discuss a new plan of action in dealing with the war-torn taxi industry.

Although they did not want to give details of the new plan, police said it would involve informal regulation of taxi routes.

The police said that Mr Fick's threat to close down taxi ranks if violence continued remained in effect.

2 held over taxi violence

By Charity Bhengu

TWO men allegedly involved in taxi violence in Soweto were arrested yesterday in connection with attempted murder and the illegal possession of an AK-47 rifle. *Sowetan*

Police spokesman Inspector John Shiburi said a taxi driver was arrested after police found an AK-47 rifle and 70 rounds of ammunition in his vehicle at a taxi rank in Diepkloof. *26/7/96*
This followed a tip-off to police after a clash between two rival taxi associations at the rank early yesterday.

Another man, believed to be a member of the Dobsonville Taxi Association, was arrested after he shot and critically wounded two women who were in a minibus in Dobsonville.

The driver of the minibus was stopped by a suspected DTA member who accused him of pirating. The driver told him the minibus was a private vehicle driving colleagues to work.

Make peace or ranks close, taxi factions warned

(332)
ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

ARU 26/7/96

ACTING Western Cape Minister of Police Lampie Fick has given a final warning to rival Peninsula taxi organisations Cata and Codeta to solve their problems by midnight or face the closure of all ranks.

Mr Fick gave the ultimatum at a meeting last night, after the two sides failed to agree on the division of ranks and routes.

The two called a truce this week after violence claimed seven lives.

They postponed further peace talks to last night to decide on routes.

The meeting with Mr Fick deadlocked at 8.30pm when Codeta members left under police escort, fearing for their lives.

The deadlock was over six routes. According to a source, Codeta initially claimed most routes from Khayelitsha, which is its stronghold.

Although Cata came to the meeting without any proposal, it apparently refused to compromise by giving any ranks to Codeta.

Finally, Codeta said it wanted only the six routes between Khayelitsha and Nyanga and one in Langa.

Mr Fick said it would be "a tragedy" if the dispute could not be settled.

Delight as taxi rivals reach 11th-hour peace agreement

ANDREA BOTHA

Staff Reporter

WARRING taxi organisations Cata and Codeta finally agreed on a peace formula last night just hours before the midnight deadline.

Acting Police Minister Lampie Fick, who helped with

(332) ARG 26/7/96
the week-long negotiations, had said all ranks would be closed if agreement was not reached last night. A compromise was reached over the "ownership" of various ranks and routes.

"I have to be honest - I had very little confidence that we would succeed here tonight," admitted Mr Fick.

Cata president Steven Williams said after the meeting: "I apologise for all those who lost their lives. Hopefully the peace will last this time".

Codeta chairman David Jezile repeated the apology and added: "Next time, before we fight, let's come to the table".

■ See article page 20

ARG 07/7/96

tragedy and give Games B

(332) ARG 27/7/96



■ For the past eight years, Western Cape has been plagued by intermittent bloody taxi wars which often claimed innocent lives. Routinely, the warring factions sign peace treaties, but these noble agreements are not honoured because they are broken at the drop of the hat. Special Correspondent **VUYO BAVUMA** looks at the background of the conflict which is a scourge to many defenceless township residents – and a city that is bidding to host the 2004 Olympics.

recipe for conflict fell on deaf ears.

Intermittent conflicts became a frequent feature of the industry. The year 1991 saw the longest and most brutal clash which saw the death of several people, including prominent African National Congress leader, Michail Mapongwana.

The killing of Mr Mapongwana brought a political dimension to the taxi conflict and it was worsened by the fact that Webta were mainly apolitical. Webta members were also viewed in some quarters as being "apartheid stooges". On the other hand, Lagunya had impeccable political colours as most of its members were from the established townships who mainly supported the ANC.

In 1992 a far-reaching peace settlement was finally reached: Lagunya and Webta would unite and all routes were to be shared by all the members. Cynics who had seen many treaties being dishonoured, expressed concern, but the peace held on for more than two years.

In 1994 seeds of discontent started germinating when the former Webta members accused the Codeta executive of being undemocratic and aloof from its membership. Former Webta members were in the main unhappy that they had to share their lucrative routes with their old rivals.

The disgruntled ex-Webta members ransacked Codeta offices in the city centre. The fury was followed by mafia-style cold-blooded killings of some former Webta officials who were serving on the

new Codeta executive. One of the casualties was Siphiso Mooi, the former Webta secretary, who supported the new peace arrangements. Other surviving officials fled into hiding.

In the streets, it was business as usual, but it was tense.

Matters became more complicated and dangerous when a shadowy group, dubbed the Big 8, was accused of being behind the killings.

This development had a political flavour as some people claimed the group was based in Crossroads where it was also allegedly instrumental in the conflict raging in squatter camps.

Significantly, the Big 8 was linked to the well-known Crossroads warlord, Jeffrey Nongwe, but the former ANC chairman always strongly denied this.

This low-key violence continued as some members of the so-called Big 8 were shot and killed in ambushes.

Rumours abounded that Webta would set up their own association. Worried Codeta members hurried to the Leonard Ramatlakane, provincial Minister of Roads, to warn him about the impending crisis of having two associations within the same area.

But their pleas could not be attended to: Mr Ramatlakane's hands were tied. In fact, the right of the freedom of association for anyone – including the former Webta members – was guaranteed in the country's interim constitution.

Oblivious to the fears of Codeta members, a hand-

ARG 27/7/96

332

End taxi war

Every time, the bloody taxi war erupts, beleaguered township commuters experience a chilling sense of déjà vu.

They have to practically duck for cover while gunmen spray bullets at fully-laden taxis. Sometimes innocent commuters are killed. This week at least seven people died after conflict flared up between members of the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) and Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) for umpteenth time.

Ironically, the violence began on the day Codeta members protested against alleged intimidation and police bias.

This litany of events is nothing new in this conflict.

The roots of the conflict can be traced to the warring factions' unwillingness to adhere to key agreements of the 1992 "peace treaty" which ended a seven-month bloody war between the then Lagunya and Webta taxi organisations. These agreements stipulated there should be a single taxi association and no one was allowed to exercise exclusive rights over routes.

The clash over the routes dates back to the early 1980s when Webta, comprising mainly Khayelitsha and Crossroads members, forcibly won the struggle for operating on routes between townships and formerly "white" areas. At that time only Golden Arrow buses operated on these routes.

Bearing the brunt of the then notorious pass-law raids, most Webta members came from poverty-stricken homelands to seek greener pastures in the city. They soon found out that running pirate taxis was the easiest way of earning money to support their families in the homelands.

Interestingly, Lagunya members, most of whom operated on the lesser lucrative inter-township routes, collaborated with the authorities to clamp down on the new entries whom they saw as undercutting their business. Lagunya members were legally permitted to operate a taxi service and gradually they tip-toed into the Nyanga-Clairemont and Nyanga-Bellville routes.

After the authorities relented to the intrusion of the African taxis on the township-city routes, both taxi associations, Lagunya and Webta claimed the right to operate on these routes as they "pioneered" these routes and hence claimed exclusive "ownership" of the routes. That claim is at the centre of the present conflict. Almost overnight the Webta members transformed their shabby rickety vehicles into flashy minibus taxis – and they officially launched their association in the late 80's.

Their cause received a further boost when South African Black Taxi Association (Sabta) adjusted its rules that barred membership of two associations from the same region. Lagunya's protests that this was

Did a chance

ful of former Webta members converged on a cold Saturday afternoon to launch their new body, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) at NY 49 stadium. For the first time in two years, there were two contenders in the township taxi kraal – an ominous sign for conflict.

Gradually, Cata members consolidated their membership and operated side-by-side with Codeta members. But it was clear that the days of peace were over as intermittent clashes between Codeta and Cata flared up.

Encouraging signs of finding long-lasting peace in the industry emerged when Mr Ramatlakane began setting up an all-inclusive process involving more than 50 taxi associations.

These organisations resolved to form a Western Cape Taxi Industry Taxi Task Team to investigate policy formulation and draft constitutional proposals for the industry.

Codeta and Cata agreed on a cease-fire only to break it within days. But Mr Ramatlakane's office, at times in conjunction with then provincial police minister Patrick Mackenzie, continued to search for a solution.

Their peace overtures received a severe setback when eleven people were shot dead and 24 injured in an attack on taxi members during a rally in Khayelitsha. Several Cata members were killed in the shooting and the organisation's spokesmen claimed they were set up.

Mr Mackenzie promised swift action, but the culprits have still not been apprehended.

This incident widened the gulf between Cata and Codeta.

A crack police team was appointed to investigate the taxi conflict and several arrests were made. In 1995 Mr MacKenzie moved to the courts when several Cata members, including Victor Sam, the so-called hitman, appeared in connection with allegations ranging from murder to intimidation. The Cata members were discharged because of lack of evidence.

For the better part of 1995, the fragile calm prevailed in the industry.

Meanwhile Mr Ramatlakane did not give up the search for peace.

This year, it's the same conundrum: People being killed, taxi gunmen shooting each other; peace talks being held and so-called cease-fires being reached.

But as long as the two sides do not accept the bonafides of each other, the taxi war will remain a permanent feature of the city that wants to host the Olympic Games in 2004.

Innocent people will continue to bear the brunt, and any solution to the taxi problem is futile without effective law enforcement.

Taxi drivers gunned down in fiery battle

By ROCKY MOKOENA

CP 28/7/96

Services (STS) refused to operate with Soweto Taxi Association (STA) on the same rank, claiming that they are not recognised by the city council.

The city council had closed the Kort street taxi rank, which was used by the two associations.

A taxi driver and member of STA who witnessed the shooting at Maebuye garage, near Pimville, said the dead drivers and two injured were members of STA.

He said two men armed with pistols started shooting at Bara rank and fled in a mini-bus.

This resulted in the blocking of the Potchefstroom road, where there was an exchange of bullets between the two association members.

Captain Westraab said no association took responsibility for

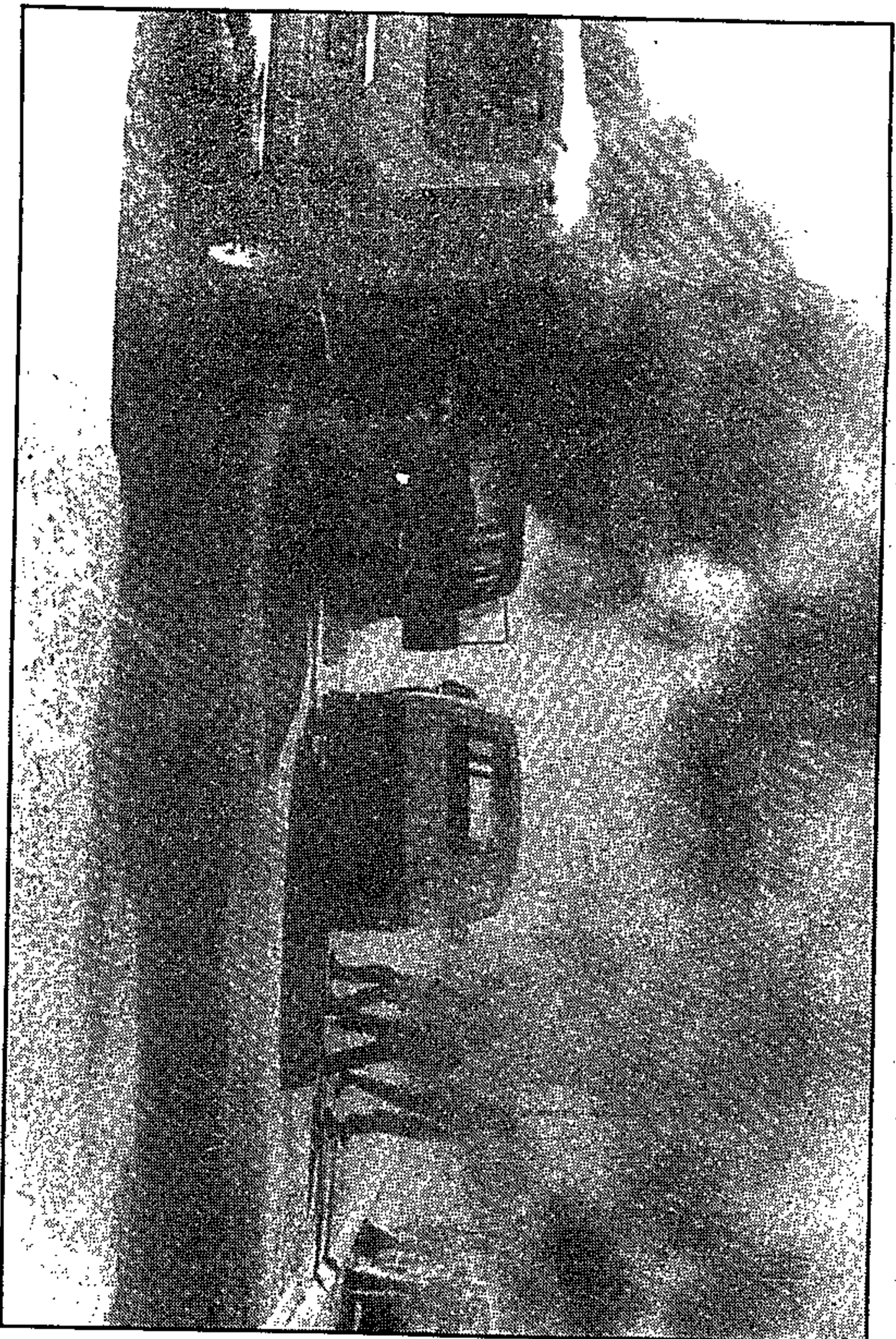
blocking the road, but said a docket would be opened.

The violence between the Soweto Taxi Association (STA) and Soweto Taxi services (STS) has been going on for five years.

Western Cape Taxi Organisations CATA and CODETA have reached an agreement concerning ownership of ranks and routes.

The agreement was reached on Friday night, hours before a mid-night deadline set by the MEC for Safety and Security, Lampie Sikk. Sick had threatened to close all taxi ranks if the organisations did not reach an agreement.

Twelve people died and three were injured yesterday morning when a minibus taxi with 15 passengers on board crashed into a stationary truck on the N4 highway, police said.



FIRE AND DESTRUCTION . . . Police struggled in vain to quell a fire which razed a minibus taxi during inter-taxi association fighting in Soweto yesterday. At least three people were killed in the incident, which was related to the use of a new rank.

■ Pic: MPHOTO

Peace deal ends taxi

BY YVETTE VAN BREDA

(322) 28/7/96 STCM

war

A GROUND-BREAKING agreement by rival taxi groups to divide city routes between them has ended the long-running taxi war in the Western Cape, but police kept a high profile on routes around the Peninsula yesterday "just in case".

The agreement was thrashed out in tense negotiations late on Friday night, just hours before the midnight deadline set by Acting Safety and Security Minister Lampie Fick for the closure of all taxi ranks following a week of violence in which seven people died.

The Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) and the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), agreed that Cata would run the routes from Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga and Codeta would operate between Khayelitsha and the city, Bellville and southern suburbs.

After a week of intense negotiations all parties expressed satisfaction.

The breaking of fragile peace treaties signed by warring factions has become commonplace in the years of indiscriminate shooting, which has claimed hundreds of lives, often of innocent passengers caught in the crossfire.

However, Codeta vice-chairman Howard Dyubeni echoed the general mood of negotiators, saying: "We've never reached an agreement like this".

Dyubeni referred to the march to the provincial parliament by about 500 Codeta members last Saturday as a desperate move to end eight years of conflict.

He hoped the "hit squads" of both organisations would "get the message that (taxi) ranks are not a place for skollies".

Informed sources say both organisations had struck a compromise to reach the final agreement.

Earlier this week the groups agreed to a truce in the blood-letting, but at further peace talks to decide on routes on Thursday night the parties deadlocked after more than four hours of talks, leading Fick to sternly reiterate his midnight ultimatum to close the ranks.

After the agreement on Friday night, a very relieved Fick said the intense negotiations had led to sacrifices by both parties.

He said the agreement on routes meant police would not have to carry out his threat to close taxi ranks, but he added that police would turn out in force at taxi ranks at the weekend to ensure the accord was maintained.

Fick said the agreement reached was "a first step based on the understanding by both sides that routes would not belong to organisations, but to permit holders."

He added that the agreement to grant certain routes to different organisations was "the first real step to lasting peace and order".

Cata president Steven Williams apologised to those who had lost loved ones in the taxi conflict and thanked Fick for bringing them together to solve their problems.

"We must try and be flexible and accept the solutions agreed upon," he said, adding that ultimately taxi members had a responsibility to their commuters.

Codeta chairman David Jezile said the taximen's lack of education was greatly to blame for the conflict. "Before, if you wanted to join (Codeta) you were asked whether you had an assegai or a gun. Now I'm going to ask to see school certificates," he said.

2 killed as taxi violence flares

(332)
Staff Reporter

AR 30/7/96
THE latest fragile ceasefire between the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) was shattered when two taxi drivers were killed in fresh outbreaks of violence.

Cata president Stephen Williams said violence had erupted when a taxi driver from Crossroads was gunned down in a hail of bullets which had apparently also wounded two schoolchildren. Emergency services staff said one man was shot dead and another knifed to death in a clash at 10.15am today between rival groups at a taxi rank in Bellville South's Charl Malan Street.

Tensions were apparently also running high between rival taxi organisation members at the taxi rank near Wynberg station, the terminus for Khayelitsha and Cape Flats taxis in the southern suburbs.

Taxi officials, politicians meet to resolve violence

Star 31/7/96 (332)

MECs Duarte and Mashatile will attempt to thrash out a solution to problems which have left commuters stranded

By DEREK RODNEY
AND MIKE MASIPA

A high-level meeting has been scheduled between Gauteng politicians and rival Soweto taxi organisations to resolve the ongoing violence which has left thousands of commuters stranded and fearful.

Officials from the warring Soweto Taxi Association (STA) and Soweto Taxi Service (STS) will meet with Gauteng safety and security MEC Jessie Duarte and public transport and roads MEC Paul Mashatile tomorrow in a bid to iron out problems on the troubled route.

Duarte and Mashatile visited the tense Baragwanath taxi rank yesterday to assess the situation.

Duarte has taken a tough approach to the dispute which has already resulted in the death of an STS driver, the wounding of an STA driver and the burning of

scores of taxis since violence erupted on Saturday.

"We are prepared to meet to discuss the real problems affecting the industry. However, I want to advise the two organisations that the maintenance of law and order is non-negotiable.

"Instructions have been given to the security forces to get tough," Duarte said.

She also instructed Superintendent Paul van Aswegen, of the Soweto police department, to close the Baragwanath rank if he felt the lives of people were in danger.

Soweto Police Commissioner Victor Nolutshungu said police would put up roadblocks along the disputed taxi route from Pretoria, central Soweto, to Johannesburg.

Four men arrested in connection with the violence are expected to appear in the Johannesburg Magistrates' Court today.

Simmering rivalry split over into open confrontation on July 1 with the closure of the Kort Street taxi rank, which was shared by the two organisations, and the opening of the new rank in Ferreira Street.

STA chairman Lucas Msibi said his drivers were prevented from using the new rank because they were not registered with the metropolitan substructure as a legitimate taxi association.

"STA has on two occasions applied to the South African Black Taxi Association to be recognised as an independent association, but the controlling authority has refused to accept its applications on the grounds that it (Sabia) only recognised STA as an affiliate of STS," Msibi said.

STS secretary-general Alphus Malao said his organisation could not recognise an illegitimate organisation.



Calming the storm ... Gauteng MEC for Safety and Security Jessie Duarte talks to local taxi driver Frank Sadike at the Baragwanath taxi rank in Soweto.



'Collective apology' by doctors comes

A truth probe focusing on the medical profession has been urged, in spite of a 'collective apology' from the untold harm of the apartheid era, writes **JOHN YELD**

the doctors of subordinating the prisoners' interests to those of the security police and other security forces.

This included treating them in the presence of their captors, in contravention of ethical medical practice. In the most extreme case, one torture victim said he had heard a doctor telling security police that his seemingly imminent death could be disguised by

stuffing porridge in his nose and throat, making it appear as though he had choked or suffocated. This was subsequently denied by the doctor concerned. The issue of collaboration between the medical profession and perpetrators of human rights and amnesty or indemnity for such collusion was one of the key themes at a conference in Cape Town last year, organised jointly

by the Woodstock-based Trauma Centre for Victims of Violence and Torture and the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims, which has its headquarters in Denmark.

One of the participants, Leslie London of the department of community health at the University of Cape Town's Medical School, said there had been in-depth discussions about issues such as

amnesty for doctors involved in human rights abuses as countries emerged from repressive eras.

"As part of that conference, doctors called quite explicitly for some process like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to enable the profession to come to terms with its past," he said.

A letter to that effect was sent to the SA Medical Journal

for possible publication. It has not appeared yet, but in the June issue of the journal there is a substantial article by one of Dr London's UCT colleagues, Dr Judith van Heerden of the department of primary health care, in which she questions the "collective apology" offered last year by South Africa's medical profession for its role in supporting apartheid "by omission or commission".

The apology, offered by the Medical Association of South Africa (Masa), a voluntary professional association, was greeted with "joy and relief" by some members, Van Heerden noted. But, she continued, other Masa members did not share these feelings and there were doubts about the true value of the association's announcement.

"In a single sentence, Masa exonerates itself from the untold harm of the apartheid era. Examples include the restriction of medical school admissions on the basis of race, the segregation

tion of hospitals and other health facilities, the maintenance of separate waiting rooms by doctors, and toleration of interference with doctors' treatment of prisoners and detainees.

"It (the Masa apology) creates a bad impression because it is dismissive of the thousands who have been detained and tortured since 1960.

"It does not foster the culture of human dignity that the president and the Government of National Unity are promoting," Van Heerden said.

The most damaging aspect of the apology, she added, was the fact that it denied Masa members the opportunity to reflect on and question the real meaning of human rights and medical ethics.

The "vagueness" of the Masa apology had prompted commentators in the SA Medical Journal to associate it mainly with the death of Steve Biko in detention in 1977 and the role of the two district surgeons who had



"Doctors who plead ignorance could easily fall into the same trap of disregarding the complicity of professional organisations and individuals," Van Heerden said.

The challenge for Masa was to find constructive ways of informing members and the public about the "dark past".

"The criticism levelled at the apology is that it is little more than an acknowledgement of previous wrongs, and (it) lacks the crucial element of disclosure. For doctors who are committed to the establishment of ethical norms, a pardon entails a visible change in behaviour from one of silence and denial, to one of acknowledgement and disclosure.

"Disclosure involves scrutiny of past actions and remorse, something that will lend weight

to the words," Van Heerden said.

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was hearing more and more testimony from victims who had experienced abuse at the hands of state doctors during the apartheid era, the medical profession had an ethical obligation to take strong, corrective action to deal with its past, Van Heerden suggested.

She proposed that Masa and

the statutory SA Medical and Dental Council should undertake a "parallel process" of healing that involved truth-telling, forgiveness and reparation through the creation of a medical "truth commission".

However, such a process would be difficult to organise, and the names of the doctors involved would have to be kept confidential, Van Heerden sug-

Our past is littered with incidents where doctors neglected their duty. Some saw collusion with the state as patriotic

gested. "Our past is littered with incidents where doctors neglected their caring duty. Collusion with the state was regarded as a patriotic duty by some of them.

"(But) pointing fingers now only adds to the stress under which district surgeons work ... There has to be recognition of the pressure and tension under which these doctors fulfil an unglamorous and unrewarding task. Yet the mismanagement of the past cannot be overlooked."

The stories of victims would probably reopen deep wounds and would need an empathetic audience.

Also, a debriefing mechanism would have to be in place for all participants, Van Heerden said. Quoting an SA Medical Journal editorial of 1991, she concluded: "The pain and remorse of this process will be living proof of a commitment to ensure that whatever happened to Steve Biko should never be allowed to happen in any country that regards itself as civilised."

27/7/96
Under Fire

MECs intervene in Reef taxi dispute

(332) Sowetan 31/7/96

By Themba Sepotokele
and Sapa

THE SOWETO TRANSPORT SERVICES have decided to resume operations following a week of clashes between its members and those of the Soweto Taxi Association after Gauteng government officials visited the Baragwanath taxi rank yesterday to meet rival factions.

When Gauteng MEC for safety and security Mrs Jessie Duarte and MEC for transport Mr Paul Mashatile arrived at the rank yesterday the situation was tense, with only the STA operating.

Briefing the media at the rank, Duarte and Mashatile said they had urged the two organisations to work towards attaining peace and stability.

Mashatile said the transport department planned to meet the two groups tomorrow to seek an amicable solution to their problem.

Four drivers killed in fresh outburst of taxi violence in Cape Peninsula

Meanwhile, on the Cape Peninsula at least four taxi drivers were killed and a commuter injured in taxi violence yesterday.

This follows a fragile peace agreement struck at the weekend between the warring Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association when a compromise was reached over the use of various ranks and routes.

Driver killed

Yesterday, however, a taxi driver was killed when shots were fired at him from another taxi in Philippi East, Lower Crossroads, at about 6.20am.

In the second incident a taxi driver sought refuge behind the Khayelitsha Police Station when his vehicle came

under fire. He got into an unoccupied police vehicle and began returning fire before he was killed.

Another driver was shot dead and another stabbed to death at the Bellville taxi rank. Two men were also stabbed at the Wynberg taxi rank and taken to hospital.

Meanwhile in Soweto, STS general-secretary Mr Elphus Malao said the decision to work together with the STA followed a meeting held at Tshiawelo Community Centre.

Malao said the STS still believed that the violence had not thwarted plans to bring the two feuding organisations under one umbrella.

An STA official at Baragwanath taxi rank also endorsed the notion of merging the two groups.

Ine strange fight over Groblersdal

Black areas surrounding Groblersdal will remain in Northern Province

By Khathu Mammala

YOUR ENEMY'S ENEMY IS YOUR friend. This best describes the current dispute between Mpumalanga and Northern Province over Groblersdal and the surrounding black areas.

The Conservative Party town council has teamed up with a forum, consisting of mainly African National Congress supporters, to force the Northern Province government to leave Groblersdal in Mpumalanga and transfer the surrounding areas to Mpumalanga as well.

This alliance was formed when new provincial boundaries were drawn up in 1994. Groblersdal fell under Mpumalanga but all black areas surrounding the town were left in Northern Province.

Primary objective

The ANC in both provinces discussed the issue at several meetings and they agreed that Bushbuckridge, which was in Northern Province, should be incorporated into Mpumalanga in exchange for Groblersdal.

The ANC in Northern Province then passed a motion transferring Bushbuckridge to Mpumalanga, and the ANC in Mpumalanga passed a motion to transfer Groblersdal to Northern Province.

But the matter was complicated by the formation of the Eastern Transvaal Joint Forum Alliance early last year.

The primary objective of the forum was to campaign for the incorporation of Saaiplaat, Dlamale, Tafelkop, Moletema, Leuwnfontein, Elandsdraai

Local ANC leaders who want our areas to remain in Northern Province are being marginalised

and Marble Hall into Mpumalanga.

Forum chairman Mr Legogoro Legoaba, a prominent ANC member, said the forum passed a resolution that the black areas near Groblersdal should be transferred to Mpumalanga. "There will be no (local government) election in this area if we are not in Mpumalanga," said Legoaba, adding that the forum enjoyed the support of most people in the disputed areas.

He added that although the forum was not politically aligned, most of its members were ANC supporters.

Asked why he felt so passionate about being part of Mpumalanga, Legoaba replied: "I am really tired of people asking me what is so special about Mpumalanga."

"They never answer me when I ask them what is so special about Northern Province. Historically, we are from Mpumalanga."

Legoaba denied that forum members were puppets of rightwingers who wanted to have local government elections postponed indefinitely so that Groblersdal could continue to be governed by a whites-only council.

"We are not being used by anybody. We want to be in Mpumalanga



Senator Sam Motsuenyane ... It is too early to say what will happen to the disputed areas.

with Groblersdal; so the question of trying to make the town a *volksstaat* therefore falls away," he said.

These sentiments were echoed by forum general secretary Mr Leonard Malasi. He said people had resolved to be incorporated into Mpumalanga after the general elections in 1994.

Community guidance

"The bottom line is that we want to be in Mpumalanga," he said, adding that forum members were ready to hold an election as long as it was administered by the Mpumalanga government.

Malasi said he was a strong supporter of the ANC but on "this matter I am guided by my community."

He said the dispute had brought together different organisations, and that some of those who supported the pro-Mpumalanga forum were members of the National Party.

"It is just a coincidence that the Boers in Groblersdal also want to remain in Mpumalanga. Local ANC leaders who want our areas to remain



Mpumalanga premier Mathews Phosa ... the Eastern Transvaal Joint Forum Alliance wants several areas incorporated into his province.

in the Northern Province are being marginalised because they are going against the wishes of the community."

He said people were increasingly becoming emotional and that violence could erupt.

"Northern Province has taken a tough line on this matter, saying our case is a non-starter. The Northern Province government should be democratic and listen to the people."

Groblersdal mayor Mr Willem Janse van Rensburg confirmed that his council wanted the town to remain in Mpumalanga.

"We depend on the Loskop Dam in Mpumalanga. Some of our farms are in Mpumalanga and our social lives, churches and sports are linked with Mpumalanga," he said.

"We want to remain in Mpumalanga and should anybody force us into Northern Province, we will fight him in court."

He also supported the forum's demand that surrounding black areas be part of Mpumalanga. "We are not

racists. And we do want elections for a new local government to be held."

However, ANC Eastern Region secretary Mr Patrick Lekgoro believes that the aim of the forum was to confuse people.

Support decision

If there were forum members who claimed to be ANC members, he said, they should support the decision taken by the provincial leadership of the ANC.

"The dispute was about Groblersdal - not the black areas. Those areas are in Northern Province and they will remain in that province," said Lekgoro.

He said forum members did not have any reason to want their areas to be transferred to Mpumalanga - except that their grandparents' graves were in Mpumalanga.

Recently senators, led by Dr Sam Motsuenyane, visited the disputed areas. He said it was too early to give an indication of what would happen in these areas.

ANC calls for taxi boycott

(332) CJ 317196

THE NATIONAL PARTY-LED provincial government is supporting ANC plans to launch a fullscale taxi boycott in an attempt to end the violence. **CHRIS BATEMAN** reports.



of the Human Resources Standing Committee on the Cape Metropolitan Council, said that the ANC had decided days before yesterday's

THE ANC is planning a fullscale commuter boycott of Codeta and Cata taxis in an attempt to stop the bloodshed and the anxiety endured by township residents.

The move has the full support of the National Party-led provincial government.

The action is a response to the renewed taxi violence yesterday in which at least four drivers were killed and a commuter was injured.

This is the first time that the region's two most powerful political parties have pooled resources to combat taxi violence.

The MEC for Police Services, Mr Gerald Morkel, has given his unqualified support to "a martial plan".

He has pledged police support for commuters who use buses and trains when the boycott comes into force, possibly early next week.

Morkel has disclosed that a regional commission is to be set up to lobby for legislative powers to regulate routes, confiscate offenders' vehicles and issue permits.

Mr David Dlali, a member of the ANC's regional executive committee and chairman

killings to pursue a civilian taxi boycott. He said that boycotts had proved in the past to be the most effective deterrents to violence.

The boycott would need several days to arrange as the co-operation of ANC branches, Golden Arrow Bus Services, the police and the army would have to be enlisted, Dlali said.

The ANC would insist that the army be brought in because several taxis were allegedly owned by policemen, Dlali claimed. This would inevitably "muddy the waters" in keeping the peace.

Police spokesman Senior Superintendent John Sterrenberg angrily denied last night that policemen owned taxis. He said this was contrary to police standing rules.

Sterrenberg invited Dlali to make such information available to the police and, if he was unwilling to do so, to give the details to the media.

Dlali said that Golden Arrow would be asked to lower fares and increase the frequency of its services on taxi routes.

Increased passenger loads would offset the cuts in fares, he said.

Spokeswoman Sergeant Vivienne Lentoort said the driver climbed into an unoccupied police vehicle and began returning fire at his attackers. He was shot dead. Police believe he was killed by a bullet that ricocheted in the vehicle.

Police later arrested five people, three for public violence and two for attempted murder, near the Khayelitsha police station.

They also confiscated six firearms, one of which was unlicensed.

He believed soldiers or policemen would have to travel on buses to deter attacks by rebel taxi operators.

The ANC's provincial secretary, Mr James Ngculu, said that the last civic taxi boycott in 1992 had induced the warring organisations (then Lagunya and Wedta) to sign a peace pact "with alacrity". The truce had been the longest-lasting.

The ANC said it had met Morkel two weeks ago to broach the idea. It had found him "supportive and committed to the police force playing its part".

Codeta and Cata had been warned that the ANC would "respond decisively" if killings continued.

Ngculu said he expected rogue taxi elements to disrupt civic boycott planning meetings, but he hoped police and the army would "play their role here, too".

"People were getting restive about the ANC's lack of action," Ngculu said.

"We can't allow people to die over routes and ranks — communities are tired of this. We expect overwhelming support."

Mr Lampie Fick, MEC for Tourism, who brokered a short-lived peace agreement last week, said a London tour operator had just cancelled a booking to Cape Town for 250

people in direct response to the taxi violence.

He said investment had also been affected. "If we don't succeed in cracking down violence, then an economy of violence rather than an economy of growth is our destiny," Fick warned.

He said yesterday's violence had been beyond the control of taxi leaders. Last week's peace agreement had not filtered down to "ground level".

Morkel extended his condolences to the bereaved families. "I'll do anything to put a stop to this and if it means closing ranks again, we will."

A Golden Arrow spokeswoman expressed surprise that the company had not been approached yet. She called for "consultation and circumspection" in drawing up plans to end the violence.

Bus passengers pay a double fare after 4pm — an attempt by Golden Arrow to encourage the use of its transport outside peak hours. This means domestic workers will be hit hardest by the boycott.

In yesterday's attacks on taxis, a driver was killed by shots fired from another taxi in Philippi East, Lower Crossroads. A schoolgirl was wounded.

Later, a driver whose taxi came under fire sought refuge behind the Khayelitsha police station.

Road, Khayelitsha, yesterday. No one was injured in these incidents.

About midday, a wounded Codeta taxi operator was taken to the Site C rank in Khayelitsha by a private motorist, **ERIC NTABAZALIA** reports.

The taxi driver had been wounded in the hip.

The motorist said he had found the man on the road from Elsie's River.

The driver was taken to the Khayelitsha day hospital.

'We can't allow people to die over routes and ranks — communities are tired of this. We expect overwhelming support.'

SA Express plans to spread its wings

Patrick Wadula

332
200 31/7/96
BLACK-controlled airline SA Express was planning to expand its routes to include destinations in areas not covered by SA Airways.

CE Israel Skosana said yesterday the company was considering Phalaborwa, Hoedspruit and Pietersburg as possible routes in the north, and the airline, already servicing 12 routes including Richards Bay, Kimberley, Upington and Bloemfontein, was also looking at opportunities in other areas not tapped by SAA.

He said the infrastructure of the new airports at Pietersburg and Hoedspruit created possibilities for development of the tourism market in these areas. "However, we'll have to do a cost benefit analysis to see how viable these destinations would be," he said.

SAA did not fly to these areas, and SA Express intended to take advantage of the fact. But with SAA's existing routes it would be at the discretion of SAA to offer some of its short distance and smaller destinations to his airline.

SA Express — a joint venture between Thebe investments (51%) and SAA (49%) was launched last year to service small towns in SA.

SAA spokesman Leon Els said it was not clear what routes SA Express planned to secure from SAA.

"SA Express have not approached us yet. We are waiting to see their intentions and routes they have an interest in," he said.

Els said SAA still valued its domestic routes and would be introducing new cabin equipment and service procedures on domestic services from Thursday.

Taxi violence claims four lives as fragile accord breaks down

(332) 30 31/7/96
CAPE TOWN — At least four drivers were killed and a commuter injured in taxi violence in a number of areas on the Cape Peninsula yesterday.

This follows a fragile peace agreement struck at the weekend between the warring Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association when a compromise was reached over the use of various ranks and routes.

Yesterday, however, a taxi driver was killed after shots were fired at him from another taxi in Philippi East, Lower Crossroads at about 6.20am. A young school-girl was wounded in the attack.

In the second incident four hours later, a taxi driver sought refuge behind the Khayelitsha police station when his vehicle came under fire.

Police spokesman Sgt Vivienne Lentoor said the driver got into an unoccupied police vehicle and began returning fire at his attackers. Police believe he was killed by a bullet which ricocheted.

Police later arrested five people, three for public violence and two for attempted murder, near the Khayelitsha police station. They also confiscated six firearms, one of which was unlicensed.

One man was shot dead and another stabbed to death at the Bell-

ville taxi rank near Cape Town at 9am. Another two men were taken to hospital for stab wounds.

Two men were also stabbed at the Wynberg taxi rank and taken to hospital while the tyres of seven taxis at the rank were slashed.

Lentoor said police had also received reports of shots being fired at taxis in Borchers Quarry Road, Nyanga and in New Road, Khayelitsha yesterday, but no one was injured.

Meanwhile, Gauteng safety and security MEC Jessie Duarte and transport MEC Paul Mashatile visited Soweto's Baragwanath taxi rank yesterday to assess the situation following renewed violence at the weekend.

Surrounded by heavy security, Duarte said police presence had been stepped up at "hot spots" along the Old Potchefstroom Road to monitor taxi routes and ranks.

"Most violence happens along the routes where taxis are forced off the roads and passengers pulled out ... and since last night (Monday night) it's a little army. We've been pulling them (police) from every station," she said.

Violence broke out between the Soweto Taxi Service and the Soweto Taxi Association following the shooting of an STA driver. The incident was related to continuous conflict between the two associa-

tions over the use of a new rank in downtown Johannesburg.

The STS refused to operate on the same rank as the STA, claiming the STA was not recognised by the Johannesburg City Council.

In the weekend violence, six STA taxis were burnt and nine were damaged.

Mashatile said he wanted to create an atmosphere in which all taxi associations could operate. He instructed police to set up roadblocks to search for unlicensed firearms.

"We will enforce the roadblocks and patrolling as long as we think it is necessary. We will assess whether we need to move them later on," he said.

Police said transport had been severely disrupted since Saturday, with reports on Monday of a blue minibus loaded with men firing at random along the Old Potchefstroom and Mokwena roads in Pimville. They described the situation as tense.

Drivers told Sapa they were reluctant to resume work, fearing renewed attacks, but the Baragwanath taxi rank remained a hive of activity.

Police said they would oppose bail for four people arrested on charges of illegal possession of firearms in connection with Monday's violence. — Sapa.

Hospital seeks non-political name

Ingrid Salgado

(332) 30 31/7/96
JG STRLJDOM Hospital's name should be changed to reflect its geographic location in order to rid itself of the political connotation attached to being named after a former prime minister, according to the hospital's management.

In a submission to the Gauteng legislature's petitions and public participation standing committee, the hospital suggested it be renamed Auckland Park Hospital or Perth Road Hospital.

The committee, which started a round of public hearings on renaming Gauteng hospitals in Johannesburg yesterday, hopes to rename institutions based on

their physical location. Where possible, institutions would not be named after people. Names should stand without having to change as government changed, the committee said.

Other hospitals, including Coronation Hospital in Coronationville, Hillbrow Hospital and South Rand Hospital asked that their names remain unchanged since they referred to the hospitals' locations.

Management of Tara psychiatric hospital, the H Moross Centre also believed its name should be retained. The institution was named after its first medical superintendent Dr H Moross, who had laid the foundations for treat-

ing psychiatric patients in SA.

Management said the name Tara should at least be retained. Changing the name would remove the recognition the hospital had acquired over the past 50 years and incur unnecessary expense.

Nursing colleges urged the committee not to change their names yet since rationalisation of the colleges would involve name changes. Embarking on the process twice would be wasteful. Several health institutions said it could prove difficult to consult their respective communities about changing names.

Other institutions which could be renamed include HF Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria.

INTERIM LANDELIKE INISIATIEF VIR ONTWIKKELING

KOMITTEE LEDE

Isaac Dokter, Karoo

Ferdinand Engel, Genadendal

Moses Michéals, Melkhoutfontein

Gawie Snyders, McGregor

Stanley Julius, Karoo

Charlie Williams, George

Georgina Kastoor, Atlantis

Joseph Taylor, Ebenhaeser

Pieter Grove, Komaggas

George Cloete, Saron

Thami Cona, Zolani

~~1997~~

Wrenelle Ruiters, SALDRU
Ben van Staden, SALDRU
1996 Aug. - DEC

TRANSPORT - PRIVATE - GENERAL

Publica ~~SECTOR~~

Taxi factions 'patch up differences' after bloody conflict (332)

ANDREW SMITH
Staff Reporter

RIVAL Peninsula taxi factions Cata and Codeta say they have patched up their differences after the bloody taxi war broke out again this week, killing five people.

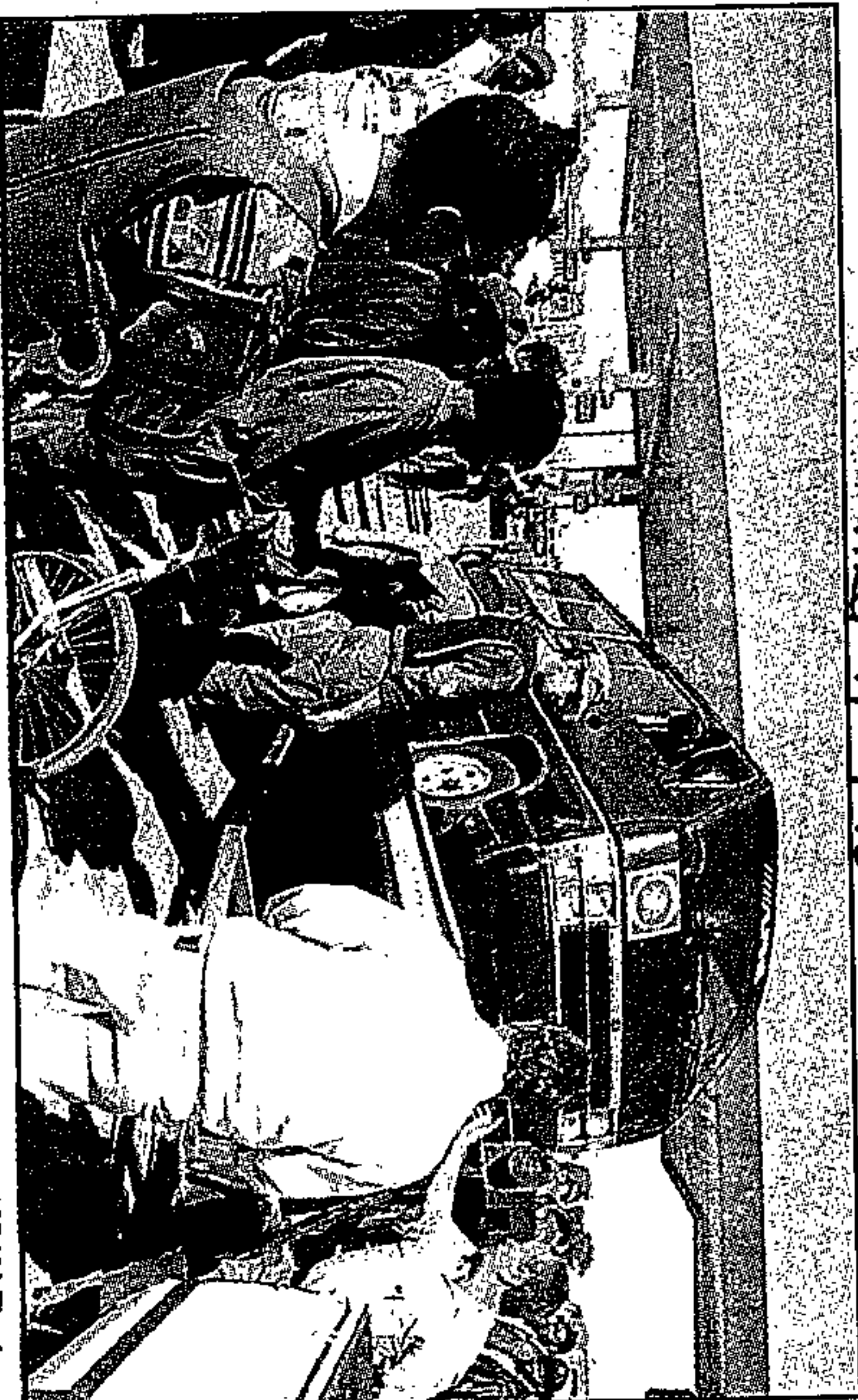
Taxi leaders are meeting Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and Police Minister Gerald Morkel today in an attempt to satisfy them the taxi violence has finally ended.

Cata and Codeta representatives said this week's violence had occurred because last week's peace accord was incomplete and needed additional discussion. They rejected the African National Congress's proposed boycott of all taxis.

Howard Dyubeni, vice-president of Codeta, said up to 90 percent of the problems had been ironed out. Steve Williams, head of Cata, said the few problems remaining were the cause of this week's renewed violence.

Attorney for Codeta Frans Coetzee said the meeting with the provincial ministers would simply be to tell them the agreement had been finalised.

Cata and Codeta representatives said lasting peace would not come from an ANC-led boycott but from a negotiated settlement supported by the ANC and



Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus.

CHECKPOINT: Police confiscate a taxi at the Khayelitsha rank after finding the engine and chassis numbers differed from those on police records.

police. Mr Dyubeni said should the supplementary negotiations be successful, he could guarantee peace between the two groups.

Meanwhile, taxi violence flared in

Wellington where the Makeweni taxi group prevented taxis from the Wellington Taxi Union from loading passengers. Shots were fired but nobody was injured.

● See page 6.

More deaths in 'battle of the taxis'

ASHLEY SMITH
Staff Reporter

IN a war characterised by violent confrontation and killings, taxi associations are battling for control of the taxi rank in Khayelitsha's Site B.

Drivers from the Eyethu taxi association, who have operated in cars between Mitchell's Plain and Khayelitsha since 1987, were attacked by Codeta drivers at the taxi rank earlier this week. An Eyethu taxi owner died in the ensuing battle.

Tomfana Magqaxolo died in a hail of bullets on Tuesday morning and 15 Eyethu taxis were damaged as Codeta drivers went on the rampage, in an apparent attempt to take over the Mitchell's Plain to Khayelitsha route.

In a bid to escape Codeta gunmen, Eyethu drivers said they spent the Tuesday night at the Mitchell's Plain taxi rank as the feared they would be putting their families in danger if they returned to their Khayelitsha homes.

Thembile Nduni, who is on the Eyethu executive committee, said that at 9 am on Tuesday, about 10 men in a Codeta taxi opened fire on a group of Eyethu drivers standing at the Khayelitsha taxi rank.

An hour after the incident, the police arrived on the scene and Mr Nduni said they asked some of the Eyethu drivers to accompany them to the police station, which is next to the taxi rank.

While some of the drivers were busy in the police station, he said about 50 Codeta taxis pulled up at the rank and

began shooting at the Eyethu drivers. In the gun battle that followed, Eyethu drivers ran for cover and Mr Magqaxolo headed for a police casspir, but was shot at while he was inside the vehicle.

Mr Nduni said intimidation and violence had "become the tools used by Codeta to gain a monopoly at the Khayelitsha taxi rank.

"Since 1993, Codeta has had their minds set on taking over," said another member of Eyethu's executive committee, who did not wish to be named.

According to Mr Nduni, there have been numerous incidents involving the two rival taxi organisations, but Eyethu did not report them to the police as they thought "Codeta would come right".

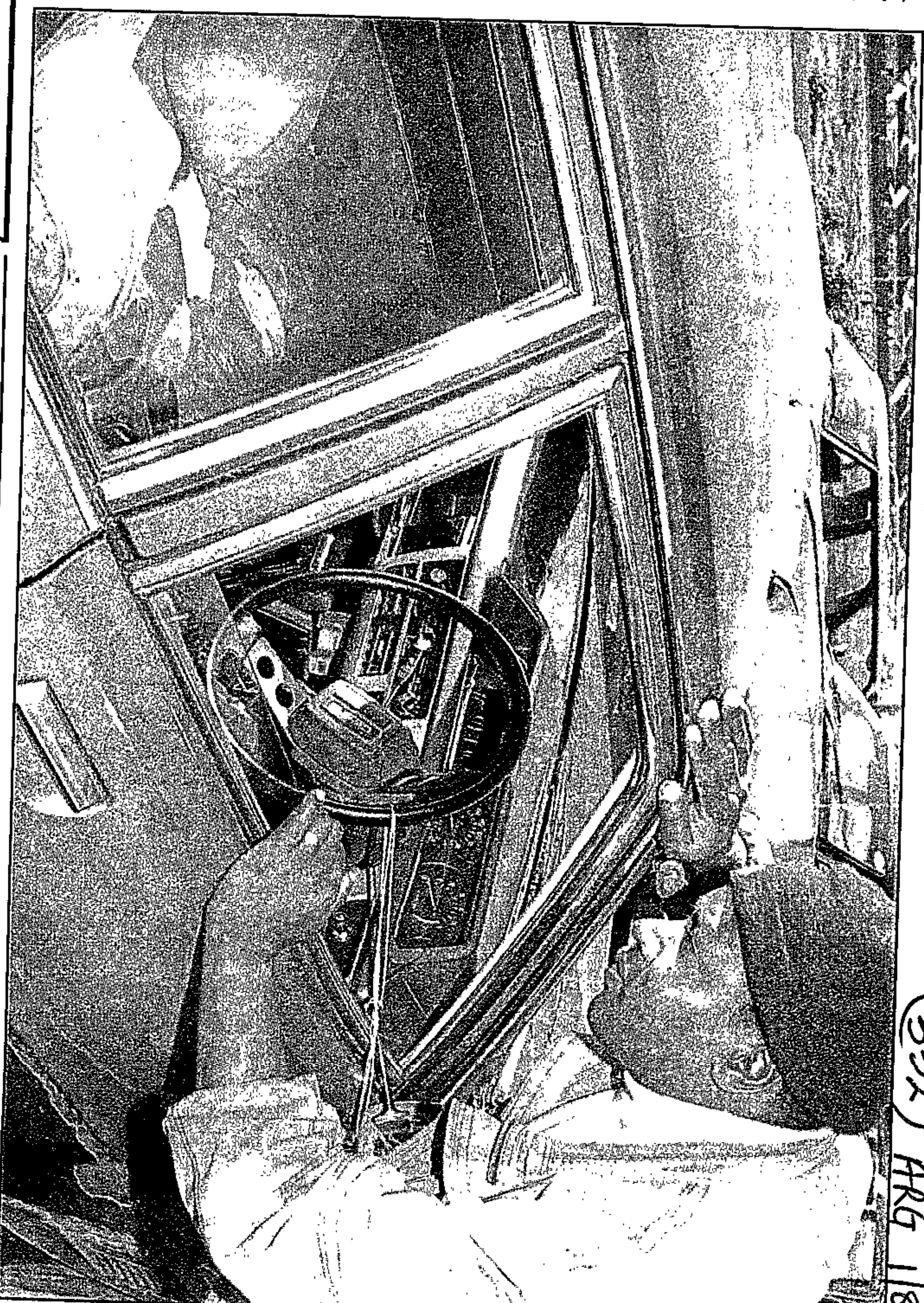
According to the Eyethu executive, two other drivers were killed earlier this year and another two injured, also in a gun battle in Khayelitsha.

Earlier reports from Codeta claimed it was Codeta and Cata that were involved in the gun battle at the taxi rank on Tuesday.

Reggie Malamba, general secretary of Codeta, said a Cata driver was killed after he tried to flee a shoot-out between the two groups.

Mr Malamba said the shoot-out occurred after Codeta members heard that Cata was loading passengers in Khayelitsha, which was supposed to be controlled by Codeta in terms of their agreement.

At least four drivers have reportedly been killed in the latest taxi violence.



Picture: BRENTON
GEACH, The Argus.

OUT OF ORDER:

Able Gigaba from the Eyethu taxi organisation examines his car, which he said was "deliberately sabotaged" by Codeta members during a recent gun-battle in Khayelitsha.

(332) ARG 1/8/96

Think again!

So you want to get out?



THERE are thousands of South Africans who may be planning to emigrate from this country. Or at least, they're talking about it. However, it is not so easy.... They could easily find they've jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. GARY VAN STADEN tells why

THE political turmoil which has reduced black townships across the country to battle-zones, and "no-go" areas, has had the effect of driving thousands of white South Africans into the nearest foreign embassy.

And then the problems REALLY begin.

Some foreign embassies are battling to cope with waiting-lists which run anything up to 18-months, embassy sources said this week. An apparent exception would be an applicant who has a university degree, and is an expert in computers — the rest have to wait.

While there are those who say that they will only leave by helicopter from the roof of a besieged embassy, if it comes to that, thousands of others are taking an advance flight. But, if the complexity, and high cost of the road ahead for these "chicken-runners" does not deter them, then nothing will.

THE following is a basic breakdown of what is required by whom, when, how, and where, as well as the strict Reserve Bank rules governing the moving of assets from South Africa.

The list — which is only a basic guide — has been compiled from embassy sources, international cartage organisations, foreign exchange officials in banks, and Reserve Bank publications.

A "shopping list" for the would-be chicken-runner would look something like this:

■ Select a country, and then visit the embassy, or other official representative of that country in South Africa.

■ If the choice rests with the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia or New Zealand, be prepared for a long wait — anything up to 18-months before the request is even processed.

Conditions of entry vary from country to country, but almost all of them demand the following:

A thorough health examination

South African Police — Australia has not accepted immigrants with a criminal record since the last prison ship docked, and no other country will either; character references and employment references are useful, although not many embassies demand them; proof of employment in the new country, is essential, and tax clearance is required by some countries. In any event the South African authorities will require such clearance. To progress even this far will involve a considerable amount of time, a lot of running around untangling red tape and not unsubstancial expense.

It gets worse.

NEXT in line is the selling of fixed property, paying-off any outstanding debts, arranging furniture removal taking Rido to the SPCA, and settling the lease on the car.

Timing is all important, according to the experts, when it comes to putting a house up for sale. It could be sold in a week — which means extra expense in finding accommodation until the green light comes to move — or it could remain on the market for 12 months.

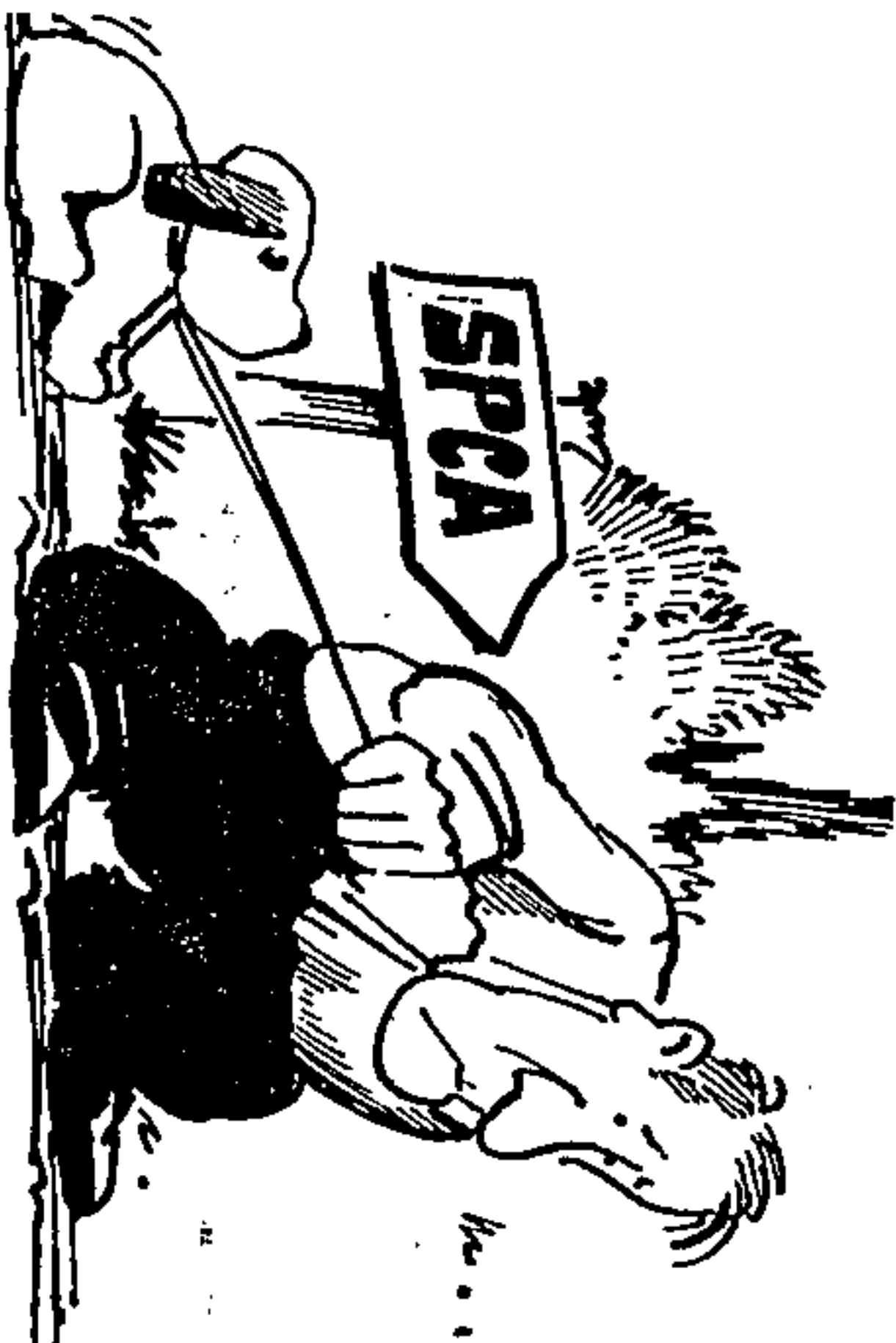
It would be wise to settle any outstanding lease or HP agreements in full as soon as possible, commercial bank sources said.

But, is it also wise to keep the old dining-room suite and send it over, or is it better to sell it, and buy a new one for the new overseas home?

The cost of furnishing a home from scratch, the generally low prices paid for used furniture in South Africa, and the poor value of the rand against other major currencies, would seem to make the cost of transporting it overseas worthwhile, according consultants who specialise in international removals.

But they also warned potential "chicken-runners" to exercise caution in this regard. "Stick to the big reputable firms," was the advice of one.

The fee — while not exactly bargain basement — involves consultation, the measurement of all articles, advice on what to leave behind, supervised packing and



supervision right to the dock-side.

The family motorcar can be included in the "container" package, but there is no chance of buying an expensive new car in the hope of speaking out some extra currency — ownership for a period of at least 12 months is required, or heavy duties will be imposed, a removals source said.

Nor will it do any good to rush out and buy Persian carpets, oil paintings or expensive jewels. Valuation certificates can be called for, and such items are included in a maximum family allowance of R20 000 for "household effects."

And while it may sound a little cruel, the expert advice on your pet is to take it to the SPCA and ask them to find a new home for the pooch or feline.

Transport costs, quarantine

costs — which in some countries can last six months — and feeding costs could amount to several thousand rands.

HAVING lived through all this, the prospective chicken-runner is already tending the grass on the other side, but a few nasty shocks are still in store.

■ **MAKE** arrangements to convert currency, buy airline tickets, get all documents in order, obtain the necessary injections and vaccinations, and tie up all loose ends, especially with the tax-man and exchange control regulations.

Different countries have varying health regulations, and the embassy concerned will be able to say what injections, vaccinations and certificates are necessary to avoid being placed in instant quarantine, or worse — being sent back on the first aircraft to Johannesburg.

The purchase of the airline tickets, validating travel documents where necessary, and making arrangements — either through a travel agent, or contact in the city of destination — for temporary accommodation, now follows.

And another huge chunk of accumulated capital goes into someone else's pocket.

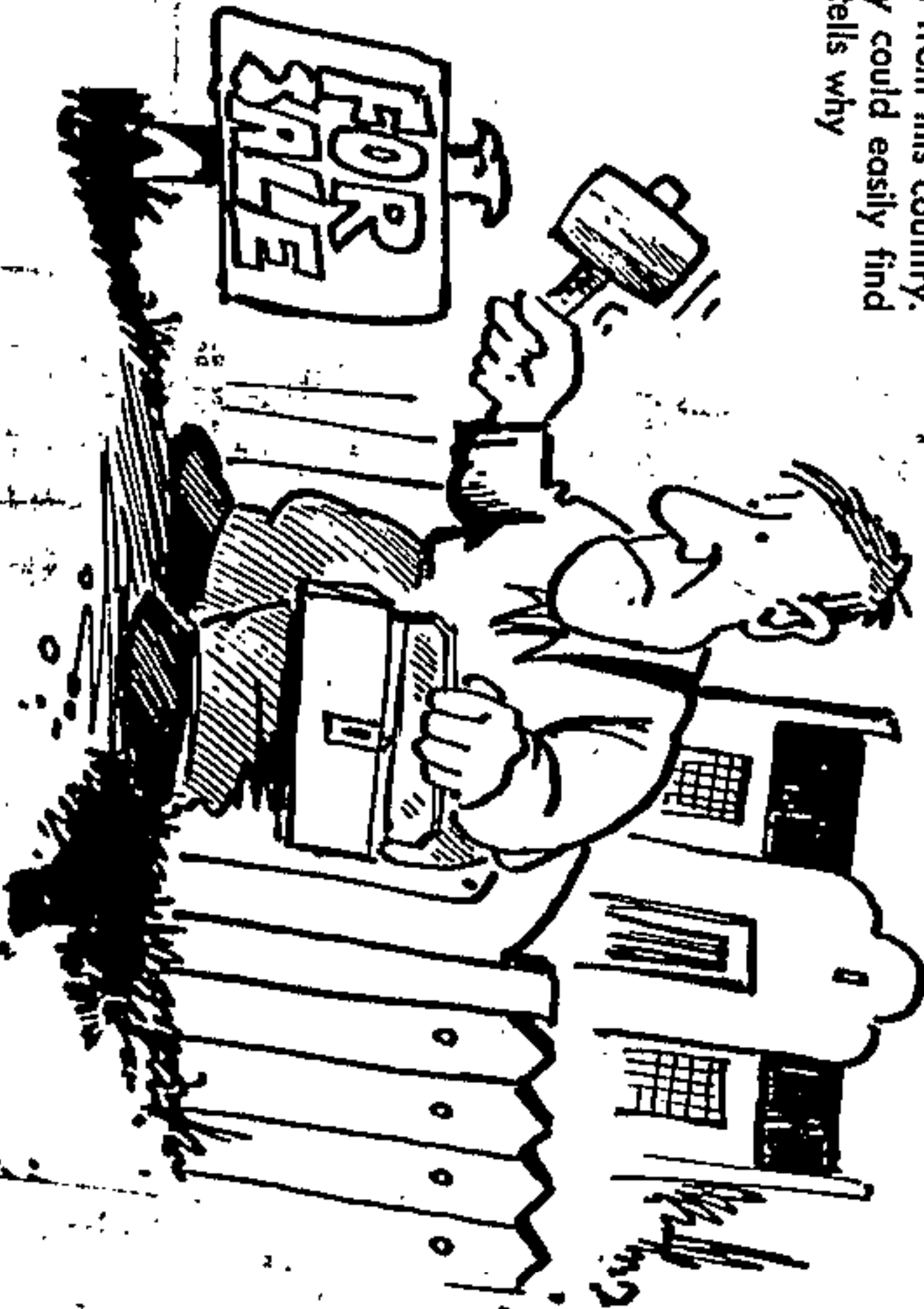
NOW comes the real shock. Once in possession of an airline ticket, accumulated cash assets can be converted into foreign currency.

The size of these assets will, of course, vary greatly, but a typical family may look something like this:

■ **SALE** of house (minus settling of outstanding bond): R80 000.

■ **SAVINGS**, converted investments etc, sale of some goods: R20 000.

■ **VALUE** of household ef-



fects shipped to new country, including Persian carpets, jewelry, art works etc: R20 000 (maximum allowed).

■ **TOTAL** assets: R120 000. Less:

■ **AIR** tickets, advance accommodation, settling of debts, removal costs (including car), tax payments, sundry expenses etc: R20 000.

■ **VALUE** of goods, furniture etc already shipped to new home: R20 000.

That leaves a hard cash balance of R80 000, the maximum permissible in this "typical family" case, as R20 000 worth of personal effects have already left the country.

All the experts in the field of emigration have warned that there are no short cuts, and no legal loop-holes. Buying new cars, Persian car-

pets or oil paintings will not work. The limit of R100 000 a chicken-runner is allowed to take out of the country is the LIMIT — no matter how that amount is made up.

According to the Reserve Bank "special circumstances" will be taken into consideration in any application for an increase in this amount — and when the Reserve Bank says "special" it means "very special". Most applications are refused. Under the new exchange control regulations the R100 000 is calculated in financial rands.

And if prospective "chicken runner" believes it is possible to fool the exchange control regulation enforcers, it would also be advisable to keep R20 000 on the side to pay the fine — or spend five years in jail.

Left with their R80 000 in

hard cash, the "typical family" used as an example above, would now exchange it for their new country's currency.

A total of R6 000 per adult and R3 000 per child under 12 may be converted at commercial rand rates which, for the "typical family" of four (two children under 12), would amount to R18 000.

At this week's rates that converts to about US\$ 100.

The remaining R62 000 must be converted at financial rand rates which was almost R5 to one US this week. It comes to roughly 12 200 making a grand total of 19 300 with which a family of four has to start a new life in a foreign country.

For these prices the grass would have to be a lot greener on the other side —

POLICE SEARCH RANK FOR WEAPONS

Taxi boycott plans go ahead

CT 1/8/96 (332)

RIVAL TAXI groups Cata and Codeta met again yesterday in a bid to resolve their dispute over ranks and routes which claimed four more lives on Tuesday. **CHRIS BATEMAN** and **JACKIE CAMERON** report.

THE warring taxi associations warned yesterday of increased "crime" if the provincial government and the ANC went ahead with plans to carry out a consumer boycott with the assistance of the police and defence force.

Police yesterday raided the Kuwait rank in Khayelitsha to search for weapons as both the ANC and regional government went ahead with their boycott plans.

The ANC exco sat for several hours last night to plan their intended boycott after an outcry over four deaths and the wounding of a schoolgirl on Tuesday. A provincial government "cabinet committee" arranged to convene today.

Premier Mr Hernus Kriel said the committee, Police MEC Mr Gerald Morkel, Tourism MEC Mr Lampie Fick and Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane had been given 30 days to make recommendations.

Early today the committee meets the Officer Commanding Western Province Command, General Dan Lamprecht and divisional Police Commissioner Leon Wessels to formulate a crackdown.

Kriel said the committee's terms of reference were to:

- Intensify action against taxi violence by the police, calling in the defence force to support them and close taxi ranks "if necessary".

- Discover the fundamental causes of the violence by talking to all parties.

- Table legislation to remove these causes.

Kriel added: "It is clear that the users of taxi services are fed up with the barbaric actions of some taxi operators."

The newly formed Western Cape Taxi Forum (representing all taxi organisations — not just Codeta and Cata), said the fighting had to be stopped "because it is besmirching the name of the entire industry".

The deputy chairman of the

forum, Mr Junaid Peters, described the impending civic boycott of taxis as "only fair — the commuters are the people whose lives are at stake".

Peters said law enforcement was a priority as police had allegedly "turned a blind eye" to Codeta and Cata offences in implementing existing legislation.

A spokesman for Golden Arrow Transport (buses) said the company had asked for an urgent explanatory meeting with Morkel.

The company is known to be concerned about possible attacks on its drivers and the implications this has for industrial action.

During 1992, when commuters last boycotted taxis, taxi-related thugs murdered four bus drivers.

ANC exco sources said the boycott — prompted by party branch calls — would be ready for launch "within 10 days".

Rival taxi organisations Cata and Codeta warned, at a joint press conference in the city, that crime would escalate if the boycott went ahead. In an 11th-hour meeting last night, Cata and Codeta representatives were thrashing out what they believed was a "small thing to rectify".

The organisations are fighting over who will control certain taxi

ranks, particularly in Nyanga.

Cata spokesman Mr Stephen Williams said: "The ANC have no right to call for a boycott. People are going to struggle for transport. This is a pain for us."

"Crime in Cape Town will be too high if people boycott the taxis. The ANC should rather help us find solutions," he said.

Mr Howard Dyubeni, of Codeta, which is more closely aligned to the ANC, said: "I object to the ANC's threatening to call for a boycott. I hope there will be an agreement by the time we see the ministers tomorrow."

Cata and Codeta representatives said peace agreements reached last week had not been kept because the news had not filtered to all its members.

Police yesterday raided Khayelitsha's Kuwait rank, and searched taxis for legal and illegal weapons. They want to test the weapons to see if they can be connected to certain crimes.

About 40 taxis were searched, but no firearms were seized.

Taxi drivers fled as police were cordoning off the area with two-metre-high barbed wire fences.

After the operation, roadblocks were set up and vehicles searched.



CT

1/8/96

332

RAID: Khayelitsha residents and taxi drivers look on as police search taxis for weapons. They seized one vehicle after noticing an irregularity with the serial number.

PICTURE: BENNY GOOL

ANC calls for boycott of Cape taxis

Sowetan 1/8/96 (332)

Even after the signing of a peace accord recently the killings continue

By Rafiq Rohan
Political Correspondent

THE African National Congress has called for a taxi boycott in the Western Cape to show opposition to the escalating bloodshed in the province.

The call has the support of the National Party and Democratic Party.

Despite the signing of a peace accord last week between feuding taxi associations, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Alliance, the killings have, in fact, escalated.

On Tuesday the violence reached new heights with five people killed and others injured.

Yesterday, drastic new steps were being taken to bring the fighting to an end, including calling in the army.

While the emergency measures were

being introduced, Western Cape premier Mr Hernus Kriel also called an urgent cabinet committee meeting to address the crisis. MECs Gerald Morkel, Leonard Ramatlakane and Lampie Fick head the committee charged with that task.

Immediate steps introduced are:

- Intensifying South African Police Service's action;
- Calling in the SA National Defence Force to support the police;
- Closing taxi ranks;
- Getting the interested parties together to discuss the crisis; and
- Introducing new legislation, such as a new process for licensing taxis.

Kriel said: "It is clear that the users of taxi services are fed up with the barbaric actions of some taxi operators."

The ANC said that a boycott of the taxis should be considered because it proved to be an "effective deterrent" to violence in the past.

NP opposes ANC call for Western Cape taxi boycott

JM
512

Ingrid Salgado

THE Western Cape ANC called on commuters yesterday to boycott taxis in several Cape Town areas from Monday to protest against escalating taxi violence, but the NP provincial government said it could result in further conflict and more deaths.

The boycott call comes as the Gauteng government took a hard line yesterday on last weekend's fighting between rival Soweto taxi associations. Gauteng public and urban transport director Lennox Magwaza promised "tough action" after a meeting with the bodies and said "the time for negotiating" was over.

Police would monitor flashpoints and increase visibility.

In Cape Town the ANC said it would meet the PAC, Azapo and civic bodies this afternoon to get support for the boycott. Provincial MP Cameron Dugmore said the party had made alternative transport arrangements for commuters and secured additional police and army security around flashpoints.

Sapa reports the NP provincial government said it could not support the boycott because it was an action "of civil disobedience". NP agriculture, planning and tourism MEC Lampie Fick said it could

lead to further conflict and, if emotions ran high, result in deaths.

Dugmore said the NP's stance appeared to contradict an earlier statement by NP safety and security MEC Gerald Morkel that the NP sympathised with the call for a boycott.

The call to boycott followed an ANC-SACP-Cosatu alliance meeting on continued fighting between rival taxi groups, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Alliance. Five people were killed on Tuesday despite a peace accord between the two associations. More than 20 people, including commuters, have been killed in taxi violence in the region this year.

Dugmore said Metrorail had given an undertaking to provide an additional train on the Khayelitsha route to ferry up to 3 000 extra commuters.

And Cape Town's major bus company, Golden Arrow, had agreed in principle to provide additional buses.

But Golden Arrow, in a statement yesterday, welcomed the provincial government's decision not to support the boycott. Action could intensify violence, it said.

The company would run its buses on "as frequent a schedule

BO 2/8/96 (332)

as possible", but its fleet was fully occupied during peak hours when no additional buses would be available to cope with extra demand. Many commuters would be stranded, it said.

Dugmore said the ANC recognised concerns about security measures — several bus drivers were killed during a 1992 taxi boycott in the area — but promised that security would be stepped up around trouble spots. The ANC had asked the police and the army to intensify efforts to confiscate illegal weapons.

He said the boycott would be suspended only when the two associations "unequivocally committed" themselves to lasting peace, agreed that no firearms — legal or illegal — would be carried on taxis, produced an acceptable proposal on routes, convened a mass meeting of drivers from both groups and convened a joint meeting of the associations and affected communities.

In Johannesburg, two rival groups, the Soweto Taxi Association and Soweto Taxi Service, agreed to merge their holding zones at the Baragwanath and Ferreira Street taxi ranks, based on the principle of "first come, first served" — irrespective of association membership.

Soweto's warring taxi bodies agree to end violence

(332) Star 2/8/96

Authorities say they will not tolerate any more trouble, promise tight security

By DEREK RODNEY
Crime Reporter

Rival Soweto taxi associations embroiled in a deadly dispute have agreed to end the month-long undeclared war in the area ... for now.

A meeting between the Greater Johannesburg metropolitan council, provincial transport and safety and security authorities, and the warring taxi associations, resulted in an agreement to revert to the status quo before July 1 - when the associations moved to a new taxi rank on the corner of Commissioner and Ferreira streets in Johannesburg.

Tit-for-tat violence has cost the lives of two drivers, the wounding of several drivers and passengers, and damage running into hundreds of thousands of rands since July 1, when the Soweto Taxi Service (STS) and the Soweto Taxi Association (STA) moved from the Kort Street taxi rank to Ferreira Street.

The meeting, attended by representatives from 23 taxi associations, also resulted in the reinstatement of the Greater Johannesburg Taxi Forum.

STS general secretary Alphus Malao described the meeting, chaired by provincial transport director Lennox Magwase, as a successful attempt to address the short-term problems besetting the local industry.

"After lengthy deliberation we agreed to jointly get our vehicles back on the road and the departments of safety and security and transport have promised to provide support to normalise the existing situation," Malao said.

STA vice-secretary Ernest Mogané said a 14-member monitoring committee consisting of representatives of all the role players would meet at 10am today to start planning resolutions.

The two associations will also be sharing the Ferreira Street taxi rank as an interim measure.

According to insiders, Gauteng Safety and Security Deputy Director-General Simon Sibeko made it clear that authorities would not tolerate any more violence in the taxi industry and promised a strong security presence along the disputed routes.

A report-back meeting will be held in Merafe Square, Soweto on Sunday at 10am.

Police, army ready for taxi boycott

(332) CT 2/8/96

CHRIS BATEMAN

DESPERATE efforts by warring taxi drivers to buy "peacemaking time" were rejected by both the ANC and the NP-led provincial government yesterday, as the political parties embarked on separate but tough crackdown strategies.

The ANC-led township commuter boycott of Codeta and Cata taxis starts on Monday as police, the army, Metro Rail and Golden Arrow buses brace themselves for the action.

The rival taxi groups broke their 28th successive peace pact last Friday, the longest lasting having come from a commuter boycott in 1992. It held for a month.

Cata chairman Mr Stephen Williams said of peace talks with Codeta yesterday: "We've walked a lot of kilometres together, we're almost there now."

Convenor of a committee appointed by the Western Cape government to look into the taxi violence, Tourism MEC Mr Lampie Fick, pledged protection by police and soldiers to taxi drivers and commuters in what he said would be an "expanded and focused" security operation.

Fick said that while the NP majority in the provincial government did not support the ANC-led boycott of taxis, brokering of agreements had "become impractical".

"The time for agreements has

passed — my committee's recommendations to the cabinet will not be subject to any taxi agreements."

Fick appealed to the ANC to call off its boycott, because "all the necessary (security) machinery is now in place to maintain peace", and said that it could spark further violence and retaliation by taxi operators.

"We've told the ANC and taxi operators that we don't support the boycott ... I think the ANC realises we cannot be part of contracting out our powers to support this kind of action."

Fick threatened to crack down with all the force at his disposal, on any "acts of civil disobedience" such as Wednesday's roadblocks by

taxi drivers in the Paarl region.

Lawyers had been briefed to look into regulations allowing the impounding of vehicles and charging a redemption fee of at least R500, and his committee had the "full co-operation of the provincial and Metropolitan traffic forces".

The intensified police action had already led to several firearms being confiscated.

ANC provincial secretary Mr James Ngculu said the ANC would brief the PAC and broad ANC alliance today.

Golden Arrow have agreed to run more buses but warned they would not tolerate guards or drop fares because of how this might be interpreted by taxi drivers.

'Taxi bodies (332) / Soweto 2/8/96 need unity'

By Themba Sepotokele

THE Gauteng ministry of public works and transport has urged the feuding Soweto Transport Services and the Soweto Taxi Association to form one body.

Briefing the media in Johannesburg yesterday, Gauteng director of public and urban transport Mr Lennox Magwaza said representatives of the STS and STA had agreed to bury the hatchet and work towards peace and stability in the industry.

"The officials of the feuding associations emphasised the need to stop all acts of violence and intimidation," Magwaza said.

He said a joint monitoring committee established during a meeting yesterday had resolved to check all the flashpoints, especially the troubled Baragwanath taxi rank.

Magwaza added that the National Taxi Task Team had also emphasised the need for peace and for Soweto to have one taxi association. "Although it will take time to combine all the associations to form one, we hope that peace will reign," he said.

Taxi violence erupted again in Soweto, especially along the Old Potchefstroom Road near Pimville, and several people were injured and minibus taxis burnt out. Hundreds of commuters were also stranded.

DIETER GERHARDT LANDS IN SA

6/0 PM 12/11/92
Own Correspondent

CAPE TOWN — Former Soviet spy and SA Navy commodore Dieter Gerhardt arrived in SA yesterday for the first time as a free man since his arrest in January 1983 on charges of high treason.

Gerhardt arrived at Jan Smuts at 9am on a Swissair flight from Basle, Switzerland, where he has lived since his release from Pretoria Central Prison two months ago.

On his arrival form Gerhardt stated his purpose of entry was business and that the duration of his stay would be eight days.

ANC spokesman Carl Niehaus said Gerhardt spent yesterday afternoon with "an old political prisoner friend" but declined to

name the former prisoner or his or her party affiliation.

The Home Affairs Department confirmed Gerhardt's arrival about seven hours after he had stepped off the plane, and after it had sifted through "thousands" of arrival forms.

Department spokesman Chris Pretorius said Gerhardt was an SA citizen and therefore entitled to the same rights of entry as any other citizen.

Niehaus said Gerhardt made the journey at his own volition and not at the request of the ANC.

He said there was no meeting planned with the ANC, but should he request

one the ANC would "welcome it".

"Mr Nelson Mandela has a full schedule, but I am sure he would somehow find time for it (a meeting)," Niehaus said.

He denied speculation that Gerhardt was being groomed for a defence portfolio, and said there had been "no considerations" on the matter.

It is believed Gerhardt is staying in Johannesburg with his brother, Parktown orthopaedic surgeon Michael Gerhardt.

An attempt by a reporter to contact him there yesterday afternoon by telephone was answered by a child who said Gerhardt was "not here at the moment, but he will be back later".

Soweto taxi war flares again, despite leaders' calls for peace

(332)
Aron 3/8/96

Andries Kwenaithe is one of only three leaders still alive from the 19 involved in the original association, writes **PETA KROST**

Andries Kwenaithe has attended a taxi driver's funeral just about every week for the past five years. This week he helped to bury another driver killed in the latest taxi war flare-up, which began in Soweto last weekend.

Kwenaithe is the chairman of Soweto Taxi Services (STS) and is one of only three leaders still alive from the 19 who were involved in the organisation in 1990.

Since then he has lost his wife, two children, and many friends and drivers.

Until 1990 there was peace in the Soweto taxi industry because there was only one association operating in the area.

"I believe violence will continue until the two taxi organisations join and have the same emblem on their vehicles," said Kwenaithe this week. "I am pleading with the Government to make this happen, so that the violence will stop - we all want peace."

Kwenaithe said he had always tried to keep the peace in the taxi industry.

When the leaders of the Soweto Taxi Association (STA) and the STS shook hands two weeks ago, he hoped the violence would end.

But last Saturday an STS taxi driver was shot dead, a passenger was wounded, and six minibus taxis were set alight and another nine damaged in renewed violence between the two Soweto organisations.

This week an STA driver was wounded and many more taxis were burnt.

This violence is believed to be the result of a power struggle over taxi routes

and ranks, longstanding feuds and a number of underlying reasons which "converged this week", said a senior official in the National Taxi Task Team.

For Kwenaithe, it was another reminder of how his wife and children were gunned down in the same senseless feud in October 1991.

At the time, he said, he was involved in trying to keep the peace between the established

taxi organisation and the group that broke away.

Two days before the attack on his family, leaders from both groups were shot. On the third evening, five combi-loads of people attacked his house.

"I sent my wife and children to the main bedroom, grabbed my shotgun and went out front because I thought it was better to die outside away from the family," he said.

But while he held his own against the gunfire outside, two

men broke through the back of his house and murdered his wife Jeminah, 17-year-old son Paulus, and daughter Pinky (16).

Since then Kwenaithe carries a gun wherever he goes. He sleeps with one next to him.

Kwenaithe was attracted to the taxi industry when he worked as a company driver in the early 1960s. By 1964 he had acquired taxi permits for his wife and himself and bought two cars.

His business grew and so did the industry in Soweto. The STA was formed in 1959. Until 1990

there was one association and its members paid R5 monthly fees.

For most of those years, Kwenaithe was chairman of the disciplinary committee, whose job it was to solve problems between drivers and passengers.

"Things changed after T J Magwe, STA's chairman, died in 1990," Kwenaithe said.

It was then that a group broke away from the STA and started their own "opposition association" because they "did not want to follow the new committee or pay fees".

Kwenaithe said his efforts to bring the rebels back into the original organisation proved unsuccessful.

After a legal wrangle, the Soweto Taxi Association changed its name to the Soweto Taxi Services, with the rebels taking the name of the STA.

"Ironically, the peace doves brought more violence to the taxi industry," Kwenaithe added.

Both organisations adopted similar emblems.

"The Government must now force the Soweto taxis to go back to the old emblem under one organisation," he said.

■ The STA leadership declined to be interviewed by the *Saturday Star*.

For Kwenaithe, it was another reminder of how his wife and children were gunned down in a senseless feud

Rival taxi bodies strike deal

(332)
An attempt to end the ongoing taxi violence in Soweto was made yesterday when two rival organisations reached agreement on the use of holding bays.

Gauteng public transport spokesman Anchen Schoeman said Soweto Taxi Services and the Soweto Taxi Association had come to a "first-come, first-load" agreement. The deal entails the joint use of holding bays, from where taxis are summoned to pick up passengers at taxi ranks. The parties agreed to a system in terms of which the first taxi to arrive at a holding bay will be the first to leave for the rank.

Officials of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council, the Gauteng safety and security department and the transport department would monitor the implementation. Schoeman said it was also the responsibility of taxi marshals to ensure smooth implementation of the agreement. — Sapa

See Page 7

Star 3/8/96

Council orders urgent report on taxis in Constantia

ARG. 6/8/96
332
Staff Reporter

AN urgent report on minibus taxis parking in Main Road, Constantia is to be compiled for the Southern Substructure Council "because of instability in the taxi industry".

Constantia councillor Joan Heming introduced a motion at last week's council meeting calling for the urgent report.

She told the council that there had been an increase in the number of minibus taxis using Main Road as a taxi rank. There are no formal minibus taxi ranks in Constantia.

"Because of the present instability in the taxi industry we need to know to which association these taxis are affiliated," Mrs Heming said.

She had been told by the Wynberg Police Forum that the increase in the number of taxis in Constantia had coincided with an increase in Constantia's crime rate. Mrs Heming's motion was accepted by the council.

Cape workers bear brunt of taxi boycott

(332) Star 6/8/96

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The ANC-led boycott of warring taxi factions began yesterday, leaving thousands of commuters stranded in some areas and causing havoc in others.

The ANC called last week on commuters to boycott the taxis of warring organisations Cata and Codeta, in an attempt to force the taxi groups to commit themselves to peace.

Taxi operations in Khayelitsha and Nyanga came to a stop yesterday morning while commuters waiting to catch their taxis to work milled in confusion around the rank.

ANC spokesman Brent Simons said: "The taxi boycott started off on a good note. Many commuters did not take the taxis to work. But after a while, Cata started to operate again and forced Codeta to work again, too".

According to Codeta spokesman Reggie Malimba, Codeta started to load passengers only when angry Khayelitsha commuters queued at the taxi ranks, demanding to be taken to work.

Simons said the ANC would not back down from the boycott until Cata and Codeta signed their peace agreement and called mass meeting to publicly commit themselves to peace.

Mixed response to taxi boycott call

CT 6/8/96

(332)

MELANIE GOSLING
STAFF WRITER

COMMUTERS in Khayelitsha queued for hours for buses as the ANC taxi boycott took effect and scores of taxis stood empty at ranks yesterday.

Drivers and owners, most of them members of Codeta, waited around the vehicles while commuters — including schoolchildren — queued at bus stops and crowded on to buses that were already full.

Said one taxi owner, who did not want to be named: "People are suffering because of the boycott. We are losing money and we are worried."

Most drivers were angry about the boycott, but said they did not want to risk taking passengers.

Taxi owner Mr Wiseman Ngesi said passengers had arrived at the ranks, but Codeta drivers and owners had turned them away.

"We are losing money, but Codeta respects what the ANC said — that people must boycott — so we didn't take any passengers," Ngesi said.

At Nyanga taxi ranks, used mainly by Cata members, the boycott was less effective. Although scores of taxis stood empty during the morning rush-hour, several were taking passengers.

Cata chairman Mr Simon Halmans, questioned at the Nyanga taxi rank, said he would not know the financial loss until the takings had been counted.

"Some people have been a bit fearful of the boycott, so they have stayed away or taken buses, but we are transporting others. The boycott is not really strong here in Nyanga," Halmans said.

Several commuters came up to him while the Cape Times was there and asked if it was safe to use the taxis. Halmans said it was.

Most of the people queueing for buses in Nyanga said they normally took taxis to work, but were afraid of trouble because of the boycott.

"We don't want to be on the taxis because maybe there will be shooting," said one.

In Bellville, where both Cata and Code-ta taxis operate, the boycott had no effect and all taxis were operating.

A pamphlet, put out by the ANC and



EMPTY: Drivers and owners, most of them members of Codeta, wander among empty taxis as the ANC taxi boycott takes effect in Khayelitsha.

PICTURE: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA

calling for all commuters to obey the boycott, said commuters had been victims of taxi violence long enough.

Peace attempts had failed and it was up to passengers to unite and bring the violence to an end by boycotting taxis for one day.

Mr Armand le Roux, a spokesman for the office of the MEC for Tourism, Mr Lampie Fick, said the Western Cape executive had agreed unanimously not to support the boycott.

"We've had negotiations with the taxi organisations and everything is in place to deal with any violence," Le Roux said.

"Police have stepped up their presence at flashpoints and are ready to put up road-blocks if need be."

A spokeswoman for the Golden Arrow Bus Company, Ms Jeanne Welsh, said a taxi boycott would be detrimental to all who relied on public transport.

The company did not have the capacity to fill the gap, she said. It had only 650 buses and, even when the taxis were running, these were full during peak hours.

"After peak hour, buses made extra trips and we cleared most of the commuters by about 8.30am," Welsh said.

Govt releases blueprint to revamp taxi industry

BD 7/8/96 (332)

Stephané Bothma

PRETORIA — About 40 000 illegal operators will be legalised and all associations registered as part of an attempt to return SA's R9bn-a-year taxi industry to viability.

Recommendations by the transport ministry's national taxi task team to formalise and structure the violence-plagued industry would be implemented on August 12 with the appointment of provincial registrars and a one-off opportunity for illegal operators to apply for permits, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj told reporters yesterday.

The task team, with members drawn from the industry and government, was set up 18 months ago to investigate problems and find solutions.

Government and the industry could not reach an agreement on certain labour relations issues, task team chairman Dipak Patel said. Discussions would continue.

Disputed proposals made by government representatives included instituting a disciplinary code for taxi owners, and penalties such as expulsion and suspension for not paying drivers basic salaries, failing to register, reckless driving, ill-treating passengers and using unserviceable taxis.

About half SA's estimated 90 000 minibus taxis were operated illegally, leading to uncontrolled competition, which bred problems such as violence.

Government would look at the feasibility of setting up a capital guarantee fund to indemnify finance houses against the possibility of taxi owners defaulting on repayments, Patel said.

According to the task team, a notional fund of R100m and a cash fund of R10m were required to cover all registered associations. However, Maharaj warned that implementing the recommendations would not automatically halt violence in the industry.

"Unfortunately a small group of people within the industry has a vested interest in violence, and has learnt to profit from violence." However, government was no longer prepared merely to sign a "peace pact".

The task team recommended that taxi associations register to create an industry structure making it easier for members to reap benefits, including fair and effective channelling of government assistance, pooling of resources, access to cheaper finance and profit from taxi petrol stations being ploughed back into the industry.

Continued on Page 2

Taxis (332)

Continued from Page 1

From later this month illegal operators could, with a six-month grace period, apply for permits. Illegal operators would be penalised to protect the interests of their legal counterparts.

Taxi offices run by industry members would be set up in each province to liaise with government, co-ordinate training and give administrative help.

However, the task team has been criticised by at least one taxi body. National Federated Taxi Organisation deputy president Victor Modise expressed dissatisfaction yesterday with

the task team's efforts, saying his organisation had "never been welcomed to the negotiation process."

□ Sapa reports that there are fears for the safety of six ANC members allegedly abducted by taxi drivers while handing out taxi boycott pamphlets at Nyanga East in Cape Town yesterday.

ANC leaders who met representatives of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Associations at Nyanga police station said the taxi body had promised to co-operate in finding the missing people. "They are sure their members are not going to kill our members," said Western Cape sport MEC Lerumo Kalake.

The ANC called for the boycott force feuding taxi factions to find non-violent solutions to their disputes.

Taxis will have to register in bid to regulate industry and end violence

By Anna Cox

The Government will begin regulating the taxi industry next week.

Provincial taxi offices, set up at a cost of R400 000 each year, will be opened around the country to register all associations and their members.

This was announced by Trans-

port Minister Mac Maharaj yesterday when the National Taxi Task Team handed a set of recommendations to him in Pretoria.

All taxi associations will be required to register to create a structure in which it would be easier for members to reap the benefits, said Maharaj.

Provincial taxi structures have

also been established to implement the recommendations and a registrar appointed in each province to register and assist associations.

The recommendations also included the legalisation of illegal taxi operators, who would be given six months to register.

An estimated 50% of minibuses

were running illegally, leading to uncontrolled competition which bred problems such as violence, said Maharaj.

"The once-off opportunity to legalise means that legal operators will be protected by the law on routes they operate. In future, law enforcement officers will penalise all illegal operators to pro-

tect the interests of legal operators," said Maharaj.

Registered members will be offered training and skills development at discounted costs.

The taxi task team, consisting of roleplayers and all three tiers of government, has been working on the recommendations since early 1995.

2 editions of Star on Women's Day



There's no bull from this team

CLASSIFIED

120 Personal

(332) Sowetan 7/8/96

Taxi men kidnap 7 from ANC

**Sowetan Correspondent
and Sapa**

ANGRY taxi drivers kidnapped seven African National Congress members at the Nyanga East taxi rank in Cape Town yesterday morning and drove off with their captives in minibus taxis.

There were fears for the safety of the abducted people and ANC leaders met representatives of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Associations at Nyanga police station and said Cata had promised to help find the missing people.

"We have been given an assurance nothing is going to happen to them. They are sure their members are not going to kill our members," said Western Cape MEC for sport Mr Lerumo Kalako.

The abducted ANC members had been handing out pamphlets to commuters to publicise the ANC's call for a boycott of taxis to pressure rival associations Cata and Codeta to end their taxi war.

Western Cape provincial transport minister Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, an ANC member, rushed to the Nyanga rank to negotiate with Cata for the release of the kidnapped people.

Senior police officials later accompanied Ramatlakane in his negotiations to free the seven ANC members.

At the time of going to press there was no sign of the kidnapped people.

Taxi boycott

Nyanga Police Commander Ganief Daniels confirmed that the ANC members had been handing out pamphlets yesterday morning at the taxi rank to call on passengers to support the ANC's call for a boycott.

Taxi drivers rushed at them and began beating them up and prevented them from handing out the pamphlets.

According to witnesses at the scene, the drivers bundled the seven ANC members into minibus taxis and sped off with them.

The ANC-led boycott of taxis began on Monday, leaving

thousands of commuters stranded in some areas and causing confusion and havoc in others.

ANC spokesman Mr Brent Simons said the ANC would not back down from the boycott until Cata and Codeta had signed a peace agreement and called a mass meeting with their members and the community to publicly commit themselves to peace.

"In the past, lack of communication resulted in more violence. Too many people have been killed and we aim now to prevent further loss of life," Simons said.

The taxi organisations said yesterday that they had sorted out their problems and a boycott was not necessary.

Cata president Mr Stephen Williams appealed to the ANC to call off the boycott, which he said could lead to greater violence and loss of life.

He said Cata drivers had chased and beaten the ANC members because they were "chasing people out of taxis", but denied they had been kidnapped.

Fear of conflict, but ANC stands firm on taxi boycott

ARG 8/8/96

(332)

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

THE African National Congress has decided to continue its Peninsula taxi boycott in spite of reports that the boycott has caused more taxi conflict and has confused commuters.

The boycott's main aim, to bring the warring taxi organisations Cata and Codeta closer to peace by signing a written agreement, has not succeeded.

Cata president Steven Williams indicated yesterday afternoon that he was "not will-

ing" to sign the agreement. "How many times must we sign a peace agreement, only to have Codeta break it?", he asked.

But spokesman Reggie Malimba said Codeta was willing to sign the agreement and was trying to get hold of Cata to arrange a meeting.

The ANC called for a community boycott of all taxis last week to force the warring taxi associations, Cata and Codeta, to sign an agreement and physically commit themselves to peace. But on the third day of the boycott yesterday, Cata and

Codeta reported that their taxis were running as usual.

Mr Malimba said yesterday: "I don't know what's going on. We are willing to stop the taxis, but commuters are insisting that we take them".

Mr Williams confirmed that Cata taxis were also operating as usual.

"But commuters are a little more scared than usual to take the taxis," he added.

Earlier this week six ANC members were allegedly abducted at Nyanga East taxi rank by members of Cata while

they were distributing leaflets publicising the boycott.

All six were later found, most of them badly beaten and requiring hospital treatment.

Afterwards, Mcebisi Skwatcha of the ANC's Safety and Security Council said the incident only reinforced the need for the taxi boycott, which would not be called off.

ANC spokesman Brent Simons said the ANC would not call off the boycott.

He added that the organisation did not consider it a failure.

Taxi union calls on drivers to register

M 8/8/96 (332)

Stephané Bothma

PRETORIA — SA's estimated 40 000 "illegal" minibus taxi drivers would be encouraged to obtain permits because a formalised industry was the only way to stop taxi violence, SA Taxi Drivers' Union spokesman Maurice Bokaba said yesterday.

The union, representing more than 30 000 drivers, has welcomed recommendations by the national taxi task team that taxi organisations be registered and the industry formalised.

There are currently an estimated 400 taxi organisations, between 110 000 and 140 000 minibus taxis and 90 000 operators in the country.

"The once-off opportunity given to taxi drivers to register from Monday to legalise themselves is the last chance. After that, drastic measures will be taken by the law enforcement agencies against drivers operating routes illegally," Bokaba said.

Bokaba expressed his regrets about a decision that labour relations recommendations made by the government component of the task team would not be implemented at the same time as the other recommendations.

The labour issues should have been prioritised by the task team on which

drivers were not represented, he said. "Introducing formal labour practices into the industry should have been part and parcel of the restructuring of the taxi industry." Drivers supported the labour-related recommendations.

These include a basic salary (not merely commission) for drivers, compulsory health funds and safety insurance and minimum wages. Other labour recommendations were that drivers would be punished for reckless driving, incurring traffic fines without informing their employers, ill-treatment of passengers, using unserviceable vehicles and deviating from routes specified by the employer.

The industry component of the task team did give all the labour-related proposals unconditional support.

This could only happen once the industry was formalised and returned to a profitability which would enable it to meet labour requirements.

Industry sources yesterday said that government should experience no problems with implementing the recommendations because of the large number of benefits to registered organisations and legal drivers including economic assistance from government.

Comment: Page 16

Taking the global route: The South African airways industry is looking to the international market for direction

Airport Company spreads its wings

Aspasia Karras

IN the year ending 1992/93, the parastatal that ran the nine state airports was operating at a considerable loss. Dirk Ackerman, the recently appointed managing director of the Airport Company formed in August 1993, is clear about the reason: "Traditional bureaucratic inefficiency."

Too many captains wanting to direct the ship resulted in three national departments — Transport, Public Enterprise and the former South African Police (SAP) — all with an unequivocal say in strategic decision-making, which was further complicated by the close ties with South African Airways (SAA).

Compounding the problem was the typical public sector approach to raising revenue, which saw the company balancing its budget via the traditional airport route, through landing fees, parking costs and terminal rent from airlines as well as from passenger-handling fees.

When the company tables its results in Cabinet this month, Ackerman claims they will not only improve on its 1994/95 pre-tax profit, but also completely dispel all memories of past inefficiency.

airline usage. More impressively, the Johannesburg International Airport figures show a 17% increase in passenger numbers and business from 66 new airlines.

Still, a recent international report shows that at the 5% growth rate in air travel, airports are being forced to question whether they are really geared to handle the traffic. The cost of inefficiency is more than \$15-billion a year, while the International Civil Aviation Organisation argues that over \$500-billion is needed to address the issue of safety and security, as well as to ensure adequate capacity.

Many airports internationally are being forced to re-examine their sources of revenue as well as the public sector link. The complete transformation of the British Airports Authority (BAA) has become the global icon of the potential success of outright consumerism in the airport industry.

The company is diversifying out of Heathrow and into bona fide shopping malls and international consultancy and partnerships. In fact, it is one of the loudest bidders to get a finger into the South African airports pie.

The South African picture looks like this: the company has first con-



(332) m+c (rmm) 8-15/8/96

The move to create the single Airport Company under one line of authority, the Department of Transport, has cut some of the red tape. But the fact that it is still a public company, accountable to a regulating committee, which imposes a flat rate on aeronautical charges that is 2% below inflation, is still a limiting factor.

"That should prove that we are not an usurious bunch of *moegoes* [idiots]," explains Ackerman. "The airlines should realise they are getting preferential rates; we are supporting them and they in turn should play along to ensure that they stimulate tourism."

Ackerman is also categorical that SAA does not benefit from any preferential treatment from the Airport Company. The relationship is based on a purely transparent business-customer relationship, he says. Ackerman believes the Department of Civil Aviation, in the Ministry for Public Enterprises, which controls SAA, should be accountable for whether the airline is playing fairly in the international market.

Nevertheless, new business with international airlines has ensured that both traffic and projected growth rates are increasing exponentially. Statistics show an average 8.2% increase in terms of total passenger growth this year and 7.3% growth in

centrated on an aviation master plan for the next 30 years that effectively maps and determines the infrastructural needs for the future, to be ready next month.

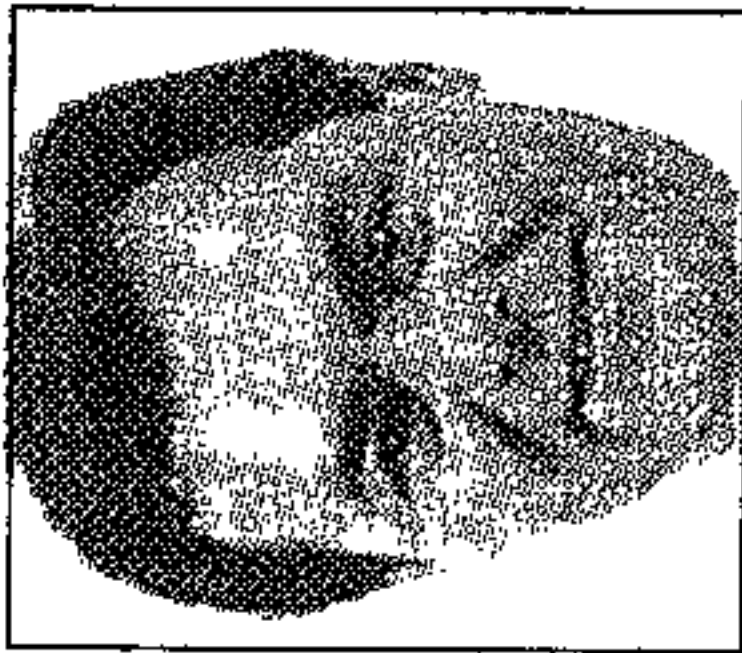
Next is a property development plan that will look at the commercial opportunities inherent in the airport, such as hotels, office blocks, freight parks and retail stores. Interest is already mounting as the Edgars clothing group, McDonald's and the Brazilian Coffee Shop all vie for space in what is clearly a viable proposal, a large and potentially trapped clientele.

"We're not a bunch of *nog schleppers*; we are planning strategically to deal with the future," asserts Ackerman.

The strategic plans have been facilitated by BAA along with international consultants, Fischer and McDonald. "We are an entrepreneurial

airports company, the vision is of giant shopping centres where aeroplanes park," concludes Ackerman.

The game plan may be set, but the question is, will the R12.9-billion earmarked for upgrading in the next five years do the job? La Merce, scheduled for opening in 2010 to replace the Durban airport, has the potential to blow the budget before the plans are even put into gear. The new Denver Airport, for instance, cost three times its original budget, while Hong Kong's new air-



No more inefficiency: Dirk Ackerman

Set to take off: 'The vision is of giant shopping centres where aeroplanes can park'

Virgin/Sun Air tie-up in the air

Tebello Radebe

THE stage is set for powerful foreign interests to play an increasingly dominant role in the domestic air travel industry — first came South African Airways' (SAA) link-up with Lufthansa, then the Comair-British Airways (BA) franchise deal, and now it is the Virgin Airlines and Sun Air talks.

Virgin Airlines' South African representative Caroline Ravenall confirmed that talks between British entrepreneur Richard Branson's Virgin Airways and Sun Air are under way to hammer out a deal with the domestic carrier ahead of Virgin's maiden flight from London to

Johannesburg on October 2. An equity deal between the two has not been ruled out "at this stage".

Meanwhile, Bert van der Linden, commercial director of Comair, the 50-year-old local private airline, announced a multi-million rand upgrading programme to launch a business-class service next month. This face-lift will tie up with the launch of Comair's franchise agreement with the global giant BA.

"We shall be repainting our aircraft and signage as well as changing our crew's uniforms and aircraft livery to those of BA."

In terms of the Comair/BA franchise agreement, Comair will be able to use BA's worldwide booking and

sales facilities, including the BA Executive Club — highly rated as one of the best frequent-flyer incentive systems in the world.

Thebe Investments' joint venture with SAA — SA Express together with Inter-Air, the independently owned carrier, are two of the other notable regional airlines on the domestic market. Both have also recently reported bold expansion plans.

SAA representative Leon Els described the forays of foreign players in the local market as part of an ongoing global trend similar to the "strong alliance" agreement SAA entered into with the German Airline Lufthansa last September.

port is projected to cost \$20-billion.

On the security front, a mass televised exercise last week, simulating the Cathay 747 crash, satisfied the airport authorities that the systems in place are more than adequate. It led Ackerman to muse that "it is a problem to provide security at a place where you have so many interests converging. The Airport Company is almost a virtual organisation, facilitating an environment — which is why we see ourselves creat-

ing partnerships for airport service excellence."

This brings us to the role of a strategic equity partner as a catalyst for transformation of parastatals. The Task Team on Airport Restructuring argued in November last year that this was the way to go, mainly because of the technology and skills transfers as well as the potential for a geographic, strategic alliance. The government and labour task team on transport is debating an option that

has already been taken by the Austrian, Danish and Dutch governments and is being planned in Mexico, Bolivia and Argentina.

Ackerman is happy to wait out the negotiations. "My philosophy for this country is that we have to work closely with labour and use our assets favourably in the interests of all."

The wait is certainly not harming the level of interest — more than 10 international companies are already banging at the door.

Honey industry faces ruin as 900-m bees die

(332) ARG 12/8/96
JOHANNESBURG. - About 900 million South African honeybees have died in a year, largely as a result of the meeting of incompatible cousins from different eco-zones.

Beekeepers told a Sunday newspaper that their industry faced partial collapse, with severe consequences for fruit farmers, flowers and trees.

The trouble began in the early 1990s when farmers moved entire colonies of Cape honeybees north from the temperate climatic zone they live in to the harsher interior to feed off plants that bloom at a different time of year.

They wandered into the hives of the more aggressive local African honeybee.

Differences in pheromone levels and breeding patterns threw the local bees into confusion, the Cape bees took over their hives but were then unable to survive themselves, and both colonies began dying off.

Beekeepers said the problem had been compounded by menacing new diseases imported along with foreign honey.

"Many experts consider the extermination of all bees living in infected areas to be the only way to save the industry," the newspaper said. - Reuter.

Gauteng vows to enforce deal after new taxi violence

(332) ARG 12/8/96
The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. - The Gauteng and Greater Johannesburg administrations say they will enforce a deal brokered between two rival Soweto taxi associations more vigorously after renewed violence claimed three lives in the past few days.

In addition, all drivers who fail to comply with the agreement clinched last Thursday will be denied operating rights.

The deal to end violence was reached between the Soweto Taxi Association (STA) and Soweto Taxi Services (STS) drivers. But a few hours later an STS driver was killed and on Saturday two more STS drivers were gunned down.

Soweto police spokesman Govindsamy Mariemuthoo said Themba Hlatwayo, 33, was shot in the back of the head by a passenger at the Fred Clark squatter camp in Soweto at 8pm on Thursday.

Police could not confirm the killing of two more STS drivers on Saturday.

Yesterday, provincial and Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (TMC) officials said drivers of the two organisations who failed to comply with the agreement would be refused operating rights.

"They would effectively be denied business opportunities," said TMC public transport committee chairman Peter Horwitz.

At a media briefing yesterday, Gauteng urban and public transport director Lennox Magwaza said some drivers were refusing to honour the agreement of "first come, first load".

Northern Metropolitan substructure councillor Sibusiso Buthelezi, who helped broker the agreement, said it would be enforced through security measures expected to be announced by public transport and roads MEC Paul Mashatile today.

HANSARD

tised six posts in the management echelon. This will enable the Department to make further progress in the relevant regard.

Taxi violence: people killed/injured (332)

553. Mr H A SMIT asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

(1) In (a) each month in 1995 and (b) each of the first four months of 1996, how many people (i) died and (ii) were injured in taxi violence attributed to the conflict (aa) between two taxi organisations in the Western Cape, the names of which have been furnished to his Department for the purpose of his reply, (bb) relating to the use of the Durban-Johannesburg and Durban-Nongoma routes, respectively, and (cc) within a certain taxi organisation in Durban, the name of which has been furnished to his Department for the purpose of his reply:

(2) whether the Government has taken or intends taking any steps to put an end to taxi violence; if not, why not; if so, what steps?

N989E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

(1) (a) (i) (aa)	Month	Killed
January	0	
February	0	
March	9	
April	1	
May	0	
June	0	
July	0	
August	1	
September	0	
October	0	
November	0	
December	0	
TOTAL	2	
(bb)	Month	Killed
January	6	
February	4	
March	14	
April	11	
May	21	
June	10	
July	8	

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2	2
3	3
2	2
3	3
0	0
<u>84</u>	
<i>Killed</i>	
11	
0	
2	
9	
<u>22</u>	
<i>Killed</i>	
6	
7	
12	
12	
<u>37</u>	
<i>Injured</i>	

HANSARD

February	0
March	29
April	33
TOTAL	76

(bb) Month	Injured
January	7
February	17
March	11
April	7
TOTAL	42

(1) (a) (i), (ii) (cc) These statistics required are included in (1)(a)(i) and (ii)(bb) above.

Note: The figures supplied under (1)(a)(i) and (ii)(bb) are for the province of KwaZulu-Natal. There are no statistics available for the different routes.

(2) Yes.

The following steps were taken by the Government in the battle against taxi violence:

- it initiated a taxi task team consisting of Non-Government Representatives to investigate the taxi industry;
- this task team was also appointed to act as mediator during taxi related disputes in an attempt to solve problems before violence erupts;
- taxi violence was declared a National Priority Crime in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal and as a result of this, a specialised police unit was formed to investigate taxi violence related cases;
- in co-operation with the specialised police unit, a taxi co-ordinator was appointed from police ranks at each police station affected by taxi-violence;
- discussions were held with the Attorney-General in Cape Town for a centralised court for taxi cases;
- provision has been made for overtime pay for SAPS ballistic experts, so that all seized firearms can be scientifically examined as soon as possible;
- computer-based data processing was implemented to centralise all relevant information;

— particulars of persons and vehicles involved in taxi violence are circulated to all police stations;

— Station Commissioners at affected stations are made co-responsible to support the Public Order Policing Service and Special Investigating Unit;

— all opportunities for negotiations are explored, but firm police action is taken when necessary;

— the Unit Priority Crime registered a project to investigate the ongoing violence within the taxi industry; and

— this unit utilises specialist investigators dedicated to the project. Numerous arrests have already been made and further arrests will be made in the very near future.

Legal aid scheme: implementation

554. Mr M F CASSIM asked the Minister of Justice:

- (1) Whether any extensive implementation of the legal aid scheme took place in the last calendar year; if not, why not; if so, (a) how many individuals were assisted and (b)(i) how many legal practitioners in private practice were engaged in this regard and (ii) at what cost in respect of each such practitioner;
- (2) whether he will make a statement on the (a) future or (b) long-term sustainability of the scheme?

N1004E

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE:

- (1) To answer the first part of the question, a short summary of the development of the legal aid system is necessary. In 1971 the Legal Aid Board implemented a *judicare* legal aid system countrywide. In terms of this system, indigent people who qualify for legal aid are referred to legal practitioners in private practice for the provision of the necessary legal services. These practitioners' fees and disbursements are paid by the Board in accordance with prescribed tariffs and subject to certain predetermined conditions. As time passed and as part of the Board's attempt to make legal services accessible to indigent persons, it has estab-

ANC suspends taxi boycott — (332) warns Cata, Codeta to make peace ARC 12/8/96

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

THE African National Congress is to suspend its Peninsula taxi boycott pending a meeting between rival taxi organisations Cata and Codeta to finalise the signing of a peace agreement.

ANC spokesman Cameron Dugmore said the Western Cape provincial executive committee had held a "bosberaad" at the weekend to assess the boycott and its results.

The taxi boycott was called two weeks ago to force Cata and Codeta to commit themselves to peace. During last week's boycott six ANC members were assaulted at the

Nyanga taxi rank while handing out leaflets about the boycott.

Mr Dugmore denied that the boycott had been a failure, saying thousands of commuters had heeded the boycott and had shown their anger at the taxi industry.

Previously the ANC said it would not call off the boycott until both sides had signed the agreement.

Mr Dugmore admitted that the suspended boycott was an act of concession on the part of the ANC.

"The ANC has compromised on the boycott to ensure that the peace process takes place as planned" he said.

He also said the boycott would be called off once an

agreement had been signed and taken to the community.

Cata and Codeta are to meet the ANC early this week to discuss their final agreement.

Mr Dugmore also condemned the behaviour last week of National Party provincial ministers Lampie Fick and Gerald Morkel over the taxi boycott.

He said Mr Fick's statement that a boycott was an act of civil disobedience was an attempt to undermine the ANC initiative to bring peace to the war-torn taxi industry.

"No lasting peace can be brought to the taxi industry unless there is clear regulation and policing," said Mr Dugmore.

Crawling into South Africa on a hope and a prayer Over the fence lies the land of milk and honey



Eric Mkhooza, an illegal immigrant who is prepared to work for R80 a month on a banana farm

PICS: SELLO MOTSEPE

Eric tries his luck in SA

ERIC Mkhooza is 28, has a wife and two children and is an illegal immigrant out to try his luck in South Africa.

In the war-ravaged Mozambique he had heard about the vast farms of the Eastern Transvaal, the roads where there are no land mines and that South Africans are "lazy"... they will not work for only a little money.

"There are lots of jobs here but in South Africa people want too much," he said.

He was arrested a day after he arrived to seek work at the farms

around Komatipoort, the border town where the majority of labourers are either illegal immigrants or staying in the country with temporary work permits.

"I will try to come here again. In my land there is no work.

"We have lots of energy, we can work hard for little," he said.

As far as Eric is concerned, working on a banana farm for R80 or R90 a month is no problem — he cannot see why SA workers want a minimum wage.

"I want to buy food for my children. In my country you cannot find

many things... that is why I must work here," he said. Meanwhile, Mozambicans are not the only ones trying to enter South Africa illegally via the Eastern Transvaal border. Hundreds of Somalis, Rwandese, Burundese and Ethiopians have been found entering the country illegally.

Dag Esperlande of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said many of these people traveled by ship to Maputo.

Many are stayaways and are deported there. They then make their way overland across Mozambique and eventually into South Africa.

By Sharon Chetty

THE DEPRESSION in the earth was fresh — not more than a few minutes old. And under the barbed wire coils lay hooked branches, ready to be hoisted as flimsy support so that the fence could be lifted up enough for a person to crawl under.

Our noisy approach in an SANDF Land-Rover had obviously scared off the person — yet another desperate Mozambican trying to enter South Africa... to them the land of milk and honey... a place with tarred roads, hospitals and work opportunities.

The 62 kilometre stretch of electric fencing separating the two countries is probably the most popular area of entry for Mozambicans coming illegally into South Africa.

According to Colonel Daan Lotter, Officer Commanding Group 33 in Nelspruit, the division responsible for the patrolling and maintenance of the fence, the majority of people crossing are job-seekers who want to get to Gauteng.

Migrants returning

Every night in January, groups of between 10 and 40 and once as many as 80 were caught crossing the fence — most were migrants returning for the start of the new work year. In the first 10 days, 3 163 immigrants were repatriated.

There have been instances where pregnant women have gone to the fence and ensured that they be caught so that they can get medical treatment on the South African side.

Since October 1992, when the rebel Renamo and the Frelimo government signed a ceasefire ending their civil war, people crossing into the country were no longer regarded as refugees but as illegal aliens.

Last year's election has resulted in relative stability in that country, effectively reducing any security threat from that side.

When the electric fence was erected in 1987, it was during PW Botha's "swart gevaar" era. Then Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrillas, with support from Frelimo, were a major threat.

That remote stretch often saw bloody confrontations between the then SADF and infiltrating cadres. But the tense times are over and with peace have come different priorities.

"Together with illegal aliens, gun trafficking, drug smuggling and cattle rustling are our major concerns," explained Colonel Lotter.

Now, when there are gunfights, it is with cattle rustlers, gun smugglers and armed guides who charge people to escort them across the fence.

Until 1990, the electric fence was switched on to "lethal mode", which meant a person would suffer an electric shock when in contact with the single live wire that runs through the barbed netting.

It still did not discourage hundreds of thousands from crossing — about 60 died in that period.

Now the setting is on "detect", which

alerts SADF control stations to activity. But the terrain is rough and responding to alarms is a time-consuming operation.

Every morning hundreds of crossing points are cleared away... only for SADF patrols to find identical set-ups within hours.

The crossing points are numerous and almost identical — we stopped counting after about 20 in less than five kilometres.

Pathways through the bush, shoes, sometimes a bag or a shirt are common signs of the numbers who traverse the area. Historically, regular movement of people between Mozambique and South Africa has been the norm.

When the borders between SA, Mozambique and Swaziland were drawn up by the colonialists, entire tribal areas were arbitrarily split.

But the people maintained contact and even during the Mozambican civil war, the Mlambo tribe was entitled to its own crossing point, so that the chiefs had easy access to their subjects.

During the Mozambican war, refugees were easily accommodated by people on the SA side — after all the NP government accepted the white Portuguese, so the black people fleeing that country were also entitled to refuge, was the thinking. But now the factors for moving have changed.

The drought in the area, poverty and lack of infrastructure have led to larger numbers of Mozambicans fleeing that country — and the numbers are threatening to overwhelm.

"We have as many complaints from black farmers about cattle rustling as we have from white farmers," explained Major Gerard Botha of the SANDF communications division.

Since the beginning of 1993, at least 3 000 head of cattle, valued at some R3,5 million have been stolen and taken across the border.

"In a country as devastated as Mozambique, where not much of the livestock survived, cattle are precious.

"It makes sense for the rustlers to steal these because they are valuable and fetch high prices," added Major Botha.

Illegal weapons

The majority of illegal weapons enter the country through that area. Often immigrants are found selling their wares to locals just to be able to buy a ticket to Johannesburg. "We have managed to bust gun running syndicates but the number of illegal weapons brought into the country is still high.

"We get about between four and 12 AK-47s a month," he added.

And at least some people are benefiting from the desperation of the Mozambicans. Avaricious guides charge to take people across the border — and they have varying rates. The first rate would be to take the person merely across the fence into South Africa.

Next up would be to guide them right up to infrastructure such as a taxi stop. The third package would include transport to a local destination.

And the fourth would be the luxury ticket — a hot meal and transport to the City of Gold, Johannesburg.

Airlines to resist 'high' fuel prices

BD 12/8/96

(332)

Reinie Booysen

AIRLINES operating in and out of SA are to present Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Penuell Maduna with evidence that they pay about 30% more for fuel in SA than at typical airports abroad — boosting oil company profits at the expense of air ticket prices.

A meeting with previous minister, Pik Botha, produced a commitment to take action against the oil companies, provided airlines could substantiate their case. Botha resigned in June, and the airlines will have to start afresh.

The airlines, represented by the Airlines Association of SA — which will also represent the International Air Transport Association — will argue that the higher ticket prices are inhibiting tourism, undermining its ability to generate foreign exchange for SA.

Fuel prices represent about a third of most airlines' operating expenses.

Airline officials said at the weekend the root cause of the high price structure at Johannesburg International Airport was Sasol's tight grip on that market. In terms of the secret supply agreement between Sasol and the rest of the oil industry, at least 80% of the 850-million litres of fuel supplied at

the airport has to be bought from the Natref refinery — in which Sasol has a 64% and Total a 36% interest — unless Natref cannot supply the full 80%.

In practice, because of the phenomenal growth in demand in recent years, Natref is now able to supply only about 60% of the airport's needs. The rest is railed up from refineries in Durban by other oil companies.

Sasol sets the price for its fuel at "in bond landed cost" (IBLC), based on the assumption that finished jet fuel is imported from Singapore and the Middle East. However, oil companies rarely import fuel from Singapore, the world's most expensive market.

After averaging a mix of posted and spot prices from three Singapore refineries and the Bahrain-Caltex refinery, the notional costs of moving the material to Durban are added, including shipping, insurance, wharfage and other fees. This produces the IBLC, to which Sasol adds an 11,695c/l pipeline charge to pump the fuel from Durban to Johannesburg. In truth, no jet fuel passes through state pipeline operator Petronet's pipeline from the coast.

The toll on fuel prices is heavy, es-

Continued on Page 2

Fuel prices

(332)

Continued from Page 1

pecially as the other oil companies — Total, BP, Shell, Caltex and Engen — use the same pricing structure for the fuel they rail up from Durban.

Johannesburg prices are now 25c/l to 30c/l above the levels at large European airports, with SAA near the bottom of this range in view of its immense volumes (it buys about 350-million litres a year at Johannesburg and 600-million litres nationwide).

According to one foreign airline fuel buyer, the average visiting airline paid about 100c/l to 105c/l at Johannesburg International last week, against 75c/l to 80c/l at London's Heathrow. While he acknowledged that Johannesburg prices were unlikely to drop as low as Heathrow's, he said the disparity was excessive. "We feel that import parity

pricing is outdated and retrogressive," the official said at the weekend.

A Sasol spokesman said Durban prices were "very much in line with international prices, confirming that the import parity pricing system gives fair wholesale market prices". Johannesburg International prices were higher than the international average for two reasons: "Firstly its location 600km from the coast necessitates, in the case of Natref, the cost of crude transportation from Durban and the further cost of transporting products from Natref to the airport. The pipeline charge is in fact a very real charge."

Johannesburg International did not enjoy the economies of scale Heathrow did. High quality requirements for jet fuel demanded dedicated and expensive logistical infrastructure. In addition, Sasol's "commercial, not secret, agreement with the other oil companies does not specify the prices they should charge the airlines".

BD 12/8/96

4 BUSINESS DAY, Monday, August 12 1996

Govt 'must not pussyfoot around taxis'

Nomavenda Mathiane

THE Gauteng public and urban transport department wanted strong action to be taken against the two Soweto taxi associations that flouted an agreement signed on August 1, resulting in a new outbreak of taxi violence, public and urban transport director Lennox Magwaza said yesterday.

Magwaza said in Johannesburg the Soweto Taxi Association and the Soweto Taxi Service signed an agreement to share

ranks and routes, use common bays and to operate on a first-come first-load basis.

However, on Friday, barely a week after the agreement had been signed, taxi violence erupted in Soweto resulting in the deaths of two drivers.

Magwaza said his department had made recommendations to Gauteng transport MEC Paul Mashatile on measures to be taken to deal with associations which violated the agreement.

Proposals sent to Mashatile

call on government to come out clearly on policy that will enforce law and order, and not to "pussyfoot with the taxi associations", Magwaza said.

He said both associations were guilty of reneging on the agreement, supporting his statement last week that a team monitoring progress of the agreement saw drivers from both associations openly defying it.

A monitoring committee chaired by Soweto resident Rev Jonathan Nyathi has been set up.



Q DATA

Q DATA LIMITED Registration number 78/02427/06

Announcement of year end results as at

Group income statement

	Audited 1996 R000	Audited 1995 R000	% Increase
Turnover	667 632	510 271	31
Operating income	66 414	45 465	46
Net interest received ..	1 542	1 003	
Income before taxation	67 956	46 468	46

Group balance sheet

	Audited 1996 R000	Audited 1995 R000
Capital employed		
Ordinary shareholders' interest ...	135 770	74 9
Outside shareholders' interest ...	1 212	3

We will enforce taxi agreement, says Gauteng administration after more

BY STUART KELLY

The Gauteng and Greater Johannesburg administrations say they will enforce a deal brokered between two rival Soweto taxi associations more vigorously after renewed violence is believed to have claimed three lives in the past few days.

In addition, all drivers who fail to comply with an agreement clinched on Thursday will be denied operating rights.

A deal to end violence be-

tween Soweto Taxi Association (STA) and Soweto Taxi Services (STS) drivers was clinched on Thursday afternoon.

But barely a few hours later, an STS driver was killed. Two more STS drivers were reportedly gunned down on Saturday.

Soweto police spokesman Superintendent Govindsamy Mariemuthoo said Themba Hlatwayo (33) was shot in the back of the head by a passenger at the Fred Clark squatter camp in Soweto at 8pm on Thursday.

The unidentified assailant fled in a blue minibus, he said.

Mariemuthoo could not confirm that two more drivers were killed on Saturday.

Yesterday, provincial and Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (TMC) officials said drivers from the two bodies who failed to comply with the agreement would be refused operating rights.

"They would effectively be denied business opportunities," said TMC public transport committee

chairman Peter Horwitz.

At a media briefing yesterday, Gauteng urban and public transport director Lennox Magwaza said some drivers were refusing to honour the agreement of "first come, first load" at the shared Baragwanath and Kort Street taxi ranks.

Northern Metropolitan Substructure councillor Sibuiso Buthelezi, who helped broker the agreement, said it would be enforced through security measures expected to be announced by

Public Transport and roads MEC Paul Mashatile today. "It is the agreement or nothing," he said.

In reaction to the shooting, Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte said she would ask the provincial transport department to close the Baragwanath and Kort Street taxi ranks.

Buthelezi said the security measures would be directed at the perpetrators and not the associations. The warring taxi associations have been at war for over a month, from the time the TMC closed a

rank in central Johannesburg which they had shared. As a recognised member of the Greater Johannesburg Taxi Forum, the council gave the STA permission to use the new ranks. But the STS, an unregistered splinter group, has been fighting for the same right.

In an effort to sort out the taxi situation as a whole, the TMC embarked on a series of meetings last month to bring all parties together to create a framework within which the industry could operate.

But Sapa reports that Mag-

deaths

waza said the government might look into other transport alternatives if taxis fail to deliver.

"We, as the government, have a duty to perform towards the commuters, not towards the taxi drivers who are the suppliers of the service," he said yesterday.

Magwaza said the government was preparing for the registering of taxi associations and drivers, starting in two weeks. He urged commuters to report problems to the Gauteng Taxi Initiative's toll-free number 0800-110-369.

Star 12/8/96

(332)

First steps taken to regulate (392) taxi industry in Western Cape

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

ARG 13/8/96

THE provincial government has taken the first steps towards regulating the crisis-ridden taxi industry.

Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane yesterday announced a new plan to legalise all pirate taxis.

The plan follows the recommendations of the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT), which submitted the results of its investigations to the national Minister of Transport, Mac Maharaj, and his provincial counterparts, last week.

The NTTT was established last year to investigate the problems facing the taxi industry.

Mr Ramatlakane said: "We need to regulate the industry so that we can control it."

The first part of this regulation process would focus primarily on the legalising of unlicensed operators.

The NTTT also made recommendations concerning formalisation, training and the establishment of taxi co-operatives.

The minister called on all taxi associations to register themselves and their members from now on.

He said he hoped the process of registering all taxi operators would be concluded within six months.

But representatives of the Western Cape Taxi Task Team (WCTTT) expressed reservations about the new plan.

Chairman Achmat Dyason said that although the WCTTT supported the legalising of illegal operators, he did not believe that proper consultation had taken place.

Although the WCTTT had been established to represent the Western Cape on the national task team, it had never been invited to take part, and had heard of the new legalisation initiative only when it was announced yesterday.

"We, as the industry, have not been consulted," he said.

Meter nearly expired on Gauteng taxi initiative

Bonile Ngqiyaza

THE Gauteng taxi initiative has expressed disappointment over the lack of response from taxi organisations in furnishing it with information before registration in two weeks' time.

Public transport and

roads consultant Knox Matjila said yesterday that while the initiative's inspectors were circulating, they were not getting co-operation.

Sapa reports that the information required included the number of registered and illegal taxis and drivers linked

to associations.

Illegal taxis had been promised a reprieve from prosecution if they registered before last month's deadline.

The response in the Vaal Triangle was 8% while 45% of East Rand and Johannesburg associations had responded.

(332)

Taxi warriors warned: peace or ranks close

Star 13/8/76

By DEREK RODNEY AND
SELLO MOTLHABAKWE

The Gauteng government has thrown down the gauntlet to warring taxi associations to heed agreements on the sharing of public facilities by Friday or face a total shutdown of major ranks.

Thousands of commuters and more than 30 taxi associations using the Baragwanath and Kort Street taxi ranks could face a total shutout if the provincial government's hardline approach, announced yesterday by Public Transport, Roads and Public Works MEC Paul Mashatile and Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte, is enforced.

A large contingent of police and SANDF personnel will be employed at identified flash-points from today to ensure that operators adhere to a "first come, first load" agreement at the Baragwanath and Kort Street ranks.

Mashatile said the government had been forced to pressure the bickering Soweto Taxi Association and Soweto Taxi Services after both parties had on several occasions failed to comply with agreements.

"Commuters, residents and drivers have been caught in the crossfire for more than two years now and we are aware of the imminent inconvenience to all parties should we enforce the closure, but we cannot continue to sign agreements which are not later adhered to," Mashatile said.

He added that the doors to his ministry would remain open for further negotiation.

Security personnel, drawn from the East Rand, Johannesburg and Pretoria, will maintain a strong presence at both ranks, as well as conduct roadblocks near Merafe Hostel, Kliptown, Old Potchefstroom Road and Old Jabalala's Garage.

The roadblocks have been authorised to search taxis for weapons and to check for identification papers, licences and the roadworthiness of vehicles.

Cata and Codeta set to sign peace agreement

ERIC NTABAZALILA

THE 29th peace agreement may be signed today between the two warring taxi associations, Cata and Codeta.

Both associations made verbal commitments yesterday to abide by the agreement, which specifies that Codeta will retain operations in Khayelitsha and that Cata will continue operating in Nyanga and Bellville.

In the event of any con-

CT 13/8/96
flict between the two associations, these ranks will immediately be closed and remain so until the conflict has been peacefully resolved.

Asked how they could assure the community that this is the last agreement to be signed, Mr Howard Dyubeni, a spokesperson for Codeta, said yesterday: "The past agreements had been done verbally and this one has been written down with us committing ourselves to it."

Johannesburg: rapid rail transit system

*28. Mr L D CHUENYANE asked the Minister of Transport:

Whether a decision has been taken on the introduction of a rapid rail transit system for Johannesburg; if not, why not; if so, what was the decision?

N996E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

This question is similar to a previous question asked on Wednesday, 1 March 1995.

The Department of Transport commissioned a feasibility study into a mass transit system for Johannesburg (the MASSTRAN study) which was completed in August 1991. A rapid rail transit system (which is basically a heavy rail system) was considered as one of four rail systems investigated, but—based on a combination of economic, financial, operational and environmental considerations—not recommended as a preferred alternative.

In the intervening years, the perspectives of the department have shifted and developed in new directions. We are currently looking at a total change in rail passenger transport policy which, while accepting the reality of tight budgetary constraints, seeks to make much more effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure and facilities.

The general framework which we wish to establish is as follows:

- regulated competition for public transport modes;
- ownership of rail infrastructure, rolling stock and land associated with rail reserves to be retained by the transport authority;
- rail operations to be based on operating and maintenance concessions, awarded by transport authorities at provincial or metropolitan level, based on a comprehensive and efficient transport plan;
- The ongoing development of Johannesburg's rail transit system will take place within this basic framework.

Minibus taxis: statistics (332)

*29. Mr Z D MNGUNI asked the Minister of Transport:†

Whether his Department has any statistics with regard to minibus taxis; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so (a) how many minibus taxis were registered in 1995 and (b)(i) how many minibus taxis are currently being operated illegally and (ii) in respect of what date is this information furnished?

N997E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(a) Yes, the total number of legal minibus taxis in the Public in 1995 was 73 323. This figure, however, excludes the number of legal minibus taxis of the former TBVC countries and self-governing territories. A legal minibus taxi in this case is defined as a minibus taxi with an operating permit and a valid certificate of fitness.

(b) (i) The total number of illegal minibus taxis is estimated to be approximately 50 000 for the Republic. This figure includes the minibus taxis of the former TBVC countries and self-governing territories.

(ii) For the period up to 31 December 1995.

New questions:**Gold smuggling**

*1. Mr J C N WAUGH asked the Minister for Safety and Security:†

(1) Whether any cases of gold smuggling were reported in the past financial year; if so, (a) how many and (b) what was the monetary value of the gold involved in such smuggling;

(2) whether the South African Police Service is currently undertaking the planning or execution of a strategy to combat such smuggling; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether he will make a statement on the matter?

N1086E

The DEPUTY MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

(1) Yes.

(a) 3 198

(b) R19 686 100

(2) Yes, the Diamond and Gold Branch of the SAPS is continuously investigating illegal gold smuggling. Conventional, as well as unconventional, methods of investigation are used. These investigations are carried out in close collaboration with mine security groups and great successes have been achieved.

(3) No.

Anti-corruption legislation

*2. Mr M F CASSIM asked the Minister of Justice:

(1) Whether, with reference to certain comments appearing in a certain newspaper, particulars of which have been furnished to his Department for the purpose of his reply, he intends introducing any anti-corruption legislation; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether such legislation will make provision for the (a) forfeiture of pension benefits and/or (b) exclusion of offenders from any public office or position of trust; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

N1087E

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE:

(1) Yes, legislation prepared by my Department has already been approved by Cabinet for introduction in Parliament during the 1996 session of Parliament. This legislation provides for, amongst other things, the establishment of special investigating units for the purpose of investigating serious malpractices or maladministration in connection with the administration of State institutions, State assets or public money, including the investigation of corruption in the criminal justice system, which includes the SA Police Service, Justice Department and Correctional Services. The legislation makes provision for the establishment of special tribunals which will be able to deal with cases arising out of such investigations.

(2) The legislation does not specially make provision for the forfeiture of pension benefits and/or the exclusion of offenders from any public office or position of trust. It does, however, confer on a Special Tribunal the power to adjudicate upon any

civil law dispute emanating from an investigation by a Special Investigating Unit, including the power to:

(a) issue suspension orders or interdicts on application by a Special Investigating Unit or any party concerned; and

(b) make any order which it deems appropriate so as to give effect to any ruling or decision by such Special Tribunal.

An opportunity to improve the Bill will be given during consideration of the Bill by the Standing Justice Committees of Parliament.

Fraudulent RDP congress

*3. Mr M J ELLIS asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

Whether an investigation has been undertaken into the allegedly fraudulent RDP congress initiated in April 1996 by a certain corporation, the name of which has been furnished to the South African Police Service for the purpose of his reply; if not, why not; if so (a) what amount was defrauded from delegates and (b) what progress has been made with the investigation?

N1088E

The DEPUTY MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

Yes.

A case of alleged fraud in connection with the above matter (John Vorster Square CAS 971/04/1996) is at present being investigated by the Commercial Crime component of the South African Police Service's Detective Service.

(a) It has been estimated that at present a loss of approximately R23 000 is involved in this case, but eventually the total involved could be as high as R1.5 million. It is impossible at this time to establish exactly how much money was lost specifically by prospective delegates.

(b) The investigation of the case is still at an early stage. Affidavits to establish whether crimes were committed and who committed them, as well as their possible extent, are still being obtained from witnesses throughout the country. The investigation is complicated further by the pending liquidation of the company involved.

Bara rank closure would be disaster, say hawkers

MOTLHALEFI MAHLABE

By MIKE MASIPA

"Too ghastly to contemplate."

That's what Baragwanath taxi rank fruit and vegetable hawker Nombulelo Nqayana thinks of the provincial government's threat to close the rank if feuding taxi association refused to stop fighting.

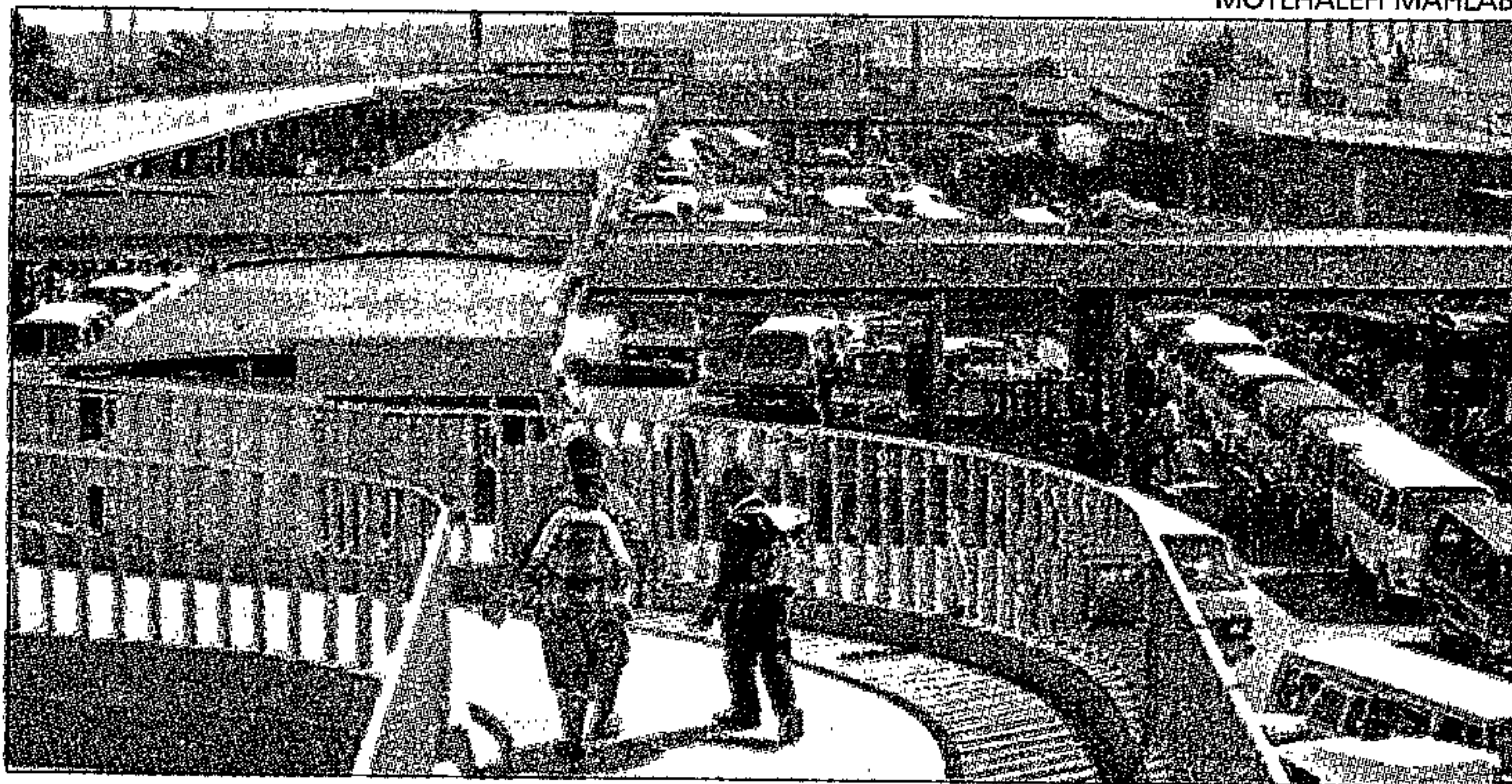
Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte has threatened to close the rank by Friday should the Soweto Taxi Association and Soweto Taxi Services fail to comply with a peace deal clinched last week.

Speaking while breastfeeding her 2-year-old son, Nqayana (37), who is a single mother, said the taxi rank was her only source of income.

"It would be a disaster not only for myself, but my other son, 11-year-old Elvi," she added.

Nqayana came to Johannesburg 16 years ago and has been working at the Baragwanath rank since 1984.

Life at the taxi rank went on as usual yesterday, with people oblivious to the fate that awaits the place should the notorious in-fighting amongst taxi operators break out again.



Time to leave ... a Baragwanath hospital patient crosses the bridge over the teeming taxi rank which could be closed on Friday should warring taxi associations fail to comply with a peace agreement.

(332) Star 14/8/96

Hawkers, selling everything from packets of peanuts to household appliances, sat with their wares waiting for the occasional customers to stop at their stalls.

A trickle of patients on crutches, both young and old, came into the rank from the hospital.

Nqayana said visitors to the hospital usually bought their last-

minute refreshments for patients from hawkers like herself.

And now the powers-that-be are contemplating closure.

"Where would such action leave thousands of commuters, and patients coming into and out of the hospital?" asks Nqayana.

Although the R10 she manages to make on a "good" day is

not enough, Nqayana said this was well augmented at weekends, when the rank usually teems with commuters from various parts of the township.

But she and her fellow traders are also scared of being caught in the crossfire when the "naughty" taxi operators start their war games all over again.

Taxi industry still simmering despite ultimatum from Duarte

(332) star 16/8/96
The threat to close the Baragwanath and Kort Street taxi ranks today has prompted Soweto's rival taxi organisations to get their houses in order and honour an agreement to implement a "first come, first load" system.

The system will come into effect again from Monday, but Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte warned the Soweto Taxi Association and Soweto Transport Services that any loss of life or damage to property "advertently or inadvertently" could still result in the

closure of the ranks.

Duarte earlier threatened to close the ranks if the two rival groups did not comply with an agreement to share the ranks and routes on a "first come, first load" basis.

The conflict has led to several deaths in past weeks.

■ In an unrelated incident, a North Rand policeman was shot and seriously wounded when two officers were fired upon after they stopped a minibus in the Sebenza area, north-east of Johannesburg. - Staff Reporter.

Taxi drivers kidnap ANC boycott pamphleteers

ANDREA BOTHA
Staff Reporter

ANGRY taxi drivers from the Cata taxi group today kidnapped six African National Congress members at the Nyanga East taxi rank and drove off with their captives in minibus taxis.

The abducted ANC members had been handing out pamphlets to commuters to publicise the ANC's call for a boycott of taxis to pressure rival taxi groups Cata and Codeta to end their taxi war.

Western Cape provincial minister Lerumo Kalako, an ANC member, rushed to the Nyanga rank to negotiate with Cata for the release of the kidnapped ANC members.

Senior police were to accompany Mr Kalako in his negotiations to free the seven ANC members, Nyanga police commander Ganief Daniels confirmed.

Negotiations between Mr Kalako, Cata

president Stephen Williams and police at Nyanga police station were still under way this afternoon.

Police Superintendent Splinters of the Priority Crime Unit and Mark Jansen of the independent Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee (Umac) also rushed to the rank to help in negotiations with Cata.

Cata taxi drivers blockaded the area surrounding the police station where the talks were taking place.

A crowd of about 150 angry Cata supporters gathered around the police station yelling: "Down with the ANC, Down with the ANC."

Cata members have denied they abducted the ANC members despite eyewitness accounts to the contrary.

Witnesses said Cata taxi drivers rushed at the ANC members as they were handing out pamphlets and began beating them up. According to some ANC members at the

scene, the Cata drivers bundled the six ANC members into minibus taxis and sped off with them.

The ANC-led boycott of warring taxi factions began yesterday, leaving thousands of commuters stranded in some areas and causing confusion and havoc in other areas where taxis were running as usual.

ANC spokesman Brent Simons said the ANC would not back down from the boycott until Cata and Codeta signed their peace agreement and called a mass meeting with their members and the community, to publicly commit themselves to peace.

But taxi organisations said they had sorted out their problems in the meantime and a taxi boycott was no longer needed.

Meanwhile, the Pan Africanist Congress has condemned the ANC's boycott.

PAC representative, Mzwabantu Gxokue said: "The PAC don't support the boycott because it will only cause more bloodshed."

FRAG 5/8/96 (332)

Star 20/8/96
Fears after Bara bus blocked
(48) (332)

STAFF REPORTER

Baragwanath Hospital has expressed fears that the taxi wars might seriously affect health services after 18 staff members were intimidated while being driven to work in a Gauteng health department bus on Friday morning.

The hospital has been sending out clearly marked clinic buses to collect staff members in Soweto for the past two weeks because of transport difficulties caused by the taxi wars, said PRO Hester Vorster. On Friday morning, the bus was blocked by a Toyota Cressida in Meadowlands Zone 9.

"Men got out of the car and told the driver he was not supposed to be ferrying people to work on the Meadowlands route," said a maternity nursing sister who lives in Meadowlands and did not want to be named. "People

were told to get out of the bus. They had to find their own way to work, and the bus came to the hospital empty," she said.

The matter was reported to police, MEC for Safety and Security Jessie Duarte and Transport MEC Paul Mashatile. The hospital has now stopped the service, fearing for the lives of its drivers.

Police taxi violence investigators said yesterday the incident would be investigated by Baragwanath police to establish for sure whether there was a link to any specific taxi association. If a link were established, specialist investigators would look into the latest allegations.

The rank and other flashpoints along the taxi routes are reported to be quiet, with no incidents being reported by the large security contingent deployed to monitor the situation.

Sowetan 20/8/96 (332)

Peace not on taximen's agenda

By Joe Mdhlela

RESEARCH by the South African Crime Overview has revealed that taxi warlords are a law unto themselves and that taxi hit squads will remain a feature designed to violently settle differences in the industry.

Coordinator of the publication Mr Maxwell Nemadzivhanani has also revealed that "no taxi organisation can claim to be pure when it comes to sponsoring taxi violence".

"Despite efforts by the government and the police to bring warring factions together and to stem the tide of violence, taxi war-

lords will always have a hidden agenda to sponsor violence for personal gain."

While the government was aware of the socio-economic problems, including the breakdown of social fabric, the report showed that taxi operators were not serious about peaceful coexistence.

Behind closed doors

"Surprisingly, when one gathers representatives of taxi organisations together, one leaves the meeting with a feeling of reassurance that these men are all angels and peace lovers.

"However, after smoking the peace pipe behind closed doors, they all leave only to dig trenches to bury each other."

Nemadzivhanani said the the public was tired of "crocodile tears from taxi operators" and that it was time that the law took its course in dealing with those who disobeyed it.

The report said the South African Police Services were in the process of tracking down 10 000 known criminals.

"In announcing the National Crime Prevention Strategies, George Fivas' plan was to clean the communities of the known criminals roaming the streets," he said.

Taxi feud claims one more life

(332)
Sowetan 20/8/96

By Josias Charle

THE taxi war in Mothotlung near Garankuwa claimed more victims when a man was shot dead and another had his minibus set alight.

Both incidents took place on Sunday and police are investigating possibilities of a link between the crimes.

Garankuwa murder and robbery unit spokesman Sergeant Aubrey Ruele confirmed yesterday that Mr Johannes Modikwe (51) of 1279 Mothotlung was shot dead by three men while he was visiting a friend at house number 435. Modikwe, who was in the company of three other men, had just parked his car in front of the house where he was visiting when three men who had been following him approached.

"All three had 9mm pistols and as they approached Modikwe, they produced firearms and pumped bullets into his body at close range. He died on the scene," Ruele said.

Ruele added that police later found 10 cartridges on the scene.

R20m fillip for Interair as five-year plan starts

Stephané Bothma

BD 21/8/96 (332)

INDEPENDENT regional carrier Interair had received a R20m financial injection with a recent change in shareholding, the airline announced.

Initiated by the airline's new shareholding status, a five-year growth strategy aimed at definite and sustainable growth had already been put into place, new chairman and CE Michael Ebeling said.

Ebeling and brother Rupert have joined the Interair board of directors, following their acquisition of 50% of the shareholding from former chairman Robert Schwartz.

Since being granted route licences in 1993, Interair has captured a number of niche markets. They currently operate flights between Johannesburg and Antananarivo in Madagascar, the Seychelles, Ndola in Zambia, Entebbe in Uganda and Reunion island.

The airline also obtained route licences for the Comores, Cameroon and Libreville and applications for a number of new routes had been submitted, Ebeling said.

An agreement had been signed to acquire three Boeing 727 aircraft from an international company. The aircraft will be phased into operation during the next three months.

He said the carrier's existing routes had been confirmed by the Civil Aviation directorate and Interair had recently been granted the status of full IATA membership.

Also, Interair had secured unilateral agreements of Lufthansa, Air France, British Airways, KLM and SAA and also had full interline and commercial agreements with Air Namibia, Comair and Air Madagascar.

"Interair is very well positioned to capture the African market and expand its operations to meet the strong need there is for an airline of its standing on the continent," he said.

Apart from increasing its frequencies into Africa, the growth plan would deliver convenience, superior service and the highest level of safety standards, Ebeling said. Interair aircraft could carry up to 6,5 tons of freight.

The airline had offices at all its destinations and employed 140 people.

Taxi drivers threaten to disrupt V&A Waterfront

JUDY DAMON
Staff Reporter

(332)
ARG 24/8/96
A GROUP of irate taxi drivers operating at the V&A Waterfront have threatened to disrupt the vibrant tourist venue if they are refused permission to continue operating in the area.

The threat was made when the Waterfront shuttle services were implemented to ensure a smoother pedestrian and traffic flow.

The minibus taxi drivers claim that they were unfairly "kicked out", in spite of having permits - which they claim allow them to operate in the area.

But under the new rules, only taxis with Waterfront permits would be allowed to operate there.

The chairman of the Peninsula Taxi Association Mr Ibrahim Albertus, said: "For so long we were operating at the Waterfront with their permission and now we are told to move out."

Mr Albertus said six years ago the

taxis were operating from the Marine Drive area, which brought visitors from the townships and Cape Flats to the Waterfront.

The drivers claim Waterfront security chief Duncan Cloete granted them a particular space from which to operate at the Waterfront.

One of the drivers said: "The shuttle services will only transport the tourists, but we bring in the most people who do not have transport to get here."

Waterfront public relations officer Maureen Thompson said the drivers had ordinary permits to operate, but did not have the Waterfront permits which were issued this week.

When the minibus taxi operators moved into the Waterfront their permits apparently included the Waterfront area.

The new rules are being implemented to regulate the number of taxis and shuttles operating in the area to stop congestion and parking problems said Ms Thompson.



AUSTRALIA

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Taxi truce for Vredehoek

By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

VREDEHOEK taxi drivers linked to the Peninsula Taxi Association have pledged not to assault or intimidate drivers of a non-aligned family taxi group which operates in the city bowl suburb.

The agreement, reached last week, is included in an out-of-court settlement which was brokered just hours before the Isaacs family was to have sought Supreme Court protection against alleged harassment by PTA drivers.

It also follows about 10 months of tension and claims by the PTA that the Isaacs taxis were not adhering to permit conditions.

The Isaacs family have allegedly been subjected to constant threats and even as-

sault and intimidation by their PTA rivals, according to Isaacs attorney Nazeem Ebrahim.

Last year, a member of the Isaacs family was allegedly "kidnapped" and taken to the taxi rank on top of Cape Town station, where he was beaten with a sjambok.

Since then, the Isaacs have been barred from the legal pick-up point on the corner of Darling and Corporation streets, says Ebrahim.

While undertaking not to harass the Isaacs' drivers or passengers, PTA drivers did not admit to any of the allegations against them.

A PTA spokeswoman denied its drivers were "thugs" and said they operated within the taxi group's rules.

Two die in taxi war revenge hit

ALT 26/8/96

(332)

Shooting at rank follows gun battle

The Argus Correspondent

PRETORIA - Two men have been shot dead and two people wounded, one critically, in the second shooting in four days in the taxi war in Pretoria.

Police spokesman Captain Dave Harrington said today that last night's incident, at a taxi rank at the corner of Dr Savage Road and Boom Street in the city, was believed to be in revenge after a shoot-out between rival groups in Marabastad on Thursday had left one man dead and another wounded.

In last night's incident, two men walked up to a parked car at the taxi rank at about 6.30 pm and began shooting at the occupants from about 5m away.

A man in the front passenger seat was killed instantly and the driver was also hit, dying shortly after arriving at H F Verwoerd Hospital.

The occupant of a bakkie parked behind the car returned fire, and the attackers fled.

A woman who tried to run away from the rank when the

shooting began was shot in the lower back in cross-fire. She was reported to be in a stable condition last night.

A third man was hit and was reported to be in a critical condition and undergoing surgery late last night.

The man who died on the scene was Jim Madou (38). His wife, who arrived at the rank shortly after the shooting, was told of his death by police.

The police have called on anyone with information about the incident to phone the investigating officer, Sergeant H K Smit, at 353 4796 during office hours.

Captain Harrington said the rank was being used by the Pretoria United Long Distance Taxi Association (Pulda), one of the organisations belonging to the Taxi Operators' Peace Initiative Conglomerated Association (Topica).

Thursday's shooting was believed to have been triggered after two associations formerly affiliated to Topica joined the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldia).

Two shot dead in Pretoria taxi war

In what appears to be an escalating taxi war in Pretoria, two men were shot dead last night and two people wounded, one critically, in the second shootout in four days.

A police spokesman said the incident, at the taxi rank at the corner of Dr Savage Road and Boom Street, was believed to be a revenge attack after the shootout between two rival taxi groups in Marabastad on Thursday which left one man dead and another wounded.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact Sergeant H K Smit at 353-4796 during office hours. - Pretoria Correspondent.

(332)

Stan
26/8/96

Taxi owners to elect executive committee

(332) *Samet*

By McKeed Kotlolo 27/8/96

THE Soshanguve Taxi Owners Association will hold elections for a new executive committee on Thursday.

The STO has not held elections in the past two years and this has reportedly caused numerous problems within the association itself as well as the taxi industry in the area.

The meeting will be held at the Soshanguve community hall which is adjacent to the Maluleke Spar Supermarket in Block H. It is scheduled to start at 10am.

The meeting will, among other issues, discuss the current taxi violence and the way forward. All members have been invited to attend.

Putco withdraws from Natal

(332) BD 27/8/96
DURBAN — Putco bus service would shut down its KwaZulu-Natal operations next month due to serious financial losses in the province over the past few years, MD Michael Oldam said yesterday.

"Putco Limited regrets to announce the closure of its strategic business unit in Durban and its withdrawal from KwaZulu-Natal," he said. The closure will affect 475 employees and more than 9-million commuters throughout the province.

Putco said it had suffered serious financial losses due to the rapidly decreasing number of passengers and the forced withdrawal of the service in certain areas. In March this year at least one Putco bus was gutted in Lindelani township north of Durban by protesters demanding the withdrawal of the service, apparently because it posed a threat to the taxi industry in the region. — Sapa.

Illegal trends in the taxi industry

(332)
ALMOST half of South Africa's minibus taxi industry is illegal and this has led to uncontrolled competition and other problems like violence, Gauteng public transport and roads MEC Paul Mashatile said yesterday.

Mashatile urged illegal taxi operators to apply for permits in order to contribute to the setting up of a healthy taxi industry.

His statement followed a summit on Friday and Saturday last week, attended by representatives of the taxi industry and the Department of Public Transport, Roads and Public Works.

The summit aimed to find solutions to the problems plaguing the taxi industry.

Mashatile said the national taxi task team had finalised its recommendations and presented them to Mincom, which consists of Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and the MECs responsible for provincial transport.

The Gauteng taxi initiative had identified 23 main issues within the taxi industry that needed to be addressed, Mashatile said.

The summit looked at all aspects regarding the regulation and control of the industry with special emphasis on new legislation in the form of a taxi Act.

Mashatile called for the formalisation of the industry with emphasis on the training of taxi operators and financial support.

He also called for the registration of taxi associations, saying this could help structure the industry properly.

Routes and ranks

The summit discussed conflict resolution mechanisms and called for a violence-free taxi industry.

Taxi associations countrywide have been plunged into violence over various issues that include routes and ranks. The violence has claimed hundreds of lives including taxi association executive committee members and innocent commuters.

Several moves had been tried to secure peace in the taxi industry and a number of so-called taxi hitmen had been arrested in the past — Sapa and Sowetan reporter.

Sowetan 28/8/96

VIOLENCE, economic uncertainty and apartheid made thousands of South Africans join the "second great trek" out of the country. In the past two years, however, exiles and ex-patriates have been coming back along with hundreds of immigrants from Eastern Europe. Weekend Argus Reporter DALE KNEEN Investigates.

'Brain drain' turns to gain

THE brain drain, the chicken run, rats leaving a sinking ship... it was a phenomenon that went by several names but it all described one thing: the 1980s, when thousands of skilled workers and new graduates packed their bags and left the country.

Virtually every day the media would record which top businessman, politician, academic or professional was emigrating.

The trend represented one of the greatest problems for local industry which had to contend with skill shortages. But new statistics show the tide has turned — despite claims by foreign embassies' officials that the flow of emigration applications remains steady.

The average rate of emigration among graduates between 1980 and 1990 was 4 500 a year — a quarter of all graduates from local universities.

Researchers for the Association of Personnel Services Organisation (Apso) believed the "brain drain" problem was greater than Department of Home Affairs emigration figures showed. These reflected only citizens applying to emigrate and thus was only a small part of the picture.

The figures did not show how many immigrants were returning home and nor did they show the thousands of skilled people who retained citizenship while working abroad.

A primary reason for many students fleeing South Africa, Apso researchers say, was their desire to evade national service.

Then came the political turmoil in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and floods of South Africans settled overseas.

By 1989 there were, for example, an estimated 40 000 South Africans living in Toronto, 30 000 in Los Angeles and 20 000 in Southern California.

They left the country in a steady flow and moved primarily to Europe, North America and Australia.

According to the Canadian, British and American embassies the trend does not appear to have changed in the 1990s. The head of migration at the Canadian Embassy, Mr Gerry Madden, said there had been a "steady flow" of applications since the mid-1980s.

Between 800 and 1 000 applications were processed by the Canadian embassy in Pretoria each year. About 10 percent of the applicants were not South African.

"Our office processes applications relatively quickly and so people from other places in the world — like Hong Kong — apply here.

"Some South Africans also apply to emigrate at embassies elsewhere in the world and

they are not included in the statistic," said Mr Madden.

A spokesman for the British Embassy said a rise in political turmoil in South Africa would spawn a spate of applications.

"Our figures have not really gone up or down over the past years. It has more or less been a steady flow," she said.

The foreign embassies may say as many people are making applications to leave South Africa, but Central Statistical Services figures show less than half the number of people who emigrated in 1987 left the country last year.

In 1987 11 174 people left the country, in 1988 another 7 767 departed. The next year there was a massive drop and only 4 911 left and even fewer, 4 722, left in 1990.

Immigration figures have shown an opposite trend. A total of 7 950 moved to South Africa in 1987, 10 400 in 1988, 11 270 in 1989 and 14 490 last year.

Many of the immigrants were people from Eastern Bloc countries who saw better opportunities in South Africa.

Up to 1 500 people are making applications to immigrate at the South African embassy in Vienna every day and queues formed outside the South African legation in Helsinki at times last year.

This increase in immigrants to South Africa brought in a variety of skilled professionals — from engineers to medical practitioners — which are in

short supply in this country.

Among the 8 409 people who immigrated to South Africa in the first half of last year 320 were engineers, 57 were doctors and 64 were educators. Most had businesses, too.

Central Statistical Services' Western Cape regional representative Mr Eddie Tiltman said of the 7 791 immigrants who arrived between January and July last year, 3 810 were economically active.

The increase in the immigration statistics was also due to a lot of expatriates returning from abroad. Most international removal companies said about 30 percent of people came back.

Stuttafords Van Lines director Mr Dave Bradford said this statistic was not unusual and that the percentage of emigrants returning had remained stable for many years.

"I don't think there has been a sudden flood of people coming back, just the usual number of people who are unable to adjust to the circumstances overseas," he said.

Mr Bradford said it was "very difficult to make it abroad" as they had to leave most of their assets behind and "try make it from scratch".

Other people simply decided they missed South Africa — like cardiac surgeon Dr Francis Hitchcock, who emigrated to the Netherlands 14 years ago. Dr Hitchcock was a member of Professor Chris Barnard's original heart team and

assisted in the revolutionary transplant operation on Mr Louis Washkansky.

In 1976, he moved with his wife Marie and four children to Utrecht, where he started a paediatric heart unit at the Wilhelmina Children's Home.

After returning to South Africa last year, Dr Hitchcock said: "It's good to be back. I have no regrets."

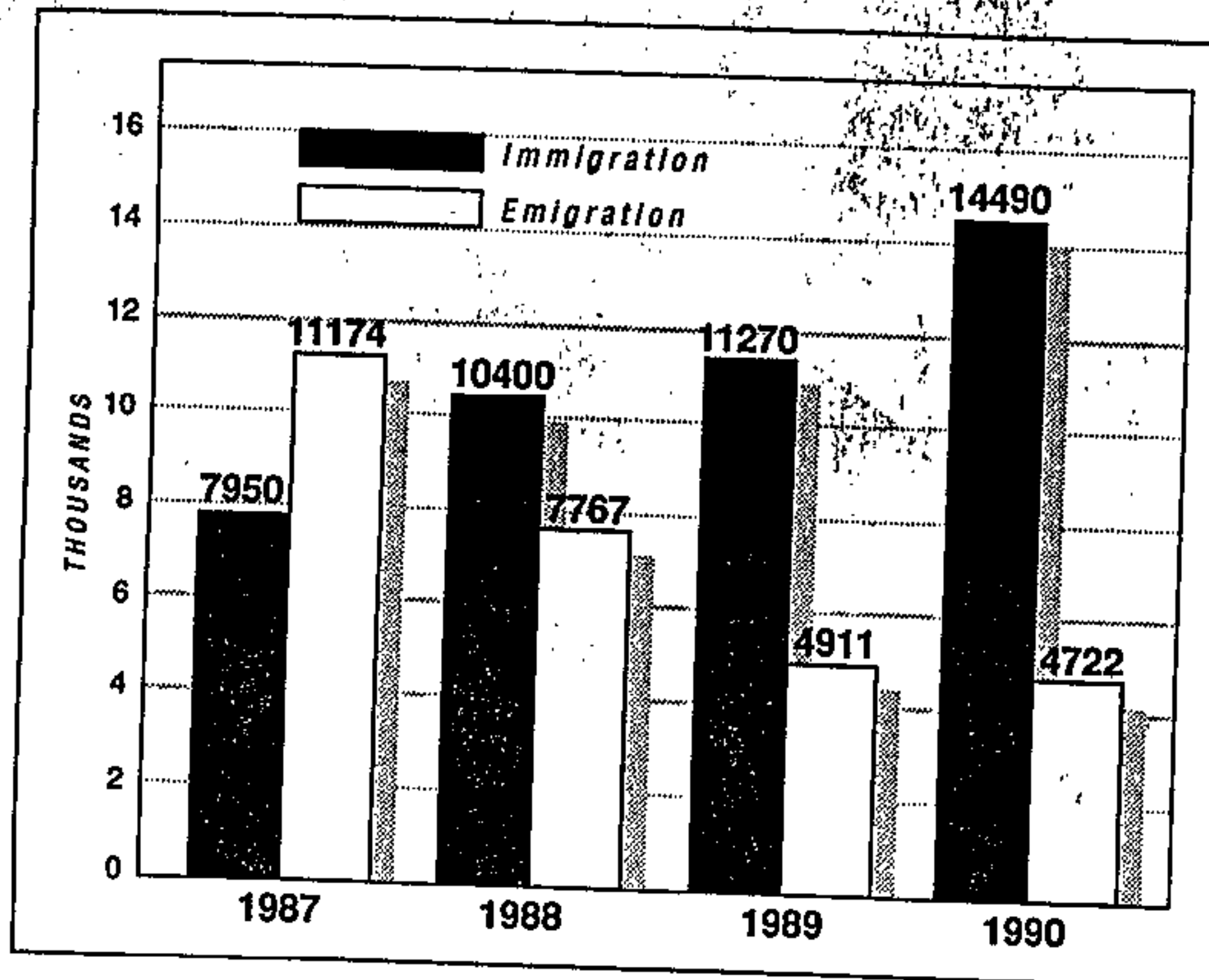
Though he left under totally different circumstances, former Eastern Cape newspaper editor Mr Donald Woods has said he would like to return to South Africa soon.

Mr Woods, who fled South Africa while under a banning order shortly after the death of Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko in police custody, said he hoped to work in South African television or radio.

He was one of many people optimistic about the country's future. "I'm convinced the reform process is irreversible, but the main problems to tackle are housing, education, poverty and unemployment," Mr Woods said.

Hansard statistics show 51 550 people entered South Africa illegally in 1989, a figure which only represents people who were caught and deported. The figure for illegal immigrants residing in South Africa is expected to be far greater.

Personnel agents say the return of skilled people is a welcome boost to the economy, but finding jobs for unskilled people remains a major challenge.



CHANGING TIMES: Figures from Central Statistical Services illustrate the "brain gain" trend: the number of people emigrating declined at the same time that more immigrants arrived.

Graphic: BOB GRIERSON, Weekend Argus.

Duduza taxi feud continues

Sowetan
By Dan Fuphe

THREE people, among them a Duduza, Nigel, taxi driver, were seriously injured when a fight broke out over routes between members of the Duduza Taxi Association (DTA) and the Brakpan Taxi Association (BTA) yesterday morning.

Those injured in the shootout included DTA taxi driver Mr Bafana Mchube (25) and passengers Mr Daniel Tsotetsi and Ms Margaret Booi. Mchube was rushed to the Glynwood Clinic in Benoni.

According to Duduza deputy president of the South African National Civic Organisation Mr Sphiwo Mhlambi, the shooting was a culmination of a long simmering

feud between the two taxi groups.

"The feud which started in February this year has impacted negatively on our communities, especially scholars and nurses who commute daily between the two townships," Mhlambi said.

Community attempts

Mhlambi told *Sowetan* that attempts to resolve the taxi violence peacefully resulted in the community staging a mass stay-away on August 12.

He criticised the Tsakane branch of Sanco for their failure and apparent reluctance to meaningfully mend the dispute by bringing the two warring parties together in an attempt to end the feud.

Chairman of the BTA Mr BP Simelane condemned the recent shootings.

"As early as Friday, one of our drivers Mr Siphio Dlamini (25) was killed by unknown persons in what we can only assume was taxi violence.

"Like all peace loving business people, we are against the use of violence as a means of achieving our objectives," Simelane said.

He called on passengers, taxi groupings and all political structures to be calm.

Captain Abel Coetzee, of the Police Public Order Unit in Dunnottar, confirmed the shootings but said the Police Taxi Task group was monitoring the situation.



President Lucas Mangope ... soldiers tried to overthrow him.

Coup bid soldiers sentenced

EIGHT of the rebel soldiers involved in the abortive coup in Bophuthatswana last year yesterday received sentences varying from seven to eight-and-a-half years' jail.

The sentences, for high treason, were handed down by Mr Justice M W Friedman in the Bophuthatswana Supreme Court.

In all, 142 members of the Bophuthatswana National Security Unit face sentence, 125 having been convicted of high treason and 17 of terrorism under the Internal Security Act.

Sentencing in this mammoth treason trial, which began in April, may last until tomorrow.

Living in fear of warlords

SOWETAN Correspondent

MR Amon Ngcobo (48) is one of the thousands of refugees thrown up by the political violence.

In 1986 Ngcobo lost a fulltime job. Since then he has been coming into central Durban almost daily looking for temporary jobs to help his wife and four children.

He has been living in Lindelani, north of Durban, since 1970.

Two Thursday ago, on returning from a fruitless work-seeking venture, he and two other men were confronted by a gang of six men as they stepped off a bus at Richmond Farm.

"They said 'what are you?' I said 'I am nothing'. They said 'you are a comrade' and shot me."

Ngcobo spent the next week in King Edward VIII Hospital, Durban.

He said he counted 52

other patients there recovering from gunshot wounds inflicted in the political violence.

Ngcobo, who is the brother of a senior KwaZulu political leader, has not been back to his Lindelani home.

He is now moving away as he fears the men will get hold of him again.

"A lot of people are making trouble for nothing. It is not right to kill other people."

His wife does not

know what has happened to him. The night he was released from hospital he slept on Durban Station.

Ngcobo was highly critical of the warlords who have set themselves up as undisputed kings in the squatter settlements north of Durban.

Hobo

He said the man who ran his Lindelani area moved in five years ago as a hobo, but was today a very rich man.

He had a police force who demanded R5 from people every month. If they did not pay they are

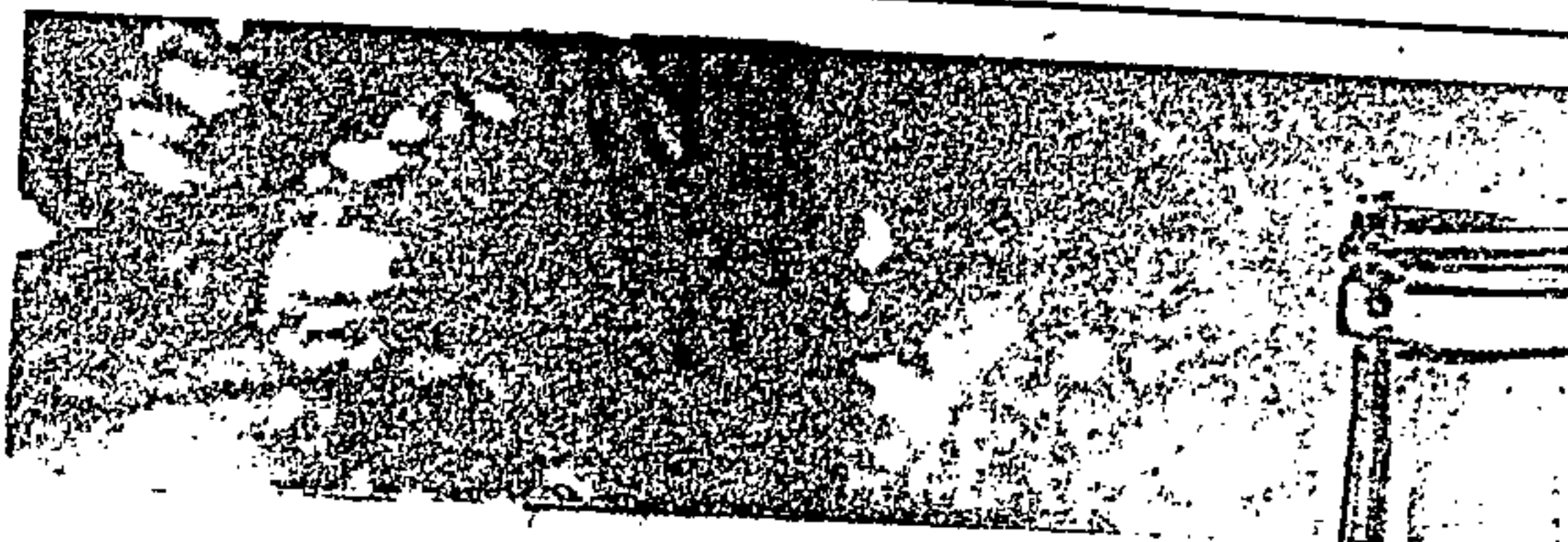
chased away.

The police made people stop talking and waiting around at 9pm, or they were fined R50.

He has scars on arms and face because he came home late from work one night and was caught talking to his family.

The warlord's police put him in handcuffs and took him to the warlord home. The warlord then hit him repeatedly with sjambok.

People in the squatter camps hated the warlord and wanted to shoot them Mr Ngcobo said.



R65m to regulate SA taxi industry

Waterfront shuttle drivers assaulted

ERIC NTABAZALILA

MORE than R65 million is to be spent on formalising, regulating and controlling the taxi industry nationally, Western Cape Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane announced yesterday.

But about 60 taxi associations have said they are dissatisfied with the process and warned that there is a "possibility of bloodshed" if the government goes ahead with it.

"They are causing a split within our industry. They are not interested in the consequences — whether people are going to die," Mr Mogamed Faek Ariefdien, co-ordinator of Concerned Taxi Operators — as the 60 associations have named themselves — said last week.

Ramatlakane gave an assurance that he was not going to declare the election of the present Taxi Task Team — which investigated the formalising, regulating and control of the taxi industry — null and void. This had been demanded by Concerned Taxi Operators, who felt they had been left outside the process.

Ramatlakane said the benefits the taxi operators would derive from the process would be less violence and tension in the industry



BENEFITS: Mr Leonard Ramatlakane

and more people using taxis.

There would be financial assistance and co-operatives would be formed by the industry and the government, in which the government would invest.

Government-funded taxi offices would be opened in all regions, to be run by the taxi industry.

Through training and strict law enforcement, violence would be stamped out in the industry.

CT 29/8/96

CYNTHIA VONGAI

A POTENTIALLY explosive situation exists between the Waterfront shuttle service and some members of the Peninsula Taxi Association (PTA), after violent clashes between members of these organisations.

Fifteen V&A shuttle drivers have allegedly been seriously assaulted by PTA members in an attempt to sabotage the shuttle service.

The manager of the shuttle service, Mr Esa Yacoob, said the Waterfront was trying to maintain an upmarket transport service that was efficiently run and closely monitored, but this was being hampered by unlicensed taxi operators stealing clients and intimidating shuttle drivers.

"Fifteen of our drivers were assaulted by PTA members and three of our minibus shuttles were smashed and defaced," he said. "We have legal licences to operate a shuttle service between the Waterfront and Cape Town and cable car every 15 minutes, and we have an airport shuttle hourly."

Yacoob said he hoped to settle the problem in a peaceful manner within the next few days.

SA, KwaZulu-Natal govts bail out Putco

Farouk Chothia

BD 30/8/96 (232)
DURBAN — The national and KwaZulu-Natal governments have decided to rescue Putco's KwaZulu-Natal operations by giving it what is believed to be R4,4m to ensure its operations continue until the end of next June.

The governments yielded to the request in last-minute negotiations with Putco and worker representatives after the bus company announced earlier this week that it would close its KwaZulu-Natal operations this week due to losses of R1m a month.

The decision would have resulted in nearly 500 people losing their jobs, and alternative transport arrangements would have had to be made for Putco's commuters.

KwaZulu-Natal transport MEC Sibusiso Ndebele said the national and provincial transport departments would "put together" the required funds to cover Putco's losses.

Ndebele did not disclose the sum, but it was understood to total R4,4m. The national and provincial departments would contribute R2,2m and R1,1m respectively. Durban's council would be asked to contribute the remaining R1,1m.

Putco Durban manager Ricky Stevenson said Putco was delighted by government aid. Putco now planned to remain in KwaZulu-Natal beyond next June, when it would tender for specific routes that it believed were viable.

Nyathi resigns from taxi team

Sowetan 30/8/96
By Themba Sepotokele (332)

THE chairperson of the Soweto taxi monitoring team, the Rev Jonathan Nyathi, yesterday resigned from the team and accused Gauteng transport department head Mr Jack van der Merwe of racism.

Nyathi said Van der Merwe wanted to replace black taxi monitors with whites. He said he regretted his decision, which had resulted from "an internal dispute in the Gauteng transport department".

"The transport head of department had complained about me being provided with a car, remuneration and a cellular phone," he said.

Nyathi said Van der Merwe had apparently complained to Gauteng transport director Mr Lennox Magwaza that he was not entitled to these benefits because he was not a civil servant.

"How does he expect me to perform the government's duties without any resources," he said.

Nyathi played a major role in brokering a cooperation agreement between the Soweto Taxi Association and the Soweto Taxi Services.

KURT SWART

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. - Friction is rising in the radio-taxi industry as qualified drivers find it increasingly difficult to make a living and feed their families in the face of an invasion of pirate taxi operators.

"It took years for me to get a permit. Now, all these bloody pirates have to do is buy a cheap, plastic taxi sign, stick it on the roof of any old wreck of a car and immediately they are taxi drivers. Not only do they not have permits, many drive without radios or even meters and they are stealing our customers," said an exasperated driver at Yeoville's Kennere rank where "legals" and pirates park bumper to bumper competing for fares.

At the same time, armed hijackers are also threatening the radio-taxi industry. With alarming regularity, drivers are shot and their vehicles taken. Their glowing taxi signs make them a highly-visible target at night, although many are hijacked during the day as well.

Many drivers have acquired guns to defend themselves, adding a further combustible ingredient to the brew. There are more than enough guns available to cause mayhem on Johannesburg streets if conflict is sparked between pirates and regular operators.

The transport ministry and representatives of the taxi industry have been holding talks on the regulation of the industry, which was deregulated at the same time as the minibus sector. Minister Mac Maharaj has set up the National Taxi Task Team to make recommendations for improving conditions in the industry.

But time is running out, according to Karen Schonfeldt, owner of Maxi Taxi,

Highway piracy is killing us - taximen

which rivals the older Rose Taxis with one of the largest fleets in the city.

Mrs Schonfeldt, a German immigrant, believes regulation and tighter control of permits and licences "will bring the industry back to what it used to be."

"Drivers must be qualified, the industry regulated. In the UK, the London cab has a reputation. Here, since de-regulation, the South African taxi industry has become a nightmare. There is friction. I have had to calm down groups of drivers because they wanted to shoot each other. Time is limited. You can't go on putting out fires. If we do not have regulation soon, we will end up shooting each other."

Interviewed in her cluttered office at the Maxi radio room in Yeoville, Mrs Schonfeldt sketched a brief history of the taxi industry since she and husband Theo battled their way into a hostile market 12 years ago.

"When we started, there were only two companies - Rose and Taxi Bureau. It was difficult because they played tough, but we gave them a run for their money. But, in

■ A new taxi war is brewing, one potentially more damaging to the economy and tourist trade than the sporadic violent conflict between minibus taxi operators.

the last two years, 18 companies have sprung up."

Mrs Schonfeldt said breakaway drivers are not even required to have the company formed City Taxis, and that through break-aways and splits Good Hope, Metro, King and Flash were formed.

"When we started, there was apartheid and black drivers could not get permits or insurance. Those who got permits weren't allowed to pick up white passengers unless the permit was multiracial. My husband and I had to battle for permits and transfer them to black drivers."

"The first multiracial permit in a black man's name was through Maxi. We built up a fleet of drivers. There were no pirates then."

The problem was compounded, she said, by the shortage of Transportation Board inspectors and by "a lot of bribery and corruption in getting permits".

(332)

Rt 31/8/96

is the ordinary criminal hijacking."

In all three cases, the taxi driver was the victim, she said.

Earlier this month, the driver of taxi 118 was shot in the jaw by a hijacker. "A little higher and he would have been dead," said a colleague.

Drivers were now packing guns themselves.

"Most have to come to me for a recommendation. I have to turn some down. I have had such arguments, but I think it is dangerous to recommend a gun for a driver. I know has a short temper. There are plenty of illegal guns floating around, although most of my drivers have legal firearms," said Mrs Schonfeldt.

The taxi industry needed three gradings of taxi service - tourist taxis, ordinary taxis and "downmarket" taxis to serve township communities not served by buses or minibus taxis.

Mrs Schonfeldt admires Mr Maharaj: "He is tough, he is clever and he takes no nonsense. He learns very quickly for someone new to the transport industry. To bring the

law back will not be a one-day business. But, if government and the industry work together, we will succeed."

But, there was not much time. "My drivers have never toy-toyed before. Now they toy-toy in my office, shouting at me to get rid of the pirates. A pirate is a bank robber as far as I'm concerned, and I am the bank."

At a city rank an angry driver said: "I have no fares. These pirates steal my fares. The police don't do anything. The traffic cops don't bother."

Driver Milton Mvimbi said: "It is not like before. Business is bad - too many taxis, too many pirates. And this hijacking is too much."

Mr Mvimbi (65) has been hijacked three times at gunpoint. On all occasions, he was unharmed and his cars were recovered.

"I was lucky. I now have a gun, and I will use it if they try to take me again."

Driver Ben Williams said Maxi drivers had taken the number plates of pirates at the Kennere rank and had handed this information to the police.

"But nothing gets done. We are completely swamped with pirates. Their number keeps growing."

"There were 150 pirates in our area last year and the number must have doubled since. Only about 10 of the drivers at the rank are Maxi drivers."

Another driver added: "There is nothing we can do. You can get yourself killed if you argue with the pirates. They all carry guns. We wouldn't stand a chance against them."

The pirates were not keen on being interviewed. One was asked by a regular to leave the rank.

The reply was: "What do you want me to do? I have no other job and I also have a family to feed."

Pirates, hijacks put radio taxis under threat

(332) Star 31/8/96



A new and possibly very bloody war is on the cards as pirate taxis steal business from the radio taxi operators. **KURT SWART** reports on the frustration and anger being experienced by this sector of the transport industry

A new taxi war is brewing in Johannesburg, one potentially more damaging to the Gauteng economy and tourist trade than the sporadically violent conflict between minibus taxi operators.

Friction is rising in the radio taxi industry as qualified drivers find it increasingly difficult to make a living and feed their families in the face of an invasion of pirate taxi operators.

"It took years for me to get a permit. Now, all these bloody pirates have to do is buy a cheap plastic taxi sign, stick it on the roof of any old wreck of a car and immediately they are taxi drivers. Not only do they not have permits, but many drive without radios or meters and they are stealing our customers," said a driver at Yeoville's Kenmere rank where "legals" and pirates park bumper-to-bumper competing for fares.

Armed hijackers are also threatening the radio taxi industry. With alarming regularity, drivers are shot and their vehicles taken. Their glowing taxi signs make them a highly visible target at night, although many are hijacked in daylight as well.

Many drivers have acquired guns to defend themselves, adding a further combustible ingredient to the brew. If conflict is sparked between pirates and regular operators, there are more than enough guns available to cause mayhem on Johannesburg's streets.

The Transport Ministry and representatives of the taxi industry have been holding talks on the regulation of the industry, which was deregulated at the same time as the minibus sector. Minister Mac Maharaj has set up the National Taxi Task Team to make recommendations for improving conditions in the industry.

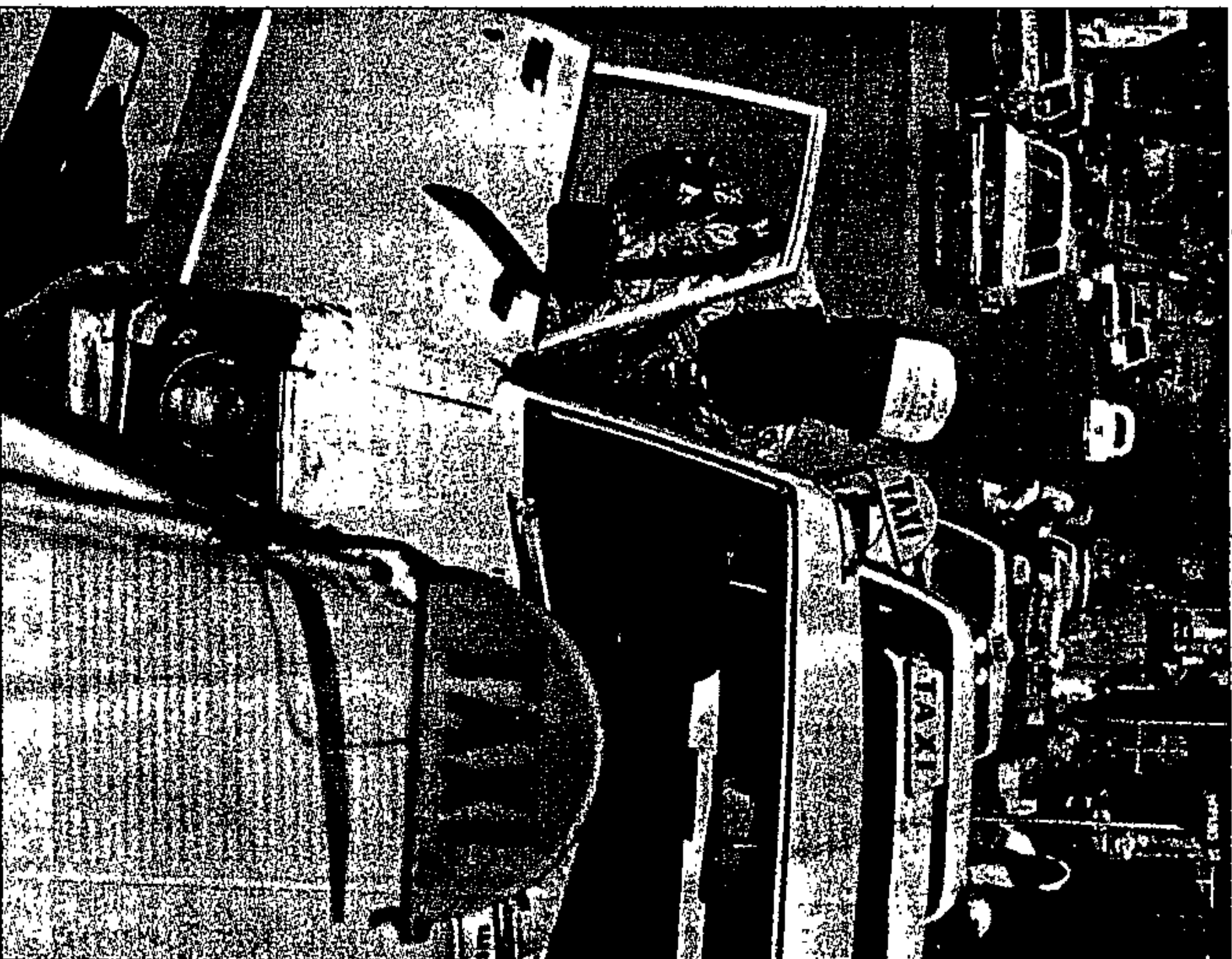
But time is running out, according to Karen Schonfeldt, owner of Maxi Taxi which rivals the older Rose Taxis with one of the largest fleets in the city. A German immigrant, Schonfeldt believes regulation and tighter control of permits and licences "will bring the industry back to what it used to be."

"Drivers must be qualified, the industry regulated. In the UK, the London cab has a reputation. Here, since deregulation, the taxi industry has become nightmare. There is friction. I've had to calm groups of drivers because they wanted to shoot each other. Time is limited. You can't go on putting out fires. If we don't have regulation soon, we will end up shooting each other."

If we don't have regulation in the industry soon, we will end up shooting each other

Interviewed in her cluttered office at the Maxi radio room in Yeoville, Schonfeldt sketched a brief history of the taxi industry since she and her husband Theo battled their way into a hostile market 12 years ago.

"When we started, there were only two companies - Rose and Taxi Bureau. It was difficult because they played tough, but we gave them a run for their money. In the past two years, 18



NO GO: Milton Mvumbi, a radio taxi driver, waits for a fare at the Kenmere Road, Yeoville, rank as pirate operators and legal taximen park bumper-to-bumper waiting for fares.

taxi companies have sprung up," Schonfeldt said. Breakaway drivers formed City Taxis and weren't allowed to pick up black that, through breakaways and spills, Good Hope, Metro, King and Flash were formed.

"When we started, there was apartheid and black drivers could not get permits or insurance. Drivers who got permits weren't allowed to pick up black passengers unless the permit was multiracial. My husband and I battled to get permits and transfer them to black drivers. The problem was compounded, she said, by the shortage of Transportation Board inspectors and by allegations of "a lot of bribery and corruption in obtaining permits."

Deregulation had caused "total confusion and friction. Under the law, taxi companies are not

even required to have the company sign and phone number on the roof."

Adding to the "nightmare" was the havoc wreaked by hijackers. Said Schonfeldt: "At the moment we have three hijacks a week. Car 269 was hijacked and the driver of car 131 has 12 bullets in him after a hijack. He may be crippled. Car 188 was involved in a shootout with hijackers at the Kensington rank. This cannot go on. Drivers are taking strain."

Earlier this month, the driver of taxi 118 was shot in the jaw by a hijacker, and drivers were now packing guns themselves.

The taxi industry needed three gradings of taxi service - "tourist taxis, ordinary taxis and 'downmarket' taxis to serve township communities not served by buses or minibuses taxis, said Schonfeldt.

She admires Transport Minister Maharaj: "He is tough, he is clever and he takes no nonsense. He learns very quickly for someone new to the industry. To bring the law back will not be a one-day business. But if the Government and the industry work together, we will succeed."

But there was not much time.

"My drivers have never-logged before. Now they log-roy! In my office shouting at me to get rid of the pirates. A pirate is a bank robber as far as I'm concerned, and I am the bank."

At a city rank, an angry driver told the *Saturday Star*: "I have no fares. These pirates steal my fares. The police don't do anything. The traffic cops don't bother. I started work at 8.30am. It is now 12.30pm and I have had only one fare. By this time, not so long ago, I would have had five or more fares."

Said Milton Mvumbi: "It is not like before. Business is bad - too many taxis, too many pirates. And this hijacking is too much." Mvumbi (65) has been hijacked at gunpoint three times.

On all occasions he was unhurt and his cars were recovered. "I was lucky. I now have a gun, and I will use it if they try to take me again."

"Roy," an old slip of a man, his size and posture affected by polio, enjoys the contact he has with his customers.

"My grandfather fought against these people in South-West Africa in World War I," he said, pointing to the German flag on the sleeve of his green parka. "I have favourite customers. Foreigners understand me and they like me. They interest me and they find me interesting."

Roy has survived an attempted hijacking during a rest break, and now takes his naps parked outside a police station.

"I do not carry a gun. I do not believe in it, and I doubt it offers much protection. It could be more dangerous having a gun, because it can be used against you. But I must say that sometimes I am sorely tempted to get one."

Driver Ben Williams said Maxi drivers had taken note of the number plates of pirates at Yeoville's Kenmere rank and handed this information to the police.

I have no fares. These pirates steal my fares. The police don't do anything. The traffic cops don't bother

But nothing gets done. We are completely swamped with pirates. Their number keeps on growing. There were 150 pirates in our area last year and the number must have doubled since. Only about 10 drivers at the rank are Maxi drivers."

Another driver said: "There is nothing we can do. You can get yourself killed if you argue with the pirates. Some of them are from KwaZulu Natal and they all carry guns. We wouldn't stand a chance against them."

The pirates were not keen to be interviewed. One was asked by a regular to leave the rank. The reply was: "What do you want me to do? I have no other job and I also have a family to feed."

6 killed in renewed taxi violence at weekend

Star 2/9/96

(332)

Taxi violence seems to have erupted again between rival taxi groups in Soweto after two taxi drivers and four passengers were shot dead in two separate incidents over the weekend.

Three taxis were set alight in Pimville and at the Baragwanath taxi rank on Saturday, said police spokesman Superintendent Govindsamy Mariemuthoo.

On Saturday night, taxi driver

Moses Sithole (33) and two passengers – Nicholas Nyati (26) and a man identified only as Matambo (24) – were shot dead by two gunmen while sitting in a minibus at the Engen Garage in Meadowlands.

AK-47 and 9mm cartridges were found at the scene.

This attack was followed yesterday morning by the burning of a taxi in Kliptown Road, Pimville.

At about 1pm yesterday another taxi driver was shot dead and two other people were seriously wounded in a shooting in Pimville, Mariemuthoo said.

He added the shootings were a result of an ongoing feud between the Soweto Taxi Services and the Soweto Taxi Association. He was, however, unable to confirm which body was responsible for the attacks. – Staff Reporters.

Maharaj has plan to regulate taxi industry

(332)

ARG 3/9/96

Register aims to curb illegal operators

Staff Reporter

MINISTER of Transport Mac Maharaj has announced a plan to regulate the taxi industry.

The drive, called Masiham-bisane, will centre on the creation of a taxi register and a provincial taxi office to register, regulate and assist the taxi industry economically.

"During a period of nine months, the National Taxi Task Team, through an active partnership with the industry and government at local and provincial level, identified a number of issues which needed urgent attention," said Mr Maharaj.

Firstly, in an effort to formalise the industry, the team instigated a drive to register the taxi associations with the Provincial Registrar.

It was hoped this would help

in coming up with uniform rules to be applicable across the industry.

To curb the violence and other problems associated with illegal taxi operators, the government was offering a one-off opportunity for illegal operators to apply for licences.

This involved using a special legalisation procedure involving registration forms available from provincial taxi offices or the Road Transport Board.

Mr Maharaj said apart from the legalisation and registration initiatives, an attempt to control individual ranks would be instituted.

With the help of registration and the legalisation of the industry, it was hoped the control initiative, called rank control, would be an effective policing mechanism.

For legal operators belonging

to registered taxi associations, several benefits were to be made available.

The government's economic assistance plan included access to cheap finance to buy vehicles as well as subsidised petrol from taxi petrol stations, the profits of which would be ploughed back into the industry.

Literacy and numeracy, advanced driving, basic vehicle maintenance, business management and customer care were some of the training programmes available.

Mr Maharaj said everyone in the industry, from drivers to rank operators, would be eligible for training.

The government would also be offering protection against the illegal operators to the members of registered associations.

Regulation of taxi industry

on its way

(332) Mar 3/9/96

Cape Town - Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj has announced a plan to regulate the taxi industry.

The plan, called Masihambi-sane, will centre on the creation of a taxi registrar and a provincial taxi office to register, regulate and economically assist the taxi industry.

"During a period of nine months, the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT), through an active partnership with the industry and Government, both at local and provincial level, identified a number of issues which needed urgent attention," said Maharaj.

In an effort to formalise the industry, the NTTT instigated a drive to register the taxi associations with the Provincial Registrar.

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The Government would also offer members of registered associations protection against illegal operators. - Own Correspondent.

Police 'involved in taxi violence'

By Josias Charle

THE Lethlabile Taxi Organisation yesterday implicated police in the killing of two policemen and pledged to work with the authorities to stamp out the ongoing violence in the industry.

In a memorandum submitted to the offices of Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi and national police Commissioner George Fivaz, the LTO said it was prepared to point out various perpetrators of the violence.

LTO spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba told *Sowetan*: "It is a risk we have to take if we want to save the lives of innocent people. We are aware that those perpetrators can come for us, but while our lives are important, we must think of the greater community."

Ledwaba also alleged that there was a police conspiracy behind the recent murder of two Soshanguve detectives.

Sergeants Michael Baloyi and Richard Khoza were gunned down last week. Khoza was to have given evidence in a taxi-related murder trial in

the Pretoria Supreme Court last Wednesday.

"We have been sending letters to the authorities for the last few months in which we highlighted some issues. All we got in response was a message that the matter was receiving attention.

"We now want the community to know that we are not just resting on our laurels, we want to cooperate with the police to stamp out the violence.

"We know who is behind it and we are prepared to point them out so that they can be arrested," Ledwaba said.

This information will be given to Mufamadi only.

Meanwhile, there was drama at the Rietgat taxi rank in Soshanguve, near Pretoria, yesterday when scores of taxis "blockaded" the rank.

Ledwaba said it was LTO members who converged on the rank with their vehicles to await Mufamadi's reaction to the memorandum.

Police spokesman Captain Morne van Wyk said the vehicles had not blocked the roads and no incidents were reported.

Rival taxi drivers in rank dispute

(332)
Taxi rivalry has flared in Rietgat, north of Pretoria, after Hammanskraal branch members of the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) muscled rival Boshanguve Taxi Owners Association (STOA) drivers out of the local taxi rank.

Police were rapidly deploying members at the Rietgat taxi rank at mid-morning yesterday to create a buffer between angry taxi drivers.

Captain Dave Harrington said Public Order Policing members, backed up by Dog Unit and local police, were at the rank and were keeping apart the angry factions.

By nightfall the associations were still squaring up against each other at the rank although no violence had been reported by police. - Crime Reporter

~~Source~~ Stan
4/9/96

Five die ⁽³³²⁾ in taxi *Sowetan 5/9/96* violence

By Matshube Mfoloe and Josias Charle

FIVE people were killed and two seriously wounded during an AK-47 rifle attack on a minibus taxi at Klipgat near Mabopane yesterday.

GaRankuwa police spokesman Sergeant Aubrey Ruele said three men in a white Golf with false registration numbers attacked a minibus travelling to Erasmus about 11am.

They opened fire on the minibus with an AK-47 rifle and continued to fire as they drove parallel to the taxi, instantly killing the driver and four passengers.

Two passengers were seriously wounded and were taken to Odi Hospital. Two others survived the ordeal.

Ruele identified the dead as Ms Ntebatseng Nthite, Ms Batshegi Mogomotsi, Mr Alfred Hlongwane and Mr Alex Dibakwane, the driver. The fifth victim, a young girl, has not been identified.

In another attack in Soshanguve, near Pretoria, dozens of commuters had to flee for their lives when rival taxi associations exchanged gunfire at the Mabopane railway station taxi rank.

Terrified commuters

Members of the Letlhabile Taxi Organisation and Soshanguve Taxi Owners' Association were involved in a shootout about 8.15am, forcing terrified commuters to flee. No one was killed but two men were wounded.

A police task force from Pretoria arrived on the scene and surrounded the rank. Armed with the new Heckler and Koch submachine guns they defused a potentially dangerous situation.

A helicopter hovered above the rank and thick smoke billowed around the taxi rank where a minibus taxi was burning. Attempts to put out the fire failed.

About 30 other taxis stood in rows with their windows shattered and revealing numerous bullet holes.

Captain Dave Harrington also disclosed that about 12 members of the Taxi Violence Investigation Unit and their families had been moved to a safe place after the killing of two policemen in Soshanguve last week.

Protesting taxi drivers lay siege (332) to airport

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN
CRIME REPORTER

ARG 6/9/96

Hundreds of minibus taxis today blocked the main entrance to Cape Town International Airport, threatening to disrupt air traffic, as drivers from the Codeta taxi association protested against being excluded from some township taxi ranks.

Codeta has been engaged in a taxi war with the rival Cata taxi group.

Several other convoys of minibuses have been spotted in other parts of the Cape Flats.

Police have summoned all available tow trucks to remove the vehicles blockading the main road to the airport terminal.

Armed police were trying to control the crowd, but taxi drivers drove on pavements to bypass them.

Traffic is being diverted from the airport into Borchers Quarry Road.

Leader figures in the taxi protest group acted as marshals to get about 250 taxis as close as they could to the airport buildings.

Goods trucks, freight companies and national and international passengers are being prevented from reaching the airport.

Several irate air passengers got out of vehicles and carried their luggage to the terminal buildings to catch their flights.

A spokesman for the taxi drivers said they were up in arms about the closure of Cape Flats taxi ranks to Codeta drivers, and were angry about the lack of response from police and other government institutions to help them.

The blockage stretched from the entrance to the airport to the N2 freeway.

Police victims of taxi wars

Police have been implicated in the assassination of two fellow officers, reports **Mungo Soggot**

THE latest victims of South Africa's bitter taxi wars are Detective Sergeants Richard Khosa and Michael Baloyi, two of the Pretoria township Soshanguve's most experienced officers, with more than 20 years service behind them. On the eve of giving crucial testimony in a murder case, Khosa left the

township's police station with Baloyi last Tuesday night, unaware he was being followed by three assassins. When they reached Baloyi's house, their pursuers jumped out of their car and opened fire. They pumped three bullets into Baloyi and four into Khosa, killing them both. Khosa was a key witness in a murder case at the heart of a taxi war in the area which could involve rogue policemen. Police investigators suspect he was eliminated because of the evidence he was to give. Baloyi had also worked on the case.

In September 1993, Joel Vuma, head of the local federation of taxi associations, was ambushed by hit men in Soshanguve and shot dead. His passenger, now part of a witness protection programme, escaped. Police spokesman Bushy Engelbrecht said the police had arrested and charged three suspects at the time, one of whom had since drowned. The remaining two — Zwide Mathebula and William Masemola — were due to have appeared in the Pretoria Supreme Court last Wednesday, but as a result of Khosa and Baloyi's mur-

ders the case has been postponed until next February.

Engelbrecht said investigators handling the Khosa and Baloyi shootings will probe claims lodged this week by another taxi association that policemen masterminded the assassinations.

Police have arrested three illegal immigrants from Mozambique who they suspect were the hit men, but have yet to discover who paid them. The three are being held in Pretoria under legislation which allows the police to detain illegal immigrants for up to three weeks.

The Lehlabile Taxi Organisation has handed a document to Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi backing up its allegations that police had a hand in the murders. It has

demand a meeting with National Police Commissioner George Fivaz.

Engelbrecht said both Khosa and Baloyi were highly respected, and their murders have sparked anger among senior Pretoria policemen. Colonel Hendrik Potgieter, their commander for the past two years, said

the South African Police Service had lost two experienced and loyal officers. ● Six people were killed on Wednesday when gunmen fired on a minibus taxi at Klipgat near Mabopane in North-West province. Sapa reported that police suspected the attack could be related to an incident in Soshanguve earlier that day when two people were wounded in a gunfight between the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation and a rival taxi association.

Govt urged to set up programme to protect witnesses to taxi violence

Bonile Ngqiyaza

THE Lehlable Taxi Organisation (LTO) has urged government to give protection to key witnesses to taxi-related violence in order to rid the industry of internecine strife.

"The lack of a witness protection programme has in the past resulted in the murder of key witnesses, with the result that the courts were unable to bring successful charges and convictions against perpetrators," spokes-

man Jacob Ledwaba told a news briefing in Johannesburg yesterday.

The organisation accused some Pretoria police of complicity in the violence, saying it had identified at least three police stations in the area whose members had an interest in the industry, and collaborated openly with rivals.

"We are saying police are conniving with the taxi warlords and the hitmen in Soshanguve, Rietgat and Phuthanong."

It called on Safety and Security Minister

Sydney Mufamadi to appoint an independent commission to probe alleged police collusion, threatening to take the law into its own hands if its warnings were not "heeded immediately".

SAPS spokesman Capt Dave Harrington said alleged SAPS complicity in the taxi violence was being investigated, but no parties involved — including the LTO — were prepared to make statements. "We want to clean up police corruption. But we cannot act without absolute evidence," he said.

Priests vow to use taxis on danger routes to end violence

(332) Nov 6/9/96
BY PATRICK PHOSA

Church ministers on the Far East Rand yesterday vowed to defy warring taxi organisations in the area by using taxis between Duduza and Tsakane in order to put an end to the taxi violence.

They announced this at a meeting for "Peace and Reconciliation in the Taxi Industry" in Duduza to call for an end to the taxi violence on the East Rand.

Violence between the Nigel Taxi Association (NTA) and the Brakpan Taxi Association (BTA) has already claimed many lives in the area. On Women's Day a taxi owner was gunned down and recently a commuter was shot dead.

Addressing about 50 people at the meeting, Tsakane Ministers' Forum leader the Rev Jabulani Zitha said priests should set a precedent by using taxis because it was the only mode of transport accessible to their congregants.

Zitha said priests should not just fold their arms while their followers' blood was being spilled because of taxi violence.

"We will continue to live in fear for our lives unless we do something to show that we are against the rampant taxi violence," Zitha said.

Greater Brakpan mayor Ace Phiri said his council had received an undertaking from the two taxi associations to co-operate with each other to ensure peace in the area.

Praising the ministers for taking the initiative to say "enough is enough" about taxi violence, Phiri said many commuters were physically assaulted by taxi drivers when alighting from taxis in Dunnotar Road in Duduza.

He said it was sad that the associations, which he said were fighting over routes, did not attend the peace meeting.

Mar 7/9/96
**Airport chaos
as taxi drivers
protest over (332)
Cape violence**

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town - Flights were disrupted when hundreds of minibus taxis blockaded Cape Town international airport yesterday to protest against the Government's failure to end taxi violence in the Western Cape.

Four flights were delayed by up to 30 minutes to accommodate passengers affected by the taxi blockade. No flights were cancelled or diverted.

After a two-hour standoff between police and angry taxi drivers who threw stones at police and slashed the tyres of a private car, the taxi drivers dispersed.

They had threatened to disrupt air traffic to press home their demands for government intervention in their struggle against rival taxi group Cata.

Drivers protested against their exclusion from Cata-dominated taxi ranks on the Cape Flats. During the standoff, police summoned all available tow trucks to remove taxis blockading the main road to the airport terminal building. At one stage about 250 taxis blockaded the road. Armoured vehicles from the police's Public Order Policing Services arrived at the scene where some of the taxi drivers were wielding knives. No firearms were visible.

or else by some of the maverick offshoots

venge by violating everything — "even your children".

Winnie's Soweto plans unclear



MANDELA

CHRIS CARMICHAEL

WINNIE MANDELA'S return to Soweto depends on how many more times this week she will be allowed to visit her jailed husband, Nelson Mandela, in Pollsmoor prison, Cape Town.

She must, however, return to Johannesburg by tomorrow, the day set down for an application in the Supreme Court asking for the order banning her from the Johannesburg and Roodepoort magisterial districts to be set aside.

She and members of her family visited Mandela for an hour on Sunday. A further visit was scheduled for yesterday. Any others later in the week will depend on prison authorities.

During some of the visits Mandela was accompanied by representatives of the family attorneys — Ismail Ayob & Associates.

One of the attorneys, Akbar Ayob, who has since returned to Pretoria, refused to reveal details of consultations with the jailed ANC leader, saying they were a purely family affair.

He was further prevented from saying anything about the meetings by the Prisons Act.

He confirmed that Winnie Mandela would almost certainly be returning to Soweto before tomorrow.

He said that at this stage it was uncertain what progress had been made in persuading the police not to arrest her until the court application had been heard.

Winnie Mandela was forcibly removed from her Soweto home on December 23 in terms of her new banning order.

She was subsequently released on her own recognisances. She is to stand trial some time in January on, as yet, unspecified charges.

Blackburn, Bishop die in E Cape motor smash

BUS DAY
30/12/85

MOLLY BLACKBURN, MPC for Walmer and human rights activist in the Eastern Cape, and Dr Brian Bishop, MPC for Gardens, died on Saturday in a motor accident near Humansdorp.

Blackburn's sister, Judy Chalmers, and Dr Bishop's wife, Di Bishop, were injured.

Reports indicate that the four were returning to Port Elizabeth from Oudtshoorn when the accident happened.

A police spokesman said Blackburn's car was involved in a head-on collision at about 8.30 pm on Saturday on the road between Kareedouw and Humansdorp.

The driver of the other vehicle, who was also killed, has not been identified.

The two injured women were admitted to the Humansdorp hospital and later transferred to the provincial hospital in Port Elizabeth.

Blackburn had been detained several times for entering black townships in the Eastern Cape without police permission.

Dr Bishop was a prominent civil rights activist in Cape Town.

Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, leader of the PFP, yesterday expressed his deep shock at the news of the death of Molly Blackburn.



SLABBERT

In a statement Slabbert said: "I am deeply shocked by the sudden and tragic death of Molly Blackburn. She was a courageous fighter for justice and had very high credibility and admiration from many black South Africans and colleagues.

"She will be sorely missed wherever communication between black and white is needed." — Sapa.

MANDELA
CHRIS CARMICHAEL
SLABBERT
SAPA

Police (372) in bid to curb taxi violence

Sunday Times Reporter

ST(CM) 8/9/96
POLICE and army patrols have been stepped up at township taxi ranks in the Cape Flats to curb further violence.

During the week a taxi driver was shot dead in Khayelitsha and another wounded at Heideveld.

Western Cape police spokeswoman Superintendent Ciska du Plessis said no arrests had been made in connection the shootings.

She said the violence could be the result of unresolved friction between rival taxi groups.

An uneasy peace returned to Peninsula minibus taxi ranks yesterday as police and army patrols were deployed at potential trouble spots.

On Friday minibus taxi drivers belonging to Code-ta caused chaos on the airport highway when they blockaded the N2 in support of calls for the authorities to intervene in the taxi dispute.

Urgent talks called after death of taxi drivers

STAFF REPORTERS AND SAPA

Urgent meetings between Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi, Police Commissioner George Fivaz and the Codeta taxi association will be held after renewed taxi violence at the weekend.

Two Codeta taxi drivers were shot dead and another is missing, three taxi operators and a Golden Arrow bus driver were wounded and at least five passengers were injured in violence between rival taxi organisations Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) and Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata).

Police reinforcements went to the Wynberg taxi rank and patrols were stepped up in Khayelitsha and Nyanga, police spokes-

woman Ciska du Plessis said yesterday.

The violence followed Codeta's blockade of Cape Town International Airport on Friday to highlight its battle with Cata over taxi routes between Khayelitsha and the airport.

In Khayelitsha, a Codeta taxi driver was shot dead near his home on Friday, and another was shot dead near the Vietnam shack settlement in Nyanga on Saturday.

Blood was found in a deserted Codeta taxi in Mitchell's Plain on Saturday but police have been unable to trace the driver. Five bullet holes were found in the vehicle.

The driver of a Codeta taxi was wounded in Nyanga on Saturday, while another driver was wounded and a passenger injured when the windscreen of their taxi was shot out in Mitchell's Plain. Police said

eight shots were fired at the taxi.

In a drive-by shooting in Guguletu on Saturday, taxi driver Trevor Ntunga was hit in the right side and a woman passenger in the left arm.

The violence continued yesterday when nine shots were fired at a Cata taxi in Philippi. The driver, Lucas Bega, was hit in the head and rushed to hospital.

Julisa Ninsela, 29, of Nyanga, was hit in the upper leg when 12 shots were fired at a taxi in Nyanga.

Seven shots were fired during an altercation between bus drivers and taxi operators at the Wynberg taxi rank and Abdul Matthews was hit in the leg.

Train routes between Wynberg and Rondebosch were apparently delayed and, when Golden Arrow bus company was asked to help, arguments erupted between

bus and taxi drivers and a man opened fire.

Bus driver Abdul Matthews, 29, was wounded in the upper leg and taken to the Wynberg Medical Centre for treatment.

Police are investigating charges of attempted murder against the man who fired the shot.

Codeta spokesman Howard Dyubeni, commenting today on the airport blockade, said: "We will do anything to get people to listen to us. Our people are dying, we deserve to be protected."

According to Mr Dyubeni, Codeta had been trying without success to get help from the authorities to deal with growing conflict at the Bellville taxi rank.

"They say closing the Bellville rank will cause more violence, but we are in the business and we know the best thing to do," Mr Dyubeni said.

Businessmen urged to help solve taxi problem

CHRIS BATEMAN

CT 9/9/96

(332)

A CHALLENGE to Peninsula businessmen to help relieve pressure on the overtraded taxi commuter market was made by Transport and Public Works MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane when he and fellow MECs met the cream of the local business community recently.

Speaking in the wake of the blockading of the approach road to Cape Town International Airport by Codeta taxis on Friday, Ramatlakane appealed to business people to help create an expanded commuter market by awarding contracts to taxi owners to transport their staff.

He suggested allowing taxis to transport staff "to and from construction sites and from here (Cape Town) to Simon's Town, for example".

Ramatlakane said he had begun discussions with the sub-structures to involve them in managing the taxi industry. Also, the legalisation of unlicensed taxi operators and training programmes would enjoy priority.

Taxi shootings raise tensions

(332)

ERIC NTABAZALILA

ET 9/9/96

A RESURGENCE in taxi shootings has followed Codeta's blockading Cape Town International Airport on Friday in an attempt to pressure the authorities into addressing problems at the Bellville rank.

In Wynberg yesterday afternoon, a taxi operator became embroiled in an argument with a Golden Arrow bus driver, took out a gun and fired.

The bus driver, Mr Abdul Matthews, was wounded in the leg and his bus hit seven times.

On Saturday, a taxi driver was shot dead in the Vietnam Camp near Nyanga. A Codeta taxi driver was wounded in Nyanga when the windscreen of his taxi was shot out and another was wounded in Heideveld.

In Philippi on Saturday afternoon, a Cata driver was wounded in the head when nine shots were fired at his taxi from a grey vehicle, police spokeswoman Superintendent Ciska du Plessis said. The driver was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital.

In another shooting, also involving a grey vehicle, a woman was wounded in the thigh.

In Mitchells Plain, a Codeta driver and a woman passenger were wounded.

Later, a taxi was found riddled with bullet holes and spattered with blood, but police could not find the driver.

A Codeta driver was shot dead near his home on Friday, hours after Codeta's blockade of the airport.

Spokesman Mr Howard Dyubeni said the blockade had been an attempt to get the authorities to respond to Codeta's pleas that they help to restore peace at the Bellville taxi rank by dealing with intimidators.

"We are left asking why, when someone is shot in Salt River, we see something resembling a military operation. People have been dying in the taxi violence and nothing like that operation has happened," he said.



Highway shooting: police examine a shot-up minibus beside the N2. The driver was seriously injured

Drive-by shooting fuels taxi warfare

CRIME STAFF

ARG 10/9/96

The N2 highway near Cape Town was the scene of renewed taxi warfare with a drive-by shooting and a high-speed chase by minibus drivers.

Also on the N2 yesterday, motorists found the body of a shot man.

A taxi driver was wounded in a peak hour drive-by shooting near Khayelitsha.

Taxi drivers who saw the shooting, took off after a car with four occupants who were allegedly responsible.

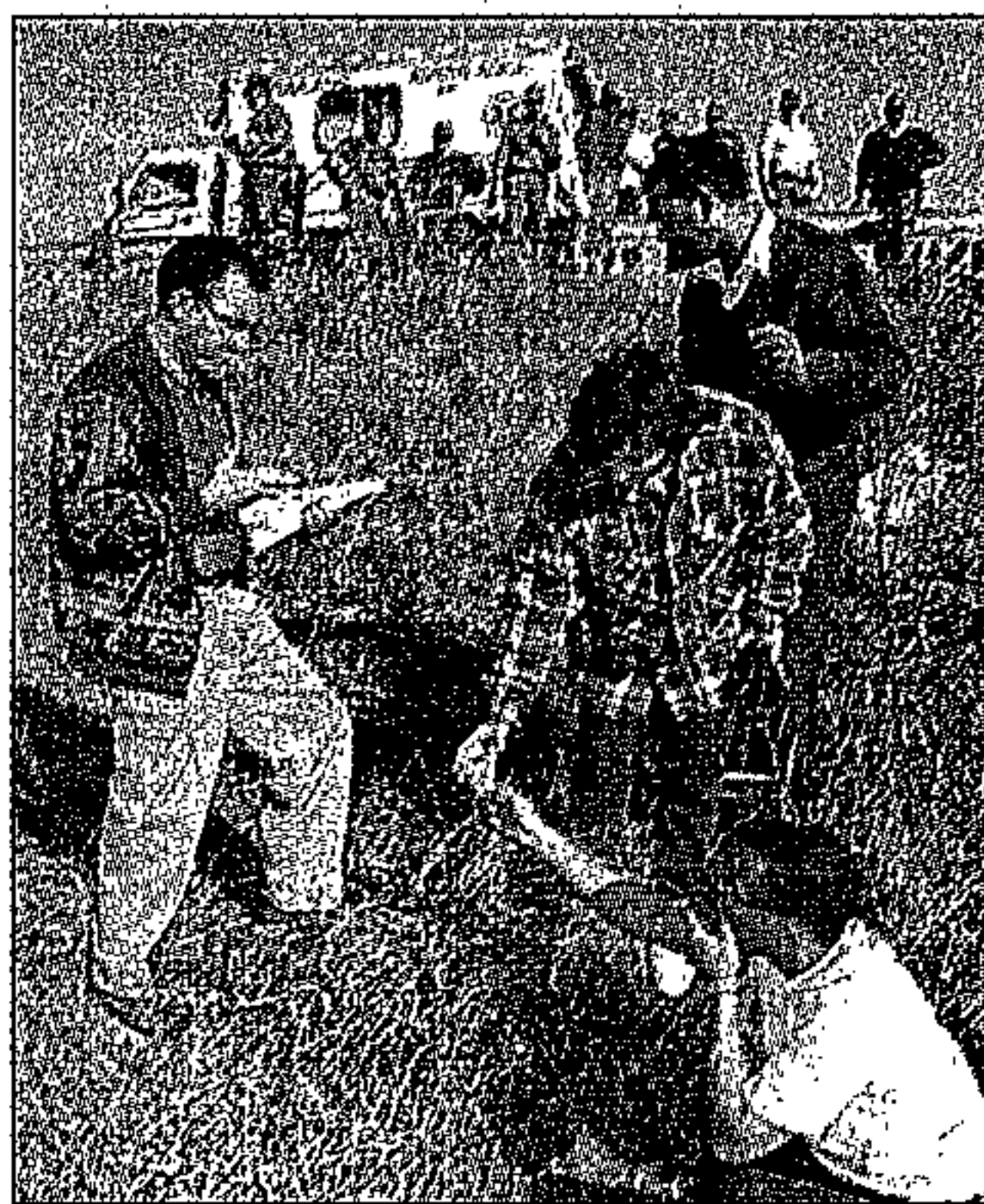
They chased the car at high speed through Khayelitsha to Mandalay, where at least five drivers opened fire on the car at the Khaya Park shopping centre.

The occupants fled on foot, but taxi drivers continued firing at the empty car.

A bystander was shot in the leg.

When a police patrol arrived, the taxi drivers sped away. One was stopped at a roadblock in Lansdowne Road.

The vice-chairman of the Codeta taxi group, Howard Dyubeni, laid the blame for



N2 assassination: police find a bullet in the mud

the shooting at the door of Western Cape police minister Gerald Morkel.

"We are sorry about the shooting. If Mr Morkel had kept his promise of closing the rank at Bellville or wherever there is a dispute, this would never have happened," Mr Dyubeni said.

Gunfight as taxi routes feud hits N2

(332) AKG 11/9/96

Seven shot and wounded, police shut down blocked lanes

JOSEPH ABAMES AND ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTERS

Lucrative taxi routes and ranks in Bellville are at the heart of the conflict between taxi associations Codeta and Cata, which resulted in the wounding of seven people and shut down traffic lanes on the N2 yesterday.

Both associations agree the only way to end the fighting is to regulate these ranks and taxi routes.

Yesterday, seven people were shot and injured and the Somerset West-bound carriageway of the N2 freeway was closed — less than a week after the airport blockade when simmering conflict threatened to erupt into a full-scale war.

The tension has claimed several lives in the past few days.

Howard Dyubeni, Codeta spokesman, said: "Provincial Police Minister Gerald Morkel has to take responsibility for the violence. He promised to close the Bellville taxi rank if no peace agreement was signed between Cata and Codeta and further violence broke out. But black lives are cheap and we taxi people are being condemned."

He said the violence was a direct result of tensions at the Bellville taxi rank. Codeta had repeatedly asked for the rank to be closed because of fears of violence.

"Once violence breaks out, it is difficult to contain... Cata and Codeta are big organisations," Mr Dyubeni said.

Cata president Steven Williams accused Codeta of starting the fighting and said the solution to the conflict was to sit down and sort out the routes.

"If Codeta wants to work in Bellville, they must work only one route and not all over the place. Codeta wants to work the whole Western Cape and we won't allow that," he said.

Yesterday, a Cata minibus taxi with six passengers travelling on the N2 past the Athlone power station was fired on by five men in a white car.

Leonard Knipe, head of the police Serious Violent Crimes Unit, said the taxi driver and one of his passengers had been seriously injured and the other passengers slightly injured.

Police closed one of the lanes on the freeway, causing a lunch-time traffic jam.

Director Knipe said police had noticed that other Cata drivers were heading towards Khayelitsha. "We knew they were out for revenge, so we tried to stop them."



N2 chaos: policemen close a section of the national road near Khayelitsha



Inspecting: a detective assesses damage

Just before the Khayelitsha off-ramp, a gunfight broke out between police, and Cata and Codeta members.

Police arrested the four occupants of one of the vehicles, all Cata members. Codeta members blocked traffic on the N2. Police closed the road at the R300 off-ramp and diverted Somerset West-bound traffic.



Injured: a paramedic helps a woman



Stand-off: angry Codeta members accuse the police of taking Cata's side in the conflict

between rival taxis

N2 becomes war zone in three wild shoot-outs

**EUGENE HUGO AND
MELANIE GOSLING**

THE taxi war exploded on to the N2 near Cape Town International Airport yesterday with three shoot-outs in three hours which left six people injured.

Two people — one shot in the head and the other in the stomach — are in a critical condition in the Groote Schuur Hospital.

Traffic came to a standstill as both sides of the N2 between the Athlone and Khayelitsha offramps were closed for about half an hour when about 200 rival taxi drivers

crowded on to the highway.

We drove into the middle of it.

The first shootout was near the turnoff to Langa. While a paramedic was giving us details of the six wounded his radio cracked and he said: "Oh no, another one up the road, let's go."

We chased the ambulance to the Khayelitsha bridge, where a red car had obviously skidded to a halt, its back window shattered by gunshots. No one was wounded, but the crowd became menacing, blaming the police for siding with the enemy — Cata.

Scores of policemen travelling

in eight armoured vehicles and nine police vans took out their weapons — shotguns, machine-guns, 9mm pistols. Their faces tense, they held back the steadily growing crowd that blocked the freeway.

A young policewoman was grabbed by some in the crowd. Her colleagues rescued her. She tackled a man climbing over the wall. "Watch out, they're going to shoot at us," yelled one police officer.

Suddenly the sound of handguns came from across the road. Police fell into single file and raced along the wall along the freeway. A

helicopter and a spotter aircraft buzzed overhead.

Squads of police broke away and roared off in their vehicles. Again we followed into Site C in Khayelitsha where a white minibus stood in the middle of the road, two bullet holes through the windshield, another through the back window and two flat tyres.

Empty cartridges littered the street while Dr. Bhekisiza Zondo treated a woman called Christine for a wound in the back. "It is only a flesh wound," he said.

He was at the back of his surgery when he heard shots at

about 2.15pm. "My receptionist called me saying people were shooting at each other. Two cars

sped off. Another group came and then took up positions behind a container across the street.

"At one stage there were three cars parked in the street. All of the men had handguns. I didn't see any AKs or anything like that. I saw at least 10 men leaving at one stage. I'm sure there were more people involved in the shootout," the doctor told us.

A police lieutenant told his commissioner that they did not yet have a clear picture of the events.

CT 11/9/96

There were three shootings, about seven people injured, two seriously. The situation was tense but he had called for reinforcements. He had three platoons of police and the army was coming in to give them backup. He had some registration numbers and some arrests had been made.

"You know about as much as we do," he told us when we asked him about the situation.

The man in the hamburger hut across the road knew even less: "I hit the floor when I heard the shooting and stayed there until they left. I didn't see anyone, I

didn't get any number plates. I know nothing."

Later police said the incident was sparked off when five occupants of a sedan opened fire on a Cata taxi travelling from Cape Town to Khayelitsha on the N2 near the Athlone offramp at 1.20pm.

In what appears to have been retaliation, a red Cressida drove down the Khayelitsha offramp on the N2 10 minutes later — against the traffic — and opened fire on a grey Cata taxi. The occupants returned fired. No one was injured and five men were arrested.

A convoy of 10 army vehicles arrived amid the stares of the hostile crowds. This was obviously Codeta territory, who believed that the police were on the side of the rivals.

A policeman was sworn at when he tried to convince the crowd that this was not so.

When the traffic officials opened the N2, there were howls from the crowd when they saw Cata taxis approaching. Some fired shots. Police stopped the taxis before they reached the main crowd and told them to take a different route.



CONFRONTATION: An angry Codeta supporter has a go at a policeman. There were scuffles between some in the menacing crowd and policemen at the Khayelitsha bridge.

PICTURE: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA

2 more die in taxi war as province talks tough

Strict permit system in pipeline (332)
ARG 12/9/96

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

Two more people have been killed and two wounded in the conflict between rival taxi associations Codeta and Cata.

Police arrested three men and seized three firearms in connection with the death of a man at KTC shack settlement near Nyanga today.

Shooting broke out between taxi groups allegedly when 50 Cata drivers tried to reclaim a vehicle they said was stolen from them yesterday.

The man was shot in his house when he peered out of his door to see what was going on.

Yesterday a taxi driver was shot dead and two youths aged 14 and 16 were wounded when shots

were fired at them from a passing taxi in Guguletu.

Meanwhile the Western Cape provincial government has, for the first time, called for the immediate regulation of the industry.

Yesterday the provincial cabinet discussed issuing permits for routes and priority status for specific routes and terminuses.

Frikkie Odendaal, spokesman for Western Cape Premier Herinus Kriel, said Mr Kriel was very concerned about the crisis-stricken taxi industry and wanted regulation as soon as possible.

This is the first time the provincial government has supported the call for regulation of the industry and Mr Odendaal explained its previous stance by saying that in a free market economy regulation was unnecessary

as the market sorted itself out according to supply and demand.

"But this market is clearly over-saturated and is sorting itself out with guns."

Four people have died this week in shootings and many others have lost their lives in the war over lucrative routes.

At the cabinet meeting, the provincial government also supported recommendations by the National Taxi Task Force, giving it the go-ahead to provide much-needed legislation.

Police MEC Gerald Morkel and transport MEC Leonard Ramatlakane met yesterday to discuss police action.

National Minister of Safety and Security, Sidney Mufamadi, will meet Codeta today to discuss its conflict with Cata.

It may be noted as well that as proposed in the Green Paper on Employment Standards it is our intention to extend the coverage of wage determinations in the unorganised sectors to include domestics and agricultural workers.

Finally, it should be noted that the above comments relate primarily to the formal sector of the labour market and the government has very little influence on how wages are determined in the informal sector of the economy.

- (2) I have appointed a task team to review the recommendations of the Comprehensive Labour Market Commission including the aspects of wages determination in both the organised and unorganised sectors and our position on these matters will be announced in due course.

State-to-state oil deals

*28. Mr A H NEL asked the Minister of Mineral and Energy Affairs:

What is his or his Department's policy on state-to-state oil deals? N1578E

The MINISTER OF MINERAL AND ENERGY AFFAIRS:

The policy is that South Africa will engage in any oil deal which will secure the optimum benefit for the country, either by means of an outright cash for oil deal or, where so negotiated, other suitable beneficial counter-performance.

SABC: investigation into alleged corruption

*29. Mr J J DOWRY asked the Minister for Posts, Telecommunications and Broadcasting:

- (1) Whether the SABC is currently undertaking an investigation into alleged corruption among any of its employees; if so, (a) when will the report be published and (b) what will be the costs involved;
- (2) whether he will make a statement on the matter? N1580E

The MINISTER FOR POSTS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND BROADCASTING:

The Chairman of the SABC has informed me as follows:

- (1) Yes. The Group Executive Officer of the SABC ordered an investigation into allegations of corruption in mid-July 1996. He has also issued a public call for information to assist with the investigation.

(a) The investigation is being undertaken by the Corporation's Internal Auditor. The Auditor will report to the Group Chief Executive at the end of September 1996.

(b) There is no special budget allocated to this exercise as it is undertaken by the Internal Auditor.

- (2) No statement will be made on the matter.

Loans for affordable housing

*30. Mr M G MASHER asked the Minister of Housing:

- (1) How many loans for affordable housing have been made available as a result of the agreement of understanding between banks, the State and the South African National Civics Organisation;

(2) whether the agreement of understanding is still in existence; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether he will make a statement on the matter? N1581E

The MINISTER OF HOUSING:

- (1) The agreement is the Record of Understanding which has only two signatories viz. the Department of Housing (representing the South African Government) and the Association of Mortgage Lenders.

The total number of loans granted nationally in the affordable housing market from June 1995 to July 1996 amounted to 56 171 loans, with a total value of approximately R3,8 billion. Of these 26 298 loans with a value of approximately R1,1 billion were granted in the government-subsidised market by financial institutions accredited with the Mortgage Indemnity Fund (Pty) Ltd. The number of subsidised affordable housing market loans approved nationally, averaged 2 004 per month over the period March 1996 to June 1996 and when statistics for new lending in July

1996 are compared with the national monthly average, lending rose by 136%, 4 734 loans in July 1996 versus the average of 2 004.

- (2) and (3) Yes, the Record of Understanding in so far as it concerns new lending, is administered by the Mortgage Indemnity Fund (Pty) Ltd on an ongoing basis.

The agreement makes provision for the annual review of lending targets. Negotiations in this regard are in progress.

Taxi industry: legislation/registration

*31. Mr J S A MAVUSO asked the Minister of Transport:

- (1) Whether his Department is considering the legalisation and registration of persons in the taxi industry; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether legally registered members of taxi organisations will be able to claim government aid; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether he will make a statement on the matter? N1582E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

- (1) All minibus-taxi owners have to legalise their operations and minibus-taxi associations and their members will be encouraged to register.

All members previously conducting illegal operations who now comply with the set criteria will have the opportunity to legalise their operations in terms of the special legalisation procedure. If applications for legalisation do not comply with the criteria, members have to apply to the Local Road Transportation Board in terms of the normal application procedure as described in the Act.

According to the registration procedure, minibus-taxi associations have to submit applications for registration on prescribed forms to the Provincial Registrar. These forms will contain information on the association itself, on the legal and illegal members as well as the association's constitution. Both the Provincial Registrar and Provincial Taxi Office will assist the indus-

try in the registration process. Individual operators not being members of taxi associations will also be permitted to register.

- (2) Government is proposing various means of assistance to the minibus-taxi industry, which include training, assistance with the establishment of taxi co-operatives and taxi fuel retail installations, as well as the establishment of financial and insurance guarantee schemes. Only legal operators who are members of registered associations will be considered for assistance.

(3) Issues regarding legalisation, registration and economic assistance were discussed during a press conference held on 6 August 1996. If necessary, another press conference may be held.

Permits to fishermen from Japan/Taiwan

*32. Mr C A WYNGAARD asked the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism:

- (1) Whether his Department has granted permits to any fishermen from (a) Japan and/or (b) Taiwan; if so, for what reasons;
- (2) whether he will make a statement on the matter? N1583E

The MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND TOURISM:

- (1) No, the Minister grants permits.

(a) 34.

(b) 30.

The permits are valid only for 1996 and the officials concerned are warned that there is no guarantee that further permits will be issued.

The reasons are as follows:

The Bilateral Agreements in terms of which the permits are issued have been in place since the mid-seventies. These agreements cannot be terminated overnight as it is customary in international relationships to discuss significant changes in agreements with treaty partners and if certain arrangements are changed, to allow for a suitable phasing out period. The Committee that investigated the future fisheries policy for South Africa

Taxi used to choke roads at protests may be fenced in

CHRIS BATEMAN

IN a tough crackdown on taxi violence, warring or protesting taxi drivers can expect to find themselves suddenly encircled with razor-wire as police search vehicles, confiscate weapons and intensify random road blocks.

These are among the measures agreed upon in a top-level meeting between Police Services MEC Mr Gerald Morkel and his police management yesterday.

Morkel said the razor-wire was a practical answer to a 25% understaffed police service which is under severe pressure.

"The wire means we don't need the same manpower to do this kind of job and frees us to fight crime elsewhere," he explained.

Morkel's meeting yesterday followed Cape Town Olympic bid co-ordinator Mr Chris Ball's crisis meeting with Morkel on Tuesday after Codeta

taxi drivers blocked the airport access road on Friday.

Another measure he announced was the summary impounding of offending taxis — even though the law only allows a maximum reclaim fee of R50 at present.

He ruled out closing off ranks, "for the moment", but said Commissioner Leon Wessels could legally close down ranks for 24 hours — "as a last resort".

Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane intends registering every taxi within six months. All permits will be route-based instead of the present "operating radius", making it clear who can operate where.

Morkel said regulation was the only way to deal with the causes of the violence.

Morkel, Ramatlakane, Wessels and Tourism MEC Mr Lampie Fick will meet Safety and Security Minister Sidney Mufamadi this afternoon to discuss the taxi crisis.

Trouble brewing as taxi drivers stake out own routes

(332)
A conflict is simmering on the Baragwanath-Meadowlands route near Johannesburg after two rival taxi bodies allocated themselves "exclusive territories", the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council said yesterday.

It said the Diepmeadow and Meadowlands-Dube North taxi associations had allocated themselves exclusive operating routes in the Diepkloof and Meadowlands areas.

As a result the Bara-Meadow Taxi Association had been forced out of operation. This had resulted in the establishment of an illegal transit rank in Orlando East, which had created problems including water and ablution facilities usage, parking on pavements, and a situation whereby passengers had to pay a double fare for what should essentially be one trip.

The council said the two taxi associations had been given until Monday to "get their house in order", failing which decisive action would be taken against them. - Sapa

Staw 14/9/96

Restore peace in SWA, says Black Sash

Own Correspondent

PORT ELIZABETH. — The Black Sash yesterday reiterated its call for an end to South Africa's "illegal occupation" of SWA/Namibia and urged implementation of measures to restore peace in the territory.

A statement issued at the end of the Black Sash's 30th annual conference here called for:

- Immediate implementation of the United Nations resolution.
- The disbanding of the paramilitary police task force, Koevoet.
- The release of all SWA/Namibian political prisoners and detainees.
- The abolition of the Terrorism Act and all Attorney-General proclamations relating to security in SWA/Namibia.

The statement resulted from a joint report compiled by Mrs Molly Blackburn and Mrs Di Bishop after a visit to SWA/Namibia and the operational area in Sep-

tember last year.

The conference also discussed reports on removals, housing, education, influx control, pension schemes, minimum wages, detentions and military conscription.

Government "reforms", especially proposed influx-control reforms, were generally distrusted as a measure designed only to "temporarily pacify" blacks, the conference heard. They were not genuine moves to remove apartheid.

The Black Sash also condemned calls for the scrapping of minimum wages and lashed out at the quality of interpretation currently provided in South Africa's courts.

"Many injustices occur because the vast majority of blacks are undefended and have little or no knowledge of the law," it said.

Mrs Sheena Duncan was re-elected national president of the Black Sash.

2 killed in taxi war

ST (CM) BY YVETTE VAN BREDA (332) 15/9/96

TAXI violence exploded in the Karoo with at least two people shot dead in midnight shootings on the N1 between Beaufort West and Laingsburg at the weekend.

At least six people were wounded in three separate incidents between 11.30pm on Friday and 12.30am on Saturday, police said yesterday.

Meanwhile, in Cape Town, taxi violence continued unabated with one man shot dead in Guguletu and another seriously injured in Nyanga.

Police spokeswoman Sergeant Vivienne Lentoor said Oudtshoorn police had arrested five men on Saturday morning and confiscated firearms and ammunition when they searched a vehicle outside Calitzdorp after the N1 shootings.

Top-level meeting on taxi strife

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

The central government has stepped in to help solve Cape Town's taxi war between the rival Cata and Codeta minibus taxi associations. A high-level meeting will be held tomorrow between government and provincial ministers, police and leaders of the taxi groups.

Minister of Safety and Security Sydney Mufamadi, Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj, Western Cape Minister of Transport Leonard Ramatlakane and provincial police commissioner Leon Wessels will be at the meeting.

It is reported to be the first time

representatives from the national government will talk to Cape Town's taxi associations about the continuing taxi war, which claimed four more lives last week.

Mr Mufamadi and Gerald Morkel, provincial Minister of Police, held discussions with the Codeta group on Thursday.

Afterwards, Mr Mufamadi said although Codeta's grievances should receive immediate attention, it was important Cata's side was also heard.

He said Codeta regretted blockading Cape Town International Airport to attract attention to its grievances, as it was not in Codeta's interests to offend the public. Mr Mufamadi declined to give more

details of the meeting, but said it could harm negotiations if only one side was able to air its grievances.

"First prize would be to find a solution through discussion," he said. Mr Morkel agreed, saying he hoped a peaceful solution to the crisis could be found at the next meeting.

Codeta spokesman Howard Dyubeni said: "I am satisfied with the meeting and we will now wait and see."

On Wednesday, the provincial authorities gave the go-ahead to departments to start regulating the taxi industry. Lawlessness and violence in the industry have been largely attributed to the lack of permits for specific routes.

ART 16/9/96

332

sowetan
Taxi 16/9/96
**bodies
get the
riot act**
(332)

**By Khangale
Makhado**

THE Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council has given two feuding Soweto taxi organisations until today to "get their house in order" or face the wrath of the authorities.

The two are the Diepmeadow and Meadowlands and Diepkloof Noord associations.

Their spokesmen were not available for comment yesterday.

A statement released jointly by the GJMTC and the Gauteng ministry of public transport, roads and public works lashed out at the violence in the taxi industry, saying the situation was unacceptable.

"The ongoing violence in the industry has led to urgent intervention by both provincial and local government structures and should the Diepmeadow and MDN bodies fail to put their house in order by today, we will be forced to take decisive action," the statement said.

Last month safety and security MEC Jessie Duarte threatened to close the Baragwanath taxi rank unless the the Soweto Taxi Services and the Soweto Taxi Association stopped fighting over the use of routes.

Several taxis belonging to both organisations were set alight during the confrontations which left thousands of commuters stranded.

Rivalry

"At the centre of the controversy is the continuous rivalry between the STS and STA.

"The GJMTC and the transport MEC have intervened and set up several mediation processes which have led to organisations committing themselves to finding lasting solutions.

"However, the Diepmeadow and MDN taxi associations now are fighting over the Baragwanath-Meadowlands routes.

Forced out

"These organisations have earmarked exclusive territories for themselves in Diepkloof and Meadowlands respectively and have forced the Bara-Meadow Taxi Association out of operation," according to the statement.

According to the GJMTC, this had resulted in the establishment of an illegal transit rank in Orlando East, creating problems which resulted in passengers having to pay double fares for a single trip.

Fourways taxi rank attack leaves driver dead, 3 hurt

By LARA SMITH

Taxi violence flared yesterday in Fourways, Sandton, claiming the life of a taxi owner and leaving three people wounded.

Diepnoot Taxi Association member William Maimane was gunned down by four men at the Fourways Mall taxi rank yesterday afternoon. Two other Diepnoot taxi owners and a driver were wounded in the shooting.

The Diepnoot Taxi Associa-

tion operates between Diepsloot and Fourways in the Nooitgedacht area.

Witnesses said the attackers were dropped off in Witkoppen Road by a light-blue Toyota Venture at about 3.30pm. They walked around the corner, into William Nicol Drive, from where they opened fire on taxi owners sitting at the taxi rank. No further incidents were reported this morning.

Charles Kona described how he escaped with his life when the

gunman who had targeted him ran out of bullets.

"I was running away and crying. He tried to shoot me and I hid behind two women who were buying flowers, but the gun was empty," a shaken Kona said.

Members of the Diepnoot Taxi Association said tensions between their association and the rival Bryanston Taxi Association had intensified since Diepnoot was granted permits last week to carry passengers between Diep-

sloot and Fourways. Before that, the route belonged exclusively to the Bryanston Taxi Association.

"All we want is for the route to be split 50-50," one Diepnoot taxi owner said. "For four years we have been struggling to get on to this route, and now that we're here we're being killed."

The attackers fled from the scene on foot. A police spokesman said a blue Toyota Venture was later found at the Hilltop taxi rank in Randburg.

Star 16/9/96

(332)

ARC 18/9/96

Pirates ruining us, say taxi (332) drivers

JUDY DAMON
STAFF REPORTER

Sedan taxi drivers complain that pirate operators are putting them out of business.

While the minibus taxi industry has long been a source of conflict, differences are starting to emerge in the conventional industry.

Recently, nearly 200 sedan taxi drivers marched to the traffic department demanding that the law be enforced to keep pirates off the roads.

According to taxi driver Bill Smith of Marine Taxis "nothing came of the meeting". He said the legitimate sedan taxi service could be "on its way out" and the traffic department was partly to blame.

Taxi fleet owner Ernest MacDonald said: "This is not a new problem. For the past 20 years we have been asking the traffic department to enforce the law to get rid of the pirates, but nothing has been done."

Cape Town traffic chief Wouter Smit said he was fully aware of the problem but it was very difficult to find a feasible and practical solution. The traffic department had assured taxi operators it would do its best to solve the problem.

Mr Smit said the department was on the lookout for pirate taxis. It had demarcated zones outside nightclubs, on a trial basis, for the exclusive use of registered sedan taxis in an effort to keep out the pirates.

No more blockades, taxi rivals promise

(332)

Codeta, Cata in new peace effort

STAFF REPORTERS

Rival Cape Town taxi groups Codeta and Cata have promised Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi and Transport Minister Mac Maharaj that there will be no more taxi blockades in the city.

Mr Mufamadi made it clear this week that drivers would be arrested and prosecuted if they set up blockades.

Codeta blockaded Cape Town International Airport earlier this month.

Representatives of Cata and Codeta have met Mr Maharaj, Mr Mufamadi, Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane, acting Western Cape Safety and Secu-

rity Minister Lampie Fick and Western Cape Provincial Police Commissioner Leon Wes-

sels. The meeting was held in an effort to curb the unlawful activities of the associations.

There have been 29 peace agreements between the two groups but violence continues.

It was agreed at the meeting that problematic aspects of the 29th peace agreement, such as routes and rank control, would be discussed in working sessions organised by Mr Ramatlakane and Mr Fick.

It was also decided that both groups would be present at these meetings.

The groups committed themselves to register with the Department of Transport in terms

of the nationwide campaign to regulate and control the taxi industry.

The associations also agreed that grievances would be heard by Commissioner Wes-

sels. There have been frequent outbreaks of the taxi war this year, in which dozens of people have been killed in the power struggle over control of taxi ranks and routes.

In the wake of the violence, the authorities have decided to tighten permits for use of these facilities.

At the centre of recent violence was Codeta's complaint that Cata dominated the Bellville taxi rank, effectively excluding Codeta taxis from one of the most important routes in the Peninsula.

ARL 18/9/96

Autonet beats problems to lift net profit to R23m

(332) CTCBR 18/9/96

By John Spira

DEPUTY EDITOR

Johannesburg — Autonet, Transnet's passenger and road transport division, tipped as a frontrunner for privatisation, lifted operating profit before finance costs by 15 percent to R20,7 million in the year to March 31.

Autonet increased its total income by 11 percent to R450 million, while net profit rose 13 percent to R23 million.

Peter Mageza, Autonet's chief executive, said yesterday that Autonet had done well to maintain its profit growth, given industrial action within Transnet, the oil industry, the chicken industry and the closure of the largest Rainbow Chicken depot in Hammarsdale.

"We also had to contend with the effects of the heavy rainfalls last season, which had a short-term negative effect on the agricultural sector," he said.

Autonet had invested R171 million in new and refurbished vehicles over the past two years following low levels of investment in previous periods.

Mageza was confident that the investment programme would enhance Autonet's competitiveness and productivity, while raising the return on assets from 7,2 percent to 16 percent by 2000.

On privatisation, Mageza commented: "We expect that Transnet's vision will be revised, accompanied by clear mandates, processes and timing regarding the restructuring of state assets."

Taximen ask for inquiry

(332) *semetan* 18/9/96
MARITZBURG taxi operators demanded yesterday that KwaZulu-Natal transport MEC Mr S'bu Ndebele established a commission of inquiry to investigate the operation of the Northern Suburbs Taxi Association in the city.

About 150 taxi drivers marched to the Maritzburg police station at noon yesterday to deliver a memorandum of grievances to Midlands area Commissioner Eric de Preez.

The operators claimed that some members of the NSTA were self-appointed and did not represent the industry.

They also claimed they were required to pay the association R15 000 a week without the association accounting for the money.

The drivers said many operators paid the money out of fear "because it has been made known that those who did not pay will be severely dealt with, including physical punishment".

The men said they were sometimes punished by illegal "people's courts" or required to pay fines if they violated laws laid down by taxi bosses. - Sapa.

Action on taxi violence urged

(332) Star 19/9/96
By SELLO MOTLHABAKWE
Soweto Bureau

The Gauteng government's "fire-fighting" approach to solving the long-running feud between rival taxi organisations was unlikely to stop the bloodletting or breed stability, the Soweto Taxi Association said yesterday.

The STA said part of the blame for renewed violence in the past two weeks was due to the slow pace of negotiations between itself, the Gauteng government and the rival Soweto Taxi Services.

At a media briefing at the STA's Merafe offices yesterday, spokesmen Absalom Dlamini and Ernest Mogane were scathing

about the Gauteng government's part-time monitoring committee.

They claimed the committee and the provincial transport department became involved only in times of crisis, such as when violence erupted at taxi ranks.

The STA said it favoured a permanent monitoring structure which would also bring about a merger between the rival associations, but this could not be done because "things are not normal at grassroots level".

The STA's criticism follows threats this week by the Gauteng administration to close down two illegal taxi ranks in Orlando East. The government did not act on its threat.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 21/22 1996

When the bullets start flying ...

MXOLISI MEXASHE
STAFF REPORTER

It is strangely ironic that taxi operators who bear the brunt of the periodic violence between rival associations should continue engaging in their warfare and risk killing innocent commuters in the process.

But the taxi-violence which has become the bane of communities and commuters' lives goes on, in spite of various attempts by the relevant authorities, political parties and the police to bring about peace.

Saturday Argus, this week turned to the taxi operators themselves to find out what the real issues and problems were, and how violence affected their lives.

When the bloody feuding between the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), and the Congress of Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) resurfaced some weeks ago after sporadic eruptions, it was—as usual—bad news for the families of the men who spend a significant time of their lives chasing each other all over the townships with guns and other dangerous weapons.

Mthethleleli Lushayo, 30, father of Sithembale, 5 and Simpphiwe, 2, admits the lives of taxi drivers and operators during such moments are like the "lives of chickens" which face slaughtering at any time.

When he joined his uncle's taxi business after passing Standard 7 in 1966, things were promising and the business was doing fairly well. Mr Lushayo was able to buy his own vehicle, a "good second hand" minibus in 1992.

He was able not only to maintain his children and wife, but Mr Lushayo could also meet the needs of his younger brothers and sisters who are still at school, with his earnings of about R4 000 a month.

"It is true, we should not really be fighting over a few rands and cents, but it is also very important that there is order and harmony, and that we should not want to occupy each and every taxi rank as some of our friends in Codeta want to do," says Mr Lushayo.

Two other taxi operators who joined in said: "As long as Codeta runs illegal taxi ranks we will, unfortunately, continue killing each other."

"When bullets start flying around, I do not

sleep at home. As you can see, my clothes are dirty and have not been changed for more than three days.

"When my children bring me new clothes I change them right inside this taxi," said Mr Lushayo.

The last time he slept at home was last Thursday when he was attacked by a group of gunmen who fired at him as he was leaving his house at 5am. He fired back but no one was hit.

He said his family had been worried all this time and he had resolved that "come what may" he was going back to be with his wife and children that very evening.

His licensed gun was impounded by the police recently in the ongoing effort to restore peace in the area and he will have to rely on his telephone to call for help in the event of an attack.

James Tafa, 47, is an executive member of rival Codeta who has been through most of the bloody skirmishes with Cata. He operates mainly from Site C Khaveitisha.

Mr Tafa, who is married with six children, began his business in the taxi industry in 1988. Previously, he had been employed at

a brick manufacturing factory in Brackenfell where he was the manager.

He used most of his retirement package to buy a new minibus which he used as a taxi.

He says between 1988 and 1990 his business was very good and there was "harmony in the taxi industry".

But things began changing by 1990 when there was continuous taxi violence for 18 months. "We lost many of our vehicles, I lost my brand new Kombi which was burnt.

"Lots of people lost their lives, including community leaders who were trying to bring about peace. The business suffered badly and I had to start afresh two years later," said Mr Tafa.

After being unemployed for two years, Mr Tafa managed to buy a second-hand Kombi in 1993 when business was still as uncertain as it is now. When there was a lull in the violence for about two years, Mr Tafa said he was convinced peace had come to stay among the taxi operators.

But he was wrong; another taxi war erupted and more people died in the conflict - taxi operators and innocent commuters. He lost his second vehicle in the violence.

Union invited to join in a bid for Sun Air

~~26~~ (332)
Renee Grawitzky

THE Cosatu-aligned SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu) has been approached to participate in a consortium in a bid for Sun Air.

The approach by the consortium, consisting of management consultancy Genrho and a black business grouping, follows attempts by government to speed up its campaign to sell off state assets with Sun Air, the former Bophuthatswana airline, being at the top of the list. **BD 23/9/96**

Sarhwu assistant general secretary Tshidiso Moshao said at the weekend the union was not opposed to the sale of Sun Air in principle, pending proper consultation with Sun Air workers and the union. He confirmed the union had been offered an equity stake in Sun Air by Genrho if it became part of their consortium. The potential equity stake had not been finalised. He said this represented a move in the right direction as the union "would have a voice" and would be at the helm of those controlling Sun Air in the future.

Although the union had not yet signed an agreement with the consortium, such a move fell within the policy decision adopted at Cosatu's recent central executive committee on state

Continued on Page 2

Sun Air

(332)

BD 23/9/96

Continued from Page 1

asset restructuring, Moshao said. It would also represent and form part of black economic empowerment.

Genrho MD Ghaleb Cachalia confirmed that discussions around the establishment of a consortium to bid for Sun Air had been held with the union. Once discussions were complete, hopefully within a week, and a range of oth-

er details, including funding, finalised, an approach would be made to government. Cachalia said no price had yet been determined.

Transport Minister Mac Maharaj indicated when government first unveiled its privatisation plans that rough calculations showed Sun Air had assets of about R1,6bn. Since a decision to commercialise Sun Air three years ago, the airline has turned around a history of losses.

See Page 3

Randburg taxi rank clean-up

BY ANNA COX

The Northern Metro Council launched a clean-up, education and safety campaign last week to tidy up the centre of Randburg, especially at the Hilltop taxi rank.

The campaign is aimed at taxi drivers, commuters and hawkers.

Many businesses near the taxi rank have vacated buildings, claiming the noise, litter, hawkers and taxi violence were keeping customers and clients away. Taxi operators use the rank to wash and service their vehicles, often causing a blockage of drains.

Northern Metro mayor Danny Kekana said the council was ap-

pealing to the hawkers and the taxis to co-operate in keeping the area clean and improving its appearance and character.

"It will be for the general good of the area and the people. If the area is clean, it will look better and the people will not be exposed to diseases and other health hazards.

"It is futile for the council to come in every day to clean up, only to face the same litter and pollution the next day," he said.

A satellite police station, attached to the Linden police station, was also to be opened at the taxi rank in an attempt to resolve the crime problems.

Star 23/9/96 (332)

Section 10 improvement 'marginal'

OF ASSEMBLY. Amendment Bill — which provided for black women to have the legal power to take out 99-year leasehold rights and apply for loans from building societies. The system whereby all people other than blacks must apply for a permit before entering a black urban area would also be abolished, although a commissioned police officer might prohibit

people from entering or order them to leave such areas if he was of the opinion they were "undesirable" and that the "public order and security" was threatened. Mr H J Tempel (NP Ermelo) said Mr Swart's description of the relaxation of Section 10 restrictions was "unreasonable" as these rights were highly valued by blacks and the move

would be welcomed in their communities. Mr Casper Uys (CP Barberton) said his party opposed the bill as it was against any relaxation of Section 10 rights. The government had agreed to let illegal squatters from Crossroads stay at the new black township of Khayelitsha for 18 months but this was only a government bluff, as it was obvious they would stay there permanently.

Although Crossroads squatters were being resettled at the new township there was no perceptible reduction of the numbers in Crossroads. The exact opposite was in fact happening and the CP had information of a large-scale influx of black people from Ciskei and Transkei to the Western Cape. — Sapa

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the PFP will support the co-operation development

CAPE TOWN

15/6/85 15/6/85

CT 24/9/96

Two arrested as (332) taxi war flares

JACKIE CAMERON

POLICE arrested two people in connection with an illegal firearm and seized two firearms in a raid on more than 100 shacks in KTC squatter camp, Nyanga, yesterday.

The raid followed another bloody outbreak of taxi violence in the Peninsula, in which two people were shot dead and three people were injured.

Taxi driver Mr Mcebisi Maki died after being shot in the chest when gunmen opened fire from two minibuses taxis in Guguletu about 6am, police spokeswoman Inspector Vrina Simon said.

Passengers Mr Lucius Mgabadei and Ms Marta Mzeewu, of Guguletu, both suffered leg wounds in the attack.

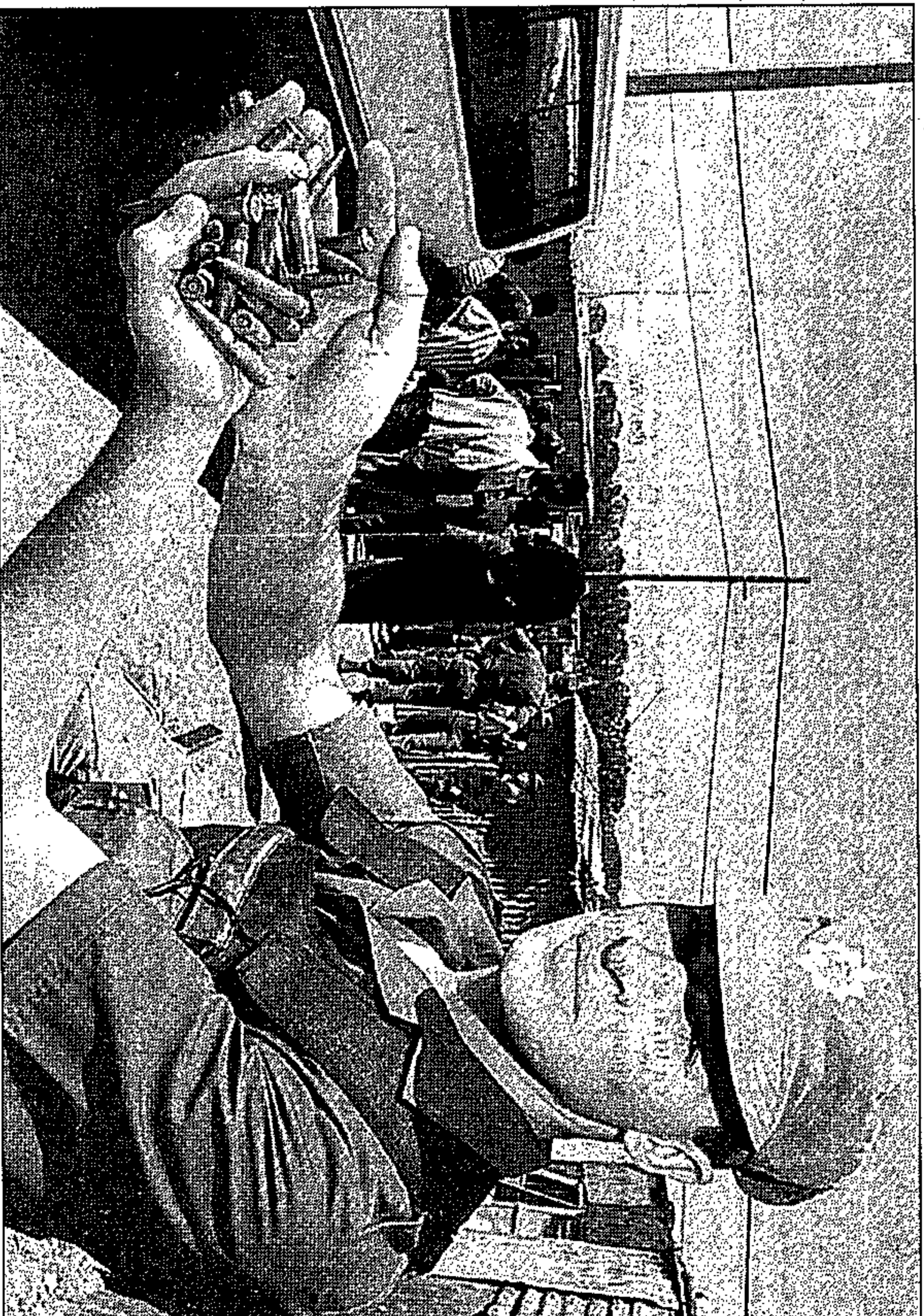
About 15 minutes later, a group of men opened fire from a sedan taxi, killing Mrs Regina Mkosi of Guguletu and wounding taxi driver Mr Victor Makapela.

Hours later, police received information that arms were being hidden in shacks in KTC squatter camp. They cordoned off about 130 shacks in a search operation.

Police arrested two people in a shack in which they discovered an illegal 9mm pistol.

They seized an illegal revolver in an empty shack, and also recovered several rounds of ammunition, Simon said.

The South African National Defence Force assisted Public Order Policing Service members with the search for weapons.



BULLETS HAUL: A member of the Public Order Policing Service with a handful of 7,62mm bullets found by police in the KTC squatter camp yesterday.

PICTURE: BENNY GOOL



Close taxi rank, say angry KTC residents

(332)

PETER DENNEHY

CT 25/9/96

ABOUT 400 KTC residents marched to the Guguletu police station yesterday demanding that the nearby Nyanga taxi terminus be closed.

Led by the local ANC, SACP and SA National Civics Organisation branches and several local bishops, marchers demanded that the terminus be closed until the two rival taxi organisations reached a peaceful settlement.

They said the violence had spilled over from the terminus into their neighbourhood, leaving five KTC residents dead.

Yesterday's protest was sparked by the murder of Mrs Regina Mkosi, a nurse who was shot in her car on Monday morning on her way to work. Initial reports had said she was a taxi driver.

Sanco leader Mr George Mqokolo warned that if anybody else was killed irate residents might be forced to take the law into their own hands.

Several of the marchers carried banners intimating that police were in league with those they termed "taxi criminals".

Mr Gladstone Ntamo, city councillor for KTC, said residents believed certain policemen — against police regulations — were owners of minibuses. "The police seem too supportive of the taxi industry, and too uncaring about the violence," he said.

Several of the marchers carried posters calling for the dismissal of a policeman they believed was involved with the taximen.

Captain Gerald Frey, who received a memorandum on behalf of his station commander, told the crowd the police would do their utmost to solve the problem.

STOP THE WAR: These women were among a crowd of about 400 who marched from KTC to the Guguletu police station to urge police to take tougher action to end the taxi violence. Several residents have been killed recently in taxi-related violence.

PICTURE: BENNY GOOL

KTC fury over taxi war

Marchers call for police to act

(332) ARG 25/9/96

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE
STAFF REPORTER

More than 500 residents of KTC shack settlement braved heavy rain to march to Guguletu police station in protest against taxi violence in their area.

The marchers yesterday called for the resignation of Western Cape Premier Her-nus Kriel and provincial Minister of Police Gerald Morkel, saying they had failed to end the taxi violence in the province.

Violence between the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Committee for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta) has claimed at least six lives in the past couple of weeks.

Scores of people have been injured.

There were a number of shootings and murders last weekend in KTC, a Cata stronghold.

Residents accused the police of complicity in the taxi violence.

"We don't want to take the law into our hands, but if the police fail to act we will be forced to do so," said George Mqokolo, spokesman for the KTC branch of the SA National Civics Organisation.

"We need full-time police protection at the Nyanga taxi rank until the taxi organisations solve their problems, even if it means closing the rank," he said.

Daniel Landingwe, chairman of the Guguletu Community Police Forum, said police should search all taxis in the area for weapons and check all permits.



JACK LESTRADE

We protest: part of the crowd of 500 KTC residents who took part in the march against taxi violence

Deaths prompt taxi cutback

By AUDREY SEKWAKWA

(332)

Commuters between Diepkloof and Johannesburg may have to find alternative transport following a decision by taxi drivers on the route to operate only between 6am and 6pm.

The drivers decided on the dawn-to-dusk operation because of the bloody conflict between rival taxi groups, which has claimed five lives in two weeks.

"Most of the recent shooting incidents have occurred in the early hours of the morning and after dark," said a driver, who gave his name as Thomas.

A Diepmeadow Taxi Association spokesman denied they had ordered the limited shift, saying drivers had made the decision voluntarily.

Frustrated Diepkloof residents, however, said other taxi organisations might move on to the route, which could lead to even more bloodshed.

Bus services were unreliable, they added.

Star 27/9/96

Bullets and bombs fly in Pretoria taxi chaos

(332)

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Arav 27/9/96
A man was shot and seven vehicles were destroyed by petrol bombs as violence erupted at the Jerusalem taxi rank in Marabastad, Pretoria, early today.

Police arrested two suspects at the scene while an unidentified man, shot in the foot, was rushed to the H F Verwoerd Hospital.

A Zimbabwean woman and her 11-month-old baby narrowly escaped death when they were trapped in a burning minibus taxi while operators from rival organisations exchanged gunfire.

Catherine Thenga, a trader, and her son, Cosmos, were sleeping in one of the minibuses when a group of men in two vehicles started shooting and hurling petrol bombs at the parked taxis.

Thenga said she was awakened by smoke and the sound of gunshots.

"Shots were being fired from all directions and I was scared of leaving the vehicle.

"But the smoke was getting too serious and my baby was coughing. I jumped out the minibus with my baby on my back and handbag in my hand."

She took cover behind a wall of a building while her wares, valued at about R8 000, went up in smoke in the burning minibus.

Police spokesman Captain Dave Harrington said two men in a Toyota Cressida were arrested at the scene. However, the occupants of a Nissan Skyline escaped.

Harrington said the incident could be linked to conflict between the SA Long Distance Taxi Association and the Letlhabile Taxi Organisation which has claimed the lives of 10 people in recent weeks.

lose the forthcoming PAC elections — which was a strong possibility — he

Legatho, he said. A number of PAC members already

pending appointment, and said Man- delo had invited liberation organisa-

ed to positions in government and in the civil service.

Taxi owners not obliged to register with transport ministry

Wynndham Hartley

CAPE TOWN — Government will not force mini-bus taxi drivers or owners to register but will encourage taxi associations and their members to sign up with the transport department.

In response to a parliamentary question from DP MP Kobus Jordaan, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said that legal compulsion of taxi drivers and owners to register was not being contemplated.

Maharaj said that only "minibus taxi associations and their legal mem-

bers will be encouraged to register" through the recently created registration procedure.

The procedure was formulated by the National Taxi Task Team and announced in early July.

He said that provincial registrars were being established and that all taxi associations that had constitutions and complied with other criteria were invited to register.

The incentive used to encourage registration is that there will be economic and other forms of assistance for those who join. This assistance will be

in the form of driver-training, administration and business skills training.

Maharaj was unable to say how many associations had applied for registration so far as the process had begun only on August 6.

He confirmed that registration forms had been delivered to the provinces, the local road transportation boards, local authorities and provincial registrars.

There were, Maharaj said, no estimates of the income which derived from the taxi industry and he therefore could not answer that element of Jor-

daan's question.

DP Transport spokesman James Selfe said Maharaj's statement that there would be no legal compulsion on taxi drivers to register was "bizarre" and "potentially extremely dangerous". He said that encouragement to register would do nothing to bring about safety on the roads in a sector which was involved in a large number of road accidents.

He said that registration only of associations would also mean that those in the taxi industry would continue to escape their tax responsibilities.

Passenger shot dead in taxi attack

fonten 30/9/96
(332)

By McKeed Kotlolo

A PASSENGER WAS SHOT DEAD, eight other people wounded and seven minibus taxis burnt out in two separate incidents of taxi violence in Pretoria at the weekend.

Six suspects have been arrested and two cars confiscated minutes after one of the incidents.

In the first incident, minibus taxis belonging to the South African Long Distance Taxi Association were fired on and petrol bombed at the Marabastad taxi rank, between Bloed and Boom streets on Friday morning.

One driver was slightly wounded in the leg, seven taxis gutted, one slightly damaged and three others hit by bullets from attackers firing from two cars at about 6.20am.

Six suspects arrested after seven minibusses are petrol bombed

Quick police reaction resulted in the arrest of six suspects and the confiscation of two cars.

In another incident, an unidentified male passenger was shot dead in Soshanguve and seven others seriously injured in an attack on a minibus at about 7.30pm also on Friday.

No arrests

Police spokesman Captain Morne van Wyk said the injured, including an off-duty policeman Constable Isaac Nkosi, were rushed to Jubilee Hospital in Temba, Hammanskraal.

No arrests have been made.

Van Wyk said about 12 people had

been killed in taxi violence in the Pretoria area during the past six weeks.

He also confirmed that a special police team was investigating the possibility that hitmen allegedly employed by feuding taxi bodies had been hired to eliminate policemen investigating taxi violence.

Meanwhile, the Transitional District Council for the Eastern Region has expressed its concern about the violence. Mr Ernest Masala told a media conference in Brits that his council had formed *ad hoc* committee to look into ways of finding solutions.

'Tide to cities' will keep flowing



By Louis
Beckerling
Business Editor

NEITHER legislation, police action, nor the creation of "magnets" in rural areas will stem the inexorable tide of black urbanisation, Port Elizabeth's civil engineers were warned this week.

"And it is a tragedy that because of the South African obsession for organisation and neat solutions — and bulldozers — we have failed to build on international experience," added Mr Ron Heydenrych, national president of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

Addressing the PE branch of the institute this week, Mr Heydenrych said South Africans should reverse their attitude to the spread of informal urban settlements and acknowledge that areas such as Crossroads "are not tempo-

rary phenomena, and are not necessarily bad".

"The real challenge for white South Africa in the next 20 years lies close to home — not in the black areas, but on our own doorstep.

"South African urbanisation will be associated with escalating expectations and the emergence of a black middle and upper class. The alternative would be political instability which will destroy our society."

Mr Heydenrych's criticism follows an equally sharp attack on the Government's policy towards regional development and influx control, delivered in Port Elizabeth last month by Urban Foundation re-

search officer Miss Anne Bernstein.

"The South African decentralisation policy, like many international attempts, is based upon the premise that control can be exerted on population patterns by encouraging industry to establish in satellite towns," said Mr Heydenrych.

"There is no reason to expect, however, that it will be more successful than in other countries.

"Its impact must be limited by the constraints of the capital resources available and the simple fact that the relatively small purchasing power of our markets limits the amount of industry which can be viably sustained.

"The majority of new city dwellers, whether there through natural population growth or through immigration, will find their jobs in the service and informal sectors which are best provided in the existing cities."

Referring to international experience, Mr Heydenrych pointed out that rapid urbanisation in countries such as Brazil and Mexico provided examples that were "not encouraging".

"For instance, 46% of the people in Mexico City live in shanty towns, 30% likewise in Bombay, and on our own continent the figure for Addis Ababa is 90%.

"In South Africa we are already far down the road towards relying upon spontaneous housing.

"It was estimated that in 1980 between 300 000 and 350 000 Africans lived in informal settlements in the Durban metropolitan area — that is 31% to 35% of the total."

Numerous studies had shown that squatters themselves do not necessarily perceive the standards of the dwellings in such settlements to be unacceptably low, being concerned rather with security of tenure and lack of services.

Under the circumstances the challenge facing the design professions in South Africa, said Mr Heydenrych, was to acknowledge that such spontaneous settlements were not temporary and not necessarily bad.

Planning provision should be made for such settlements "by providing water and by making it known that settlers will not be harassed".

And once these development goodwill must be established with the new city dwellers and the authorities should then "work with them in keeping access routes open, and in providing other basic services such as refuse removal and sewerage".

Such squatter camps were not a permanent solution, and on-going urbanisation would be associated with escalating expectations and the emergence of a black middle and upper class, said Mr Heydenrych.

NOW VAIL AND VAIL BUSINESS

Woman shot dead in latest outbreak of taxi violence (332)

LINDSAY BARNES

Crime Desk

AKG 30/9/96

A woman from Transkei who had just arrived in Cape Town to look for work is the latest victim of the city's bloody minibus taxi violence.

Noloyiso Magaze, in her 20s, was shot in the neck and died at 10am today when four men fired on the taxi in which she was travelling in Lansdowne Road, near Hanover Park Avenue.

The attackers drove up to the taxi in a cream Venture bakkie and fired at the driver through his window, fatally wounding Ms Magaze, police spokesman Edward Braaf said.

The taxi pulled off the road and the passengers scattered. The attackers sped off towards Gugulethu, Sergeant Braaf said.

Bullets grazed the buttocks of the driver, Lawrence Sonkgayi, 36, who was taken to Phillippi police station.

Police believe more passengers may have been shot but could not find any other injured people.

Soon after the attack, a friend of Ms Magaze's family arrived at the scene and identified her body.



Victim: police check the body of Noloyiso Magaze, who was sitting next to the driver at the time of the shooting

ANDREW INGRAM

Taxi blockade strangles parts of Bloemfontein

(332) 11/10/96

Taxi blockades involving about 280 minibuses disrupted traffic in Bloemfontein for about seven hours yesterday, police said.

Captain Mientjie Bruwer said problems began about 10am when taxis from Mangaung township began arriving in the city.

There were reports of drivers not wishing to join the blockade being intimidated.

Taxis gathered outside the offices of Premier Patrick Lekota. When it became known he was not available to meet the taxi operators, seven taxis involved in a blockade of Maitland Street were removed.

The taxis then regrouped and blockaded several Bloemfontein streets, causing major traffic disruptions.

After talking to a senior government official, the drivers agreed to return for a meeting with the government today. The taxis dispersed about 5pm.

Bruwer said there were no serious incidents and no arrests.

The fact that the municipality ran a bus service into Mangaung was apparently the main grievance of the taxi drivers. — Sapa.

Codeta, Cata in (332) new talks

JUDY DAMON
AND MXOLISI MGXASHE

STAFF REPORTERS

AKG 2/10/96

Rival taxi associations
Codeta and Cata
resume peace talks
today amid continuing
tensions that erupted
at the weekend with
police forming a
human shield to
prevent a bloodbath.

Three people have
died in taxi violence in
the past three days.

On Sunday police had
to get between factions
when about 500 armed
men from the two organi-
sations faced each other
at the Bellville station.
The confrontation fol-
lowed a meeting to nego-
tiate peace.

But Codeta vice-chair-
man Howard Dyubmi
says the violence will
continue and his organi-
sation "has lost all confi-
dence" in the police.

"If only the police
would charge certain
people with intimidation
the acts of violence could
be stopped," he said.

Decision taken to close Baragwanath rank

JOHANNESBURG transport officials on Wednesday gave notice of their intention to close the Baragwanath taxi rank in Soweto, one of the biggest and busiest in the country.

The transportation committee of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council said it would publish legal notices announcing its intention to close the Baragwanath rank.

The rank has been the source of violent rivalry between the Soweto Taxi

Association and Soweto Taxi Services.

Transportation committee chairman Peter Horwitz said the council could not allow the high levels of violence and disorder to continue in the taxi industry.

The notice is expected to be published in the Gauteng provincial gazette on October 16, and will provide for a 21-day period in which objections to the closure can be lodged.

Similar notices will also appear in various local newspapers. — Sapa.

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(332) PD 3/10/96

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Blaze destroys 500 shacks

Alarm as authorities announce plan to close Baragwanath taxi rank

(332) Star 3/10/96

Johannesburg Metro Council says closure will be enforced 'until safety of passengers can be assured'

Violence in the taxi industry has prompted Johannesburg transport authorities to close the Baragwanath taxi rank within the next few weeks.

Notice of the intention to close the rank, one of the biggest and busiest in the country, was issued yesterday by Johannesburg Metro Council transportation committee chairman Peter Horwitz.

The rank will be closed as soon as legal notices are pub-

lished, although a final decision will only be made after a 21-day objections period.

"The closure will be enforced until such time as the safety of the public can be assured by the taxi associations settling their differences," Horwitz said.

While the move was regrettable, it had become necessary in the light of the murder on Tuesday night of Soweto Taxi Services chairman Decker Ngutshana, he added.

Police said Ngutshana was at-

tacked by gunmen outside his Spruitview residence at about 7pm. He was shot dead inside his parked car by men in a BMW and a Jetta.

Nothing was taken from Ngutshana or his car and police suspect the shooting is related to the ongoing taxi violence.

Ngutshana was a leading figure in negotiations with the provincial government and rival associations which sought to end the taxi feuds.

Taxi operators in Soweto last night threatened chaos and violence if the closure went ahead, saying the council's move would create "more orphans" rather than stem the violence.

The group threatened to shoot at any replacement operators who took over their routes as a result of the government's actions.

"Not even police escorting those operators will be safe. We will hide in the dark and wait," said one of the taxi drivers who did not want his name published.

The drivers added the planned closure amounted to a government attack on families and commuters who depended on the taxi service, saying the move was ill-considered. They urged the council to find a solu-

tion through negotiations.

Commuters and police patrolling the rank said yesterday they did not think the council's move was constructive or practical.

Ephraim Zungu, a queue marshal on the Baragwanath-Kagiso-Leratong taxi route which services part of the West Rand, asked: "What about the community? This will only make people suffer."

Bongani Buthelezi, who commutes daily by taxi, said there

'Move will only create havoc and orphans'

would be disaster unless the council had an alternative plan. He said the rank went beyond Soweto and it was therefore inconceivable why anybody would want to close it.

"If they close the rank, these guys will open up elsewhere and the problem will restart," he added.

A group of policemen on patrol said the rank was a "transport hub" and its closure would cause havoc. - Staff Reporter and Sapa.

No alternative transport if taxi rank shuts down

(332)
By BEATRICE MOTSIISI

City Desk

MAN 4/10/96
No alternative transport will be laid on for the thousands of passengers who use the Baragwanath taxi rank, which is set to close amid warnings from taxi associations that its shut-down will cause chaos and bloodshed.

"There will be stampedes at the other ranks. Taxi drivers will end up being pushed off their usual routes or face the barrel of a gun," said SA Black Taxi Association chairman Joe Mabaso.

The Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metro Council (TMC) said yesterday it was unable to provide alternative transport.

Chairman of the TMC's transportation committee, Peter Horwitz, said the rank would be closed because commuters were "sick and tired of violence".

Actual closure will only take place early next month after a set notice period for people to lodge their objections. Horwitz said the rank would be reopened if violence was curbed.

In a meeting yesterday with the Soweto Taxi Association, one of the two warring rival associations, Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte emphasised the need for the two associations to amalgamate if peace was to resume.

Judge returns to his alma mater as chancellor

APR 23/10/96

Goldstone says spell abroad helped him to see SA through different eyes

By Stuart Kelly

Mr Justice Richard Goldstone accepted his election as the new chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in an address to invited guests on campus last night.

Goldstone said his experience as prosecutor of the two United Nations war crimes tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda had sensitised him to the South African situation.

A Wits graduate in 1957, he returned to take up his position as chancellor, saying his absence had given him an opportunity to witness South Africa's transformation with an objectivity not possible when living at home.

"We must never forget how fortunate South Africa is that the route chosen to achieve a balance founded on principles of democracy, openness and a constitutional state. No such balance compromise was found or accepted in the former Yugoslavia or Rwanda. Look at the conse-

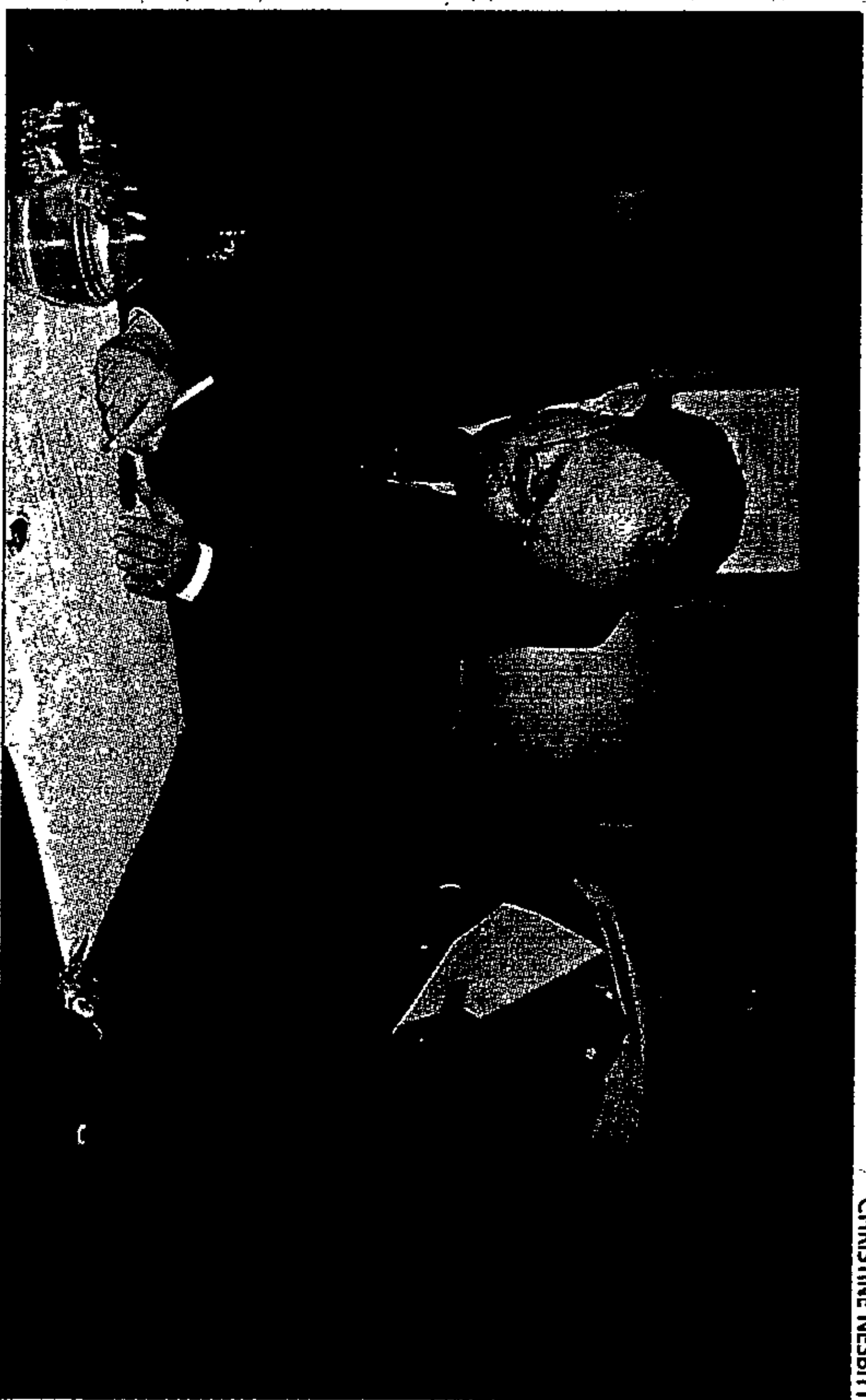
quences," he said.

Referring to the imbalances created by the past, Goldstone said it was unfortunate that no one had coined a new word for the "much maligned policy of affirmative action".

"That policy originated in the United States where a minority, disadvantaged by racism, needed remedial steps to be taken. In South Africa we have to tackle the consequences which have resulted from the prolonged disadvantage of the majority of our people - a very different situation calling for different and innovative solutions," he said.

"That South Africans have already recognised and accepted that the unfairness of the past needs to be corrected, as enshrined in the equality clause of the constitution, is already an important beginning," he added.

Education, he said, was one of the most important areas that needed repairing. To this end Goldstone urged pupils and students to understand and embrace a culture of human rights.



CHRISTINE NESBITT

Sign here ... Mr Justice Richard Goldstone makes his appointment as Chancellor of Wits official last night.

Candidates square up for final phase of leadership battle

By Adam Cooke

The race for the post of Wits University's vice-chancellor begins its final countdown today when two of the candidates, Professor June Sinclair and Professor Sam Nolutshungu, stand before the community they could soon lead and deliver their vision for the future of the campus.

The speeches will to be followed by question time. Candidates will face carefully worded queries from students and academics. The third candidate, Professor Njabulo Ndebele, will speak tomorrow.

Sinclair, the present deputy vice-chancellor, has faced a concerted campaign from the South African Students' Congress to have her removed. She will talk on "What kind of university could Wits be in the 21st century?"

Sinclair has extensive experience in administration and is clearly dedicated to Wits after nearly 30 years of service. But she created enemies in 1993 when, as acting vice-chancellor, she was accused of being hasty in calling police on to campus to deal with protests by students and workers.

She is seen, even by some non-aligned students, to be too confrontational and could deepen power struggles at a time when diplomacy is needed.

But she is one of the few candidates who looks to the highly influential senate, alumni and mainstream structures to back her up. Little is known about Nolutshungu, acting director of the Frederick Douglass Institute at the University of Rochester in New York, or where his support comes from. But having left the country 30 years ago, he is seen to have an outside chance as he will bring a "fresh face" to the administration.

Many believe he would be out of touch with the realities of life at Wits - a claim he denies, saying he is aware of the problems. He will be speaking on "Re-

yond the gold standard? The idea of a (post-apartheid) university". Ndebele, the vice-chancellor of the University of the North, will speak tomorrow on the topic "Can we reinvent the university?"

The respected author and academic was apparently begged by senior academics and politicians to apply for the post.

Tales of his successes at Turfloop differ, some saying he has successfully set about transforming what was an underfunded "bush campus" into a smooth operation.

Others say he has been a weak, absent figure who has stalled on transformation.

NE

Virgin Atlantic joins the wait for privatisation

Airlines queue up for a place in the Sun

AUDREY D'ANGELO

Cape Town — Richard Branson, the chairman of Virgin Atlantic Airways, threw down the gauntlet to South African Airways (SAA) and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines last week, when he announced that his airline had told the South African government it wanted to take an equity stake in Sun Air to use it as a vehicle for a pan-African airline.

Simone Wickenhagen, KLM's general manager in southern Africa, said on Friday that the Dutch airline wanted to take a stake in Sun Air and use it as a feeder for its international services in southern Africa.

She said KLM, which owns 26 percent of Kenya Airways and is building up Nairobi airport as its hub in East Africa, wanted to use Johannesburg international airport as its hub in southern Africa.

This policy would bring it into direct conflict with SAA, which cut back on unprofitable European routes last year and is concentrating on its network of routes within Africa. SAA will double its services to Ghana next month and introduce a twice-weekly flight to Abidjan.

Meanwhile, Johan Borstlap, the managing director of Sun Air, has been negotiating with other international airlines for a joint frequent-flyer programme to give his passengers the opportunity to win points towards free international flights. The government has said it will privatise Sun Air, but it has not said when.

A spokesman for Sun said Borstlap had been negotiating with the airlines in the alliance of Swissair, Austrian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Delta and SAS of Scandinavia to join its Qualiflyer programme. It had also been negotiating with Singapore Airlines, Malaysia Airlines and Cathay Pacific Airlines to join their Passages programme.

The spokesman said Sun hoped to join Virgin's frequent-flyer programme to enable it to offer passengers a wide range of opportunities. No agreements had been signed yet.

Sun already has inter-line agreements with many international airlines which bring pas-

sengers to South Africa.

Wickenhagen said serious negotiations to buy a stake in Sun could not begin until the government had announced a privatisation date and called for tenders. She said discussions had been held.

KLM was thwarted in its attempt to buy a stake in Comair earlier this year when the inde-

pendent airline announced that it had become a British Airways franchiseholder. Wickenhagen said KLM had gone quite far in its discussions with Comair when it announced the British Airways tie-up.

She said the airline hoped to achieve a similar arrangement with Sun.

The spokesman for Sun said discussions had been held with several international airlines but they could not be named at this stage.

Inter-Air, a regional airline, has also announced plans to expand its network of international routes. The airline will fly to the Comoros soon and plans new routes into West Africa.

CT(BR) 7/10/96

(332)

Serious negotiations cannot begin until the government calls for tenders

- (2) whether any foreign countries have made grants towards these projects; if so, (a) which countries and (b) what is the (i) nature and (ii) extent of such grants;
- (3) what is the total cost of these projects to the Government?

N1444E

The MINISTER FOR PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The information asked for is not readily available in the Ministry or the Department of Constitutional Development. In an attempt to be of assistance to the hon member the question was referred to the various provincial administrations. The following information was furnished by them:

Free State Province

- (1) (a) Four and one on a part-time basis.

(b) A project on Community Policing in partnership with IDASA and the Free State Provincial Government.

Advising management in running a Rural Strategy Unit.

The Free State Performance Improvement Programme that focuses on the transformation process in the Free State Provincial Government.

(c) United Kingdom.

- (2) Yes.

(a) United Kingdom.

(b) (i) Expertise and money.

To provide technical assistance and training to the Rural Strategy Unit.

Financial support for the Performance Improvement Programme through the provision of an advisory team, plus funding for consultancies, training and pilot projects.

(ii) R23 733 000.

- (3) None.

Northern Province

- (1) (a) None.

The rest of the question falls away.

Northern Cape Province

- (1) (a) Five.

(b) Management development for the Administration and with particular emphasis on education management and health management.

Support for a development plan for the Province.

(c) Sweden, United Kingdom.

- (2) Yes.

(a) Sweden, United Kingdom.

(b) (i) Financial and technical support.
(ii) R52 920 000 (SEK 36 million).
R 4 200 000.

- (3) Approximately R4 500 000,00.

Western Cape Province

- (1) (a) Four.

(b) Assisting the Provincial Minister of Police Services with the establishment of Community Police Consultative Forums.

Support with the Western Cape Community Policing Project.

Advice on a development institution.

Preparation of a pre-feasibility study for the Genadendal Restoration Project.

(c) United Kingdom, Switzerland, Netherlands.

- (2) Yes.

(a) United Kingdom, Switzerland.

(b) (i) Financial and technical support and advice.
(ii) R9 450 000 (£1 350 000).
R 180 000.

- (3) Approximately R240 938.

KwaZulu-Natal Province

- (1) (a) Six.

(b) A KwaZulu-Natal Road Safety Project aimed at reducing fatalities on national roads.

(c) Australia.

- (2) Yes.

(a) Australia.

(b) (i) No information furnished.

(ii) R200 000.

- (3) R80 000.

Eastern Cape Province

No information was received from this Province.

North West Province

No information was received from this Province.

Mpumalanga Province

No information was received from this Province.

Gauteng Province

No information was received from this Province.

Minibus taxi owners/drivers: registration

811. Mr J A JORDAAN asked the Minister of Transport: (332)

(1) Whether minibus taxi (a) owners and (b) drivers have to be registered as such; if so, (i) according to what procedure and (ii) how many had been registered in each case as at the latest specified date for which information is available; if not, why not;

(2) whether any steps are being taken towards implementing a registration system in this regard; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether any estimate has been made of the income of the minibus-taxi industry; if not, why not; if so, (a) what is the current estimated income of this industry and (b) how was this figure arrived at?

N1448E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(1) (a) and (b) No, not owners and drivers as such. Rather, minibus-taxi associations and their legal members will be encouraged to register; legal compulsion is not contemplated at present.

(i) The registration procedures was announced by the Minister of Transport on 6 July 1996 at the press conference outside Pretoria which launched the implementation of the Final Recommendations of the National Taxi Task Team. According to this procedure, minibus-taxi associations are invited to submit applications for registration to the Provincial Registrar using a set of prescribed forms which have been made available. These forms will contain information on the association itself, its constitution and its members, both legal and (hitherto) illegal. All associations complying with the criteria laid down will be registered conditionally, though final registration will only be possible after the promulgation of national land transport legislation on the issue.

Escapes from police cells

809. Mr A J LEON asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

(1) Whether any persons being detained by the South African Police Service escaped from cells in police stations during the period 1 January 1996 up to the latest specified date for which information is available; if so, in each case, (a) where was the police station, (b) how many persons escaped, (c) how did these persons escape and (d) when did such escape occur;

(2) whether any of these persons were subsequently rearrested; if so, (a) when and (b) in connection with what crimes were such persons arrested;

(3) whether any (a) deaths or (b) injuries occurred as a result of such escapes; if so, what are the relevant details in each case?

N1446E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY (Reply bound in Annexures of House—see M/491).

SAPS: staff employment

819. Mr R S MOLEKANE asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

Likewise, the Provincial Registrars will initially have only administrative functions, one of which will be the establishment of a database of associations and their members. In future, after the promulgation of the legislation referred to above, the Registrars will acquire statutory functions which will empower them to deregister associations which do not present acceptable constitutions, or which fail to comply with the prescribed code of conduct. Both the Provincial Registrar and the Provincial Taxi Office will assist the industry throughout the registration process.

Legislation and registration will also provide access for taxi associations and operators to economic and other forms of assistance, such as training in a wide spectrum of disciplines within the industry, including driver training, administration and business skills.

(ii) No information is available on how many associations have already applied for registration as the process was only initiated on 6 August 1996. From this date, the process of distributing registration forms began, and they were delivered to Provinces, Local Road Transportation Boards, Local Authorities and Provincial Registrars.

(2) See (1).
(3) No estimates of the income of the minibus-taxi industry have been made as no reliable information in this regard exists. The Provincial Registrars' databases will contain operational information, and passenger transport plans containing more detailed information will be compiled by the relevant authorities. Although not the purpose of these documents, they will be sources of information which the Department can use to make estimates on the income of the taxi industry.

(bb) See annexure "B".
(cc) (aaa) See annexure "B".
(bbb) See annexure "B".

(ii) Candidates appointed in the REOP programme are currently evaluated to determine suitability for permanent appointment. Further REOP candidates will be identified on an ongoing basis and will receive specialised training and exposure to more senior posts to equip them for future more senior managerial appointments.

(c)(i)(bb)(aaa), (c)(i)(bb)(bbb), (c)(ii)(aa), (c)(ii)(bb) and (2):

So far 348 station commissioners have been appointed in rationalised posts in the ranks of Director and Senior Superintendent as per annexure "C".
The remaining station commissioners in the ranks of Superintendent and Captain will be appointed during the en-masse appointment process, which will be finalised in the next few weeks and should be completed by the end of October 1996.

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE HEAD OFFICE

02-09-96

(1)(a)(ii) rank structure

(1)(a)(iii)(aa) and (bb)

Rank Description	Whites		Indians/Asians		Coloureds		Africans/Blacks		Total		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
National Commissioner	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
Deputy National Commissioner	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	4	0	
Divisional Commissioner	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	
Provincial Commissioner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Assistant Commissioner	28	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	30	4	3
Director	112	6	1	2	1	0	9	1	123	9	13
Senior Superintendent	179	29	10	1	1	0	19	1	209	31	24
Superintendent	301	82	3	0	5	0	24	3	333	85	41
Captain	607	198	23	3	27	2	57	8	714	211	92

- (ii) 1994/95 financial year
R 7 825 414.
- (iii) 1995/96 financial year
R11 876 391.

These costs included the direct costs of operating Harvard aircraft which is calculated at R674,16 per flying hour. Central Flying School Langebaanweg also provides base and support facilities for other Air Force operations, so that the exact costs of training an individual pilot are not clearly discernible. Should only the direct operating costs of the Harvard aircraft be considered, the cost of training a pupil pilot amounts to ± R135 000.

- (c) To train a pilot from the outset, requires a period of two years. The first year comprises preparatory and

ground training, whilst the second year entails a theoretical and flying phase of approximately 200 flying hours. The actual number of hours flown to complete the course will vary slightly depending on the progress of each individual student.

- (d) (i) Of the pilots trained over the period in question three have resigned.

(ii) Their present employment is not known to the Air Force.

- (e) (i) The current salary and occupational allowance (flying instructor) for pilots after the 1 July 1996 increases, is as tabulated below. The pre-1 July 1996 bottom and top notches are also tabulated for comparison purposes.

Rank	Post 1 July '96 fixed notch	Pre-1 July 1996	
		Bottom notch	Top notch
Lt	R 72 816	R 39 414	R 56 520
Capt	R 95 943	R 59 907	R 73 683
Maj	R110 121	R 78 030	R 92 973
Lt Col	R130 443	R 87 546	R113 217
Col	R147 393	R102 117	R129 321

- (ii) The last salary review was on 1 July 1996.

- (iii) The increase awarded to each rank differs according to the notch that a pilot was on prior to

Rank	Difference to bottom notch	Difference to top notch
Lt	R33 402	R16 296
Capt	R36 036	R22 260
Maj	R32 091	R17 148
Lt Col	R42 897	R17 226
Col	R45 276	R18 072

- (iv) According to the Department of Public Service and Administration's improvement plan for the next three years the Public Ser-

vice can expect the next salary grading adjustment in July 1997 if the right sizing of the Public Service has been successful.

- (2) The South African Air Force is not privy to the SA Airways salary structure for pilots.

Sword and Shield Plan's most wanted list

879. Mr D H M GIBSON asked the Minister for Safety and Security:

- (a) How many persons on the Sword and Shield Plan's most wanted list are wanted in connec-

tion with (i) vehicle hijacking, (ii) vehicle theft, (iii) gang-related crimes, (iv) taxi violence, (v) possession of and trafficking in illegal weapons, (vi) political massacres and (vii) robberies and (b) how many persons in each of these categories have been (i) arrested and (ii) charged to date?

N1630E

The MINISTER FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY:

Crime	(a) Wanted	(b)(i) Arrested	(b)(ii) Charged to date
(i) Vehicle hijacking	1 120	156	154
(ii) Vehicle theft	6 660	773	742
(iii) Gang-related crimes	30	10	21
(iv) Taxi violence	32	185	23
(v) Possession of and trafficking in illegal weapons	1 459	288	270
(vi) Political massacres	68	46	46
(vii) Robberies	5 354	889	825
TOTAL	14 723	2 357	2 081

Note: (a)(iii) and (iv) As the South African Police Service code list of crimes does not make provision for gang-related crimes and taxi violence as such, persons arrested are usually charged with murder, rape, attempted murder, theft, theft of motor vehicle, hijacking, assault and intimidation. It is therefore not always possible to establish whether the crime is gang-related or connected to taxi violence.

Weightbridges along N1

884. Mr A E REEVES asked the Minister of Transport:†

Whether his Department intends putting up weightbridges along the N1 between Pietersburg and Cape Town, if so, (a) where and (b) what will be the cost of each of these weightbridges?

N1635E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

The Department of Transport in co-operation with the respective provinces is currently involved in the planning and construction of six new weighing stations along the N1 between Pietersburg and Cape Town and a further weightbridge on the N1 at Messina. The programme was devised in conjunction with the nine Provinces and will be jointly funded.

- (a) The weightbridges are designed for sites at Messina, Mantsole, Eyalon, Kroonstad, Colesberg, Worcester and Joostenbergvlei.

- (b) The estimated cost of the weightbridges vary depending on factors such as location, land costs, size of facility, etc. The first contract, for Mantsole weightbridge, was awarded on 3 September 1996 to Messrs Murray and Roberts Civils at a cost of R14 267 151,32 (VAT inclusive).

National taxi task group (332)
885. Past Z K MANGALISO asked the Minister of Transport:†

- (a) How many members are currently serving in his Department's national taxi task group, (b) what are the names of these persons and (c)

what were the travel and subsistence costs of these persons during the period 1 November 1995 up to 30 June 1996?

N1636E

The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT:

(a) The National Taxi Task Team comprises 20 members. Nine specialist advisers provided services to the Task Team until the completion of its Final Report to the Minister on 6 August 1996, after which they were withdrawn from the process. These advisers were responsible for the provision of technical and expert knowledge in specific areas of investigation. Two of the nine were civil servants who did not receive any consultation fees but only reimbursement for their costs.

Of the current team of 20, nine are government members—one from national

level, six from provincial level and two from metropolitan level—and 11 are from the taxi industry: one from each province and two from Gauteng. (Only one of the Gauteng representatives' costs are paid by the national Department, and Gauteng only has one vote on the Task Team.) The eleventh member of the Team was added in May 1996, specifically to represent the interests of the metered taxi industry.

The decision to include taxi industry representatives as members of the task team was taken after extensive consultations with the taxi industry from which a consensus emerged that the taxi industry should be integrally involved in the process of seeking solutions to its problems. The representatives were chosen through elections in every province.

(b) Government representatives

Mr D D Patel (Chairperson)	National Department of Transport
Mr L Conywa (previously Mr R Bula)	E. Cape Department of Transport
Mr W E W Hahn	Gauteng Department of Transport
Mr J S Hugo (previously Mr Fanner)	W. Cape Department of Transport
Mr G Mahlela	KwaZulu-Natal Ministry of Transport
Mr G Ravele (previously Mr Lekolane)	Northern Province Department of Transport
Mr A Troskie	Free State Department of Transport
Mr Z J Froneman	Johannesburg Metropolitan Council
Mr E Moller	Durban Metropolitan Council
Taxi industry representatives	
Mr L J Bowen	North West taxi industry
Mr J Kapeng	Free State taxi industry
Mr B E T Letsoela	Gauteng taxi industry
Mr J Mabaso	Gauteng taxi industry
Mr D Modise	Northern Cape taxi industry
Mr L J Morolong	Northern Province taxi industry
Mr R Ndlovu	Mpumalanga taxi industry
Mr C B Ngiba	KwaZulu-Natal taxi industry
Mr V Ngudle	Eastern Cape taxi industry
Mr N Prins (previously Mr Antefdien, previously Mr Nagel)	Western Cape taxi industry

Mr D D Patel (Chairperson)	National Department of Transport
Mr L Conywa (previously Mr R Bula)	E. Cape Department of Transport
Mr T S Schoenfeldt	Metered taxi industry
Specialist advisers	
Mr J Chapman	Strategic Planning and Management
Mr N Horwitz	Industrial Strategy and Regulation and Control
Mr G Magomola (previously Dr Khosa)	Economy and Finances
Ms M Masepe	Capacity Building, Training and Research
Ms C McCaul	Transport Planning
Insp. D Moorhouse (Durban City Police)	Law Enforcement, Security and Discipline
Dr H Ribbens	Road Traffic Safety
Adv D J Rossouw (Office of the Attorney-General)	Conflict and Conflict Resolution
Adv A Singh	Legal Aspects and Labour Relations

(c) The expenses incurred from 1 November 1995 till 30 June 1996 are divided into two categories:

(i) Regular NTTT meetings: per taxi industry representative and per specialist adviser: travel and subsistence costs.

(ii) Public hearings, workshops and participatory processes involving broader stakeholder communities: per taxi industry representative and per specialist adviser: travel and subsistence costs.

Travel costs include private motor transport, airplane tickets and hired cars. Further expenses, e.g. parking, toll-fees and a stipend for sundry expenses (for taxi representatives) are also included in these figures.

Subsistence includes accommodation in hotels or guest houses as well as meals. Extra expenses, e.g. for telephone calls, laundry services and alcohol are paid by the individuals themselves.

(1) NTTT meetings

It is not possible to give a breakdown here of the expenses incurred by government representatives, since each national, provincial and metropolitan department carries the costs for its own representatives.

In the period for which information has been requested 12 meetings were held:

9/10 November 1995
23/24 November 1995
7 December 1995
16/17 January 1996
2 February 1996
22 February 1996
6/7 March 1996
25/26 March 1996
15/16 April 1996
9/10 May 1996
30/31 May 1996
20/21 June 1996

During this period two national taxi plenaries were also held, on 17 February 1996 and 15 March 1996.

(Please remember that not every person was present at every meeting.)

TAXI REPRESENTATIVES
Regular NTTT meetings

Name	Travel	Subsistence including
Ariefdien	R 15 838,87	R 4 968,53
Boweni	R 18 276,28	R10 356,67
Kapeng	R 27 436,77	R 9 843,31
Letsoela	R 15 318,46	R10 248,71
Modise	R 19 469,25	R 8 381,05
Morolong	R 9 586,21	R10 460,12
Ndlovu	R 8 245,48	R 8 073,93
Ngiba	R 16 813,75	R 6 652,83
Ngudle	R 45 861,00	R 7 533,87
Prins	R 1 533,04	R 500,00
Schoenfeldt	*	*
Total	R178 819,11	R78 019,02
Grand Total (T & S)	R256 838,13	

*Not on NTTT during this period.

SPECIALIST ADVISERS
Regular NTTT Meetings

Name	Travel	Subsistence including
Chapman	R 835,70	R 0,00
Horwitz	R 1 011,60	R 5 316,55
Magonola	R 3 079,24	R 2 393,65
Matsape	R 9 194,38	R 2 121,10
McCaul	R 2 305,92	R 226,60
Moorhouse	R 8 705,75	R 5 405,11
Ribbens	R 489,10	R 0,00
Rossouw	R16 432,69	R 4 433,95
Singh	R 3 890,00	R 1 575,80
Total	R45 944,38	R21 472,76
Grand Total (T&S)	R67 417,14	

(ii) *Public hearings, workshops and participatory processes involving broader stakeholder communities*

Other meetings were also held during this period, namely public hearings, report back sessions, subcommittee meetings and workshops. The distri-

bution of publicity and educational material in each province is also included here.

(Please remember that each person was not present at each meeting.)

**PUBLIC HEARINGS, WORKSHOPS AND PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES INVOLVING
BROADER STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITIES**
Taxi representatives

Name	Travel	Subsistence
Ariefdien		
Boweni	R 37 384,65	R 3 076,65
Kapeng	R 18 504,21	R 1 316,75
Letsoela	R 16 156,01	R 5 534,03
Modise	R 9 245,27	R 1 521,05
Morolong	R 11 373,21	R 250,00
Ndlovu	R15 022,85	R 3 699,67
Ngiba	R 8 223,30	R 1 150,10
Ngudle	R 36 677,82	R 2 165,93
Prins	*	*
Schoenfeldt	*	*
Total	R165 679,17	R21 203,04
Grand Total (T&S)	R186 882,21	

*Not on NTTT during this period.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS, WORKSHOPS AND PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES INVOLVING
BROADER STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITIES**
Specialist Advisers

Name	Travel	Subsistence
Chapman	R 3 180,72	R 1 556,00
Horwitz	R 3 208,23	R 1 490,92
Magonola	R 1 473,44	R 600,00
Matsape	R 4 913,74	R 513,90
McCaul	R 5 627,83	R 750,00
Moorhouse	R 7 153,14	R 1 329,72
Ribbens	R 1 404,00	R 280,00
Rossouw	R 4 655,40	R 691,00
Singh	R 2 748,19	R 250,00
Total	R34 364,69	R 7 461,54
Grand Total (T&S)	R41 826,23	

Taxi pirates forced off road in licence blitz

(332) ARG 8/10/96

JUDY DAMON
STAFF REPORTER

A traffic department blitz has forced large numbers of Cape Town pirate sedan taxi operators off the roads, after complaints by licensed operators that they were being run out of business.

At the weekend, traffic officials issued traffic fines of R800 each to numerous pirates operating in the city centre.

Illegal operators working from Greenmarket Square, the Cape Sun Hotel and the Waterfront were hardest hit.

Drivers were slapped with heavy fines when they failed to produce official sedan taxi operating permits.

Legitimate operators were delighted, saying business had increased substantially after the clampdown.

A driver for Marine Taxis said that after the weekend's ticketing spree, the usually busy Waterfront taxi zones were almost deserted as the pirate operators kept out of sight.

According to legitimate operator and fleet owner Ernest MacDonald, taxi companies had been pleading with the traffic department for more than 20 years to get rid of the pirates.

Sedan taxi drivers feared another taxi war along the lines of the conflict between groups of minibus taxi operators unless the authorities took action.

City council spokesman Alan Dolby said the big ticketing operation followed demands that the traffic department enforce the law against pirate taxis.

The department could not afford to conduct such large operations every weekend but would be following the situation closely, Mr Dolby said.



Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and Intersite managing director Jack Prentice chatting to Gauteng MEC for safety and security Jesse Duarte, after Maharaj presented R25 million for reconstruction of the Johannesburg Station taxi rank.

Maharaj gives taxi industry R25-m (332)

By Isaac Moledi

MINI-BUS taxi industry and related businesses were given a major boost yesterday when Transport Minister Mr Mac Maharaj handed over a R25-million cheque to finance the construction of a taxi rank at Johannesburg Station.

The money was handed over to the South African Commuter Corporation's property arm, Intersite Property Management Services, as part of the company's R160 million rehabilitation programme of the railway station.

National operations

The taxi rank will provide conditions which will cater for the requirements of the taxi industry in Gauteng and assist with laying the foundation for formalising its operations nationally.

Acknowledging that the mini-bus taxi industry has been a marginalised form of public transport, Maharaj said there had been an overwhelming need for mini-bus taxi and related busi-

nesses to be put onto a development path towards greater order, professionalism and profitability.

The mini-bus taxi industry caters for 2,2 million people daily in South Africa.

Sametian
Affordable transport 9/10/96

"We need to ensure that the millions of South Africans who use public transport each day are adequately catered for in terms of affordable, accessible and safe transport," he said.

The project which got under way in August last year, has already seen the construction on the first two phases of a R47-million luxury transit centre for long distance trains, buses and metered taxis.

Refurbish

There is also a R34-million commuter concourse which involves the refurbishment of the existing first and third class phases.

The two projects are scheduled for completion and will be operational by January next year.

TRANSPORT *Park City to provide multimodal transport service*

Maharaj boosts taxi-rank project

(332) 27(32) 9110196

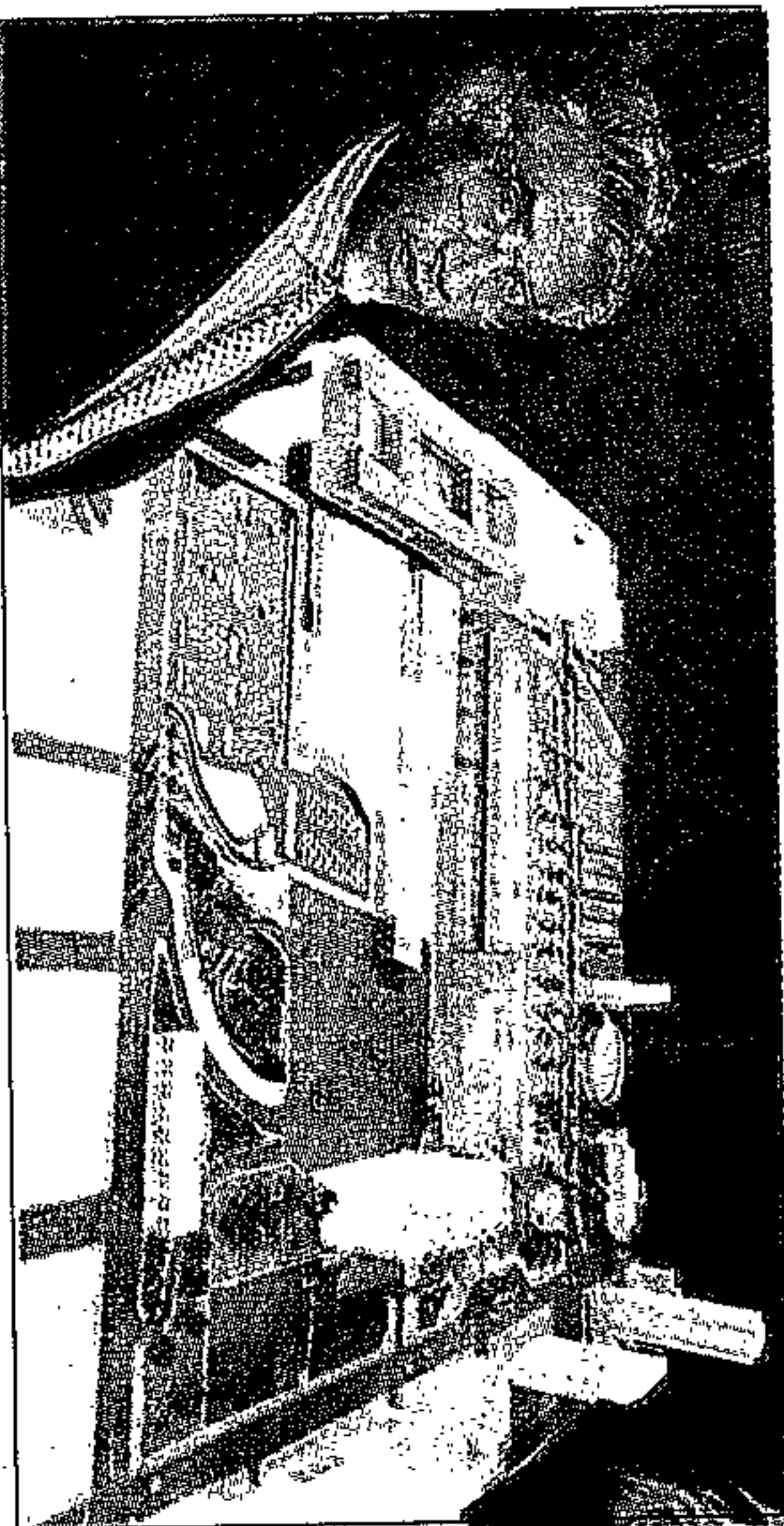
THABO LESHILO

Johannesburg — The R160 million project to turn Park Station into a modern, multimodal transport facility yesterday got a R25 million boost from Mac Maharaj, the transport minister, for the construction of a minibus-taxi rank.

The Park City rank will be built above the railway lines on the eastern boundary of the station and will provide much-needed facilities for long-distance minibus-taxis. Vehicles will be moved from the nearby congested ranks.

"As the minister of transport, public passenger transport facilities are one of my primary concerns. We need to ensure that the millions of South Africans who use public transport each day are adequately catered for in terms of affordable, accessible and safe transport," Maharaj said.

The minister likened building the taxi facility to laying the foundation for government efforts to regulate the ailing taxi industry, making it profession-



TOP GEAR Mac Maharaj with a model of the Park City project that will turn Park Station into a user-friendly transport facility

PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

al, profitable and customer-orientated. The rank is the third phase of the of the R160 million Park City project to turn the squalid station into a user-friendly transport facility and a vibrant business centre. Park Station serves about 200 000 train, minibus-taxi and bus commuters daily.

The massive project spans 22 city

blocks and is expected to be another important catalyst for the rejuvenation of the central business district.

Said Maharaj: "Spiralling crime and unemployment are nothing new to those who live and work in Johannesburg, and something which the Johannesburg CBD has become infamous for. "Inner-city crime is endemic to Jo-

hannesburg and it needs to be eradicated fast if the CBD is to be saved."

He said the city was caught in a vicious circle. "Business is leaving town, saying that crime must stop first before they can operate in the CBD. Yet the very absence of business and employment opportunities in the CBD contribute to even more crime."

Work on the seven-phase project began 18 months ago and is expected to be finished by the second half of 1998.

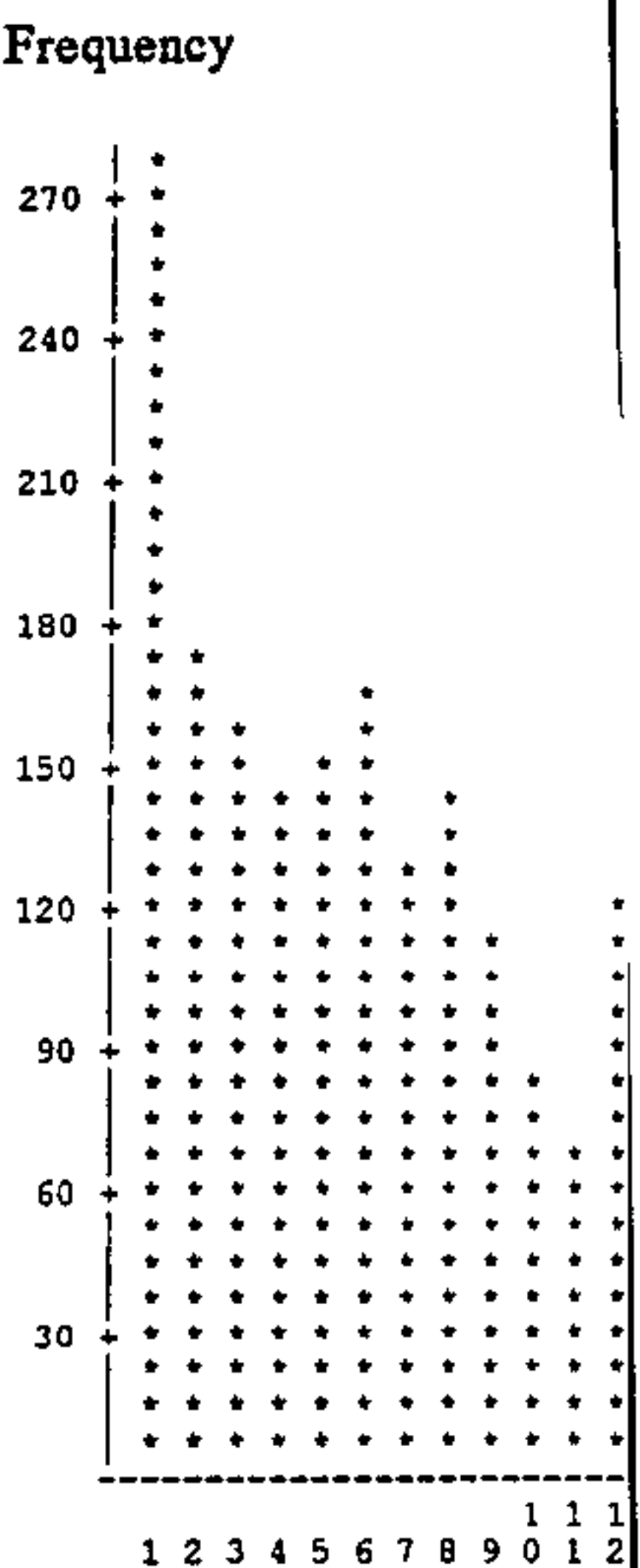
The development is being undertaken by InterSite Property Management Services, a subsidiary of the South African Rail Commuter Corporation.

Jack Prentice, the managing director of InterSite, said construction of the R47 million transit centre for luxury coaches and long-distance buses and a R34 million metro concourse that integrated first- and third-class concourses was on schedule.

Prentice said the government had committed R140 million to the Park City project, with the rest coming from the private sector.

the first year as software programme consequence, an

Figure V-1: Age



Four die in new taxi violence (332)

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT AND SAPA
 Port Elizabeth - Taxi violence has claimed the lives of four more people here in Pretoria.

Two taxi drivers and a woman passenger were gunned down in two attacks in the northern Port Elizabeth suburb of Veeplaas.

Fourteen people have died in the city since a feud erupted between the Uncedo Service Taxi Association and the Border Alliance Taxi Association last month over taxi ranks in Port Elizabeth.

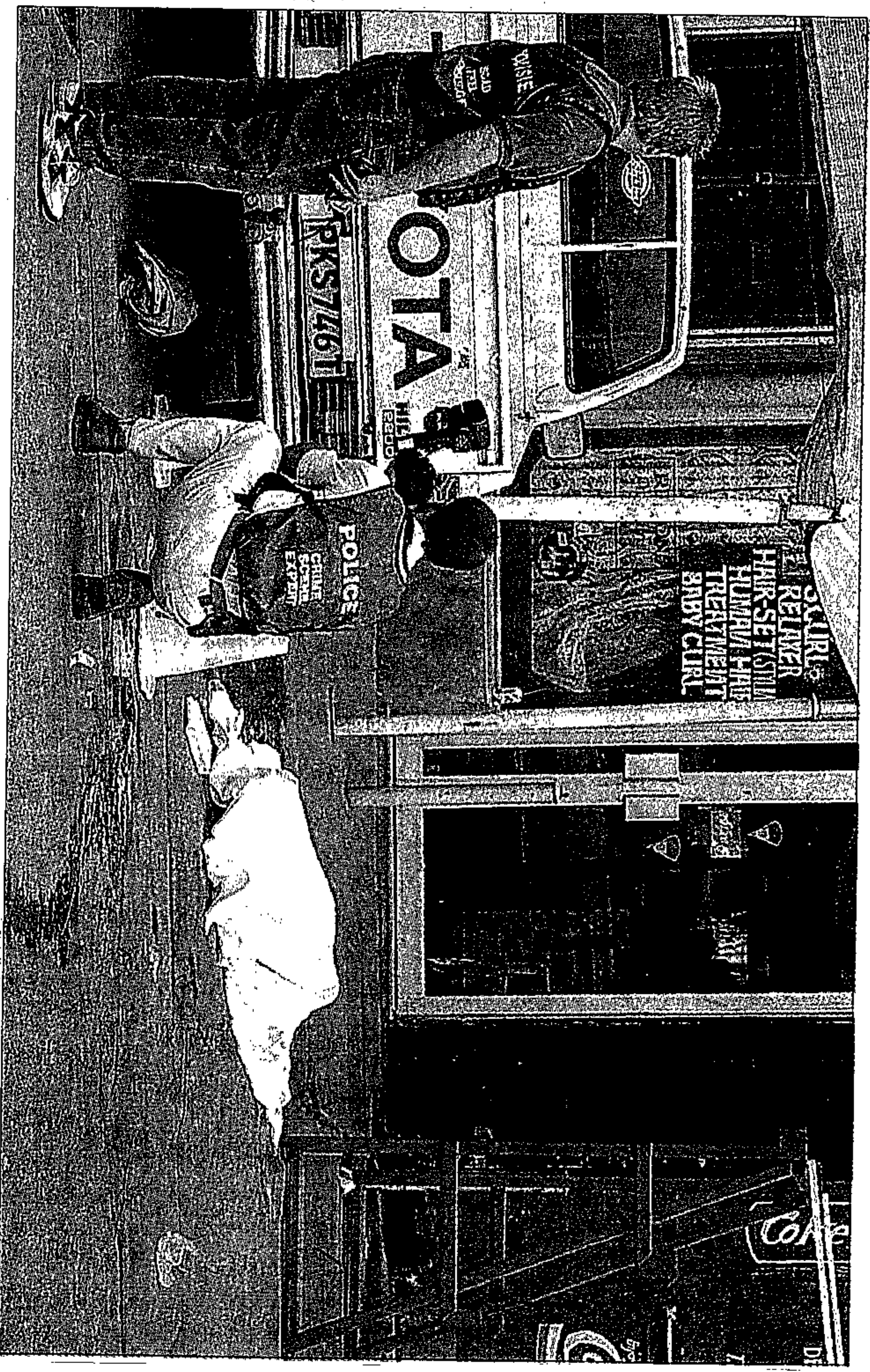
In the first attack yesterday, a driver was shot in the head and died instantly, his taxi ploughing into a primary school's grounds. Then, about 100 metres away, another taxi driver was shot.

Police said they did not have information about the woman who was killed.

In Pretoria, a man injured in a drive-by shooting near the Bloed Street taxi rank today was in a serious condition in the H F Verwoerd Hospital, a hospital spokesman said. He was shot in the head.

Another man was killed when two men in a car opened fire on taxi operators standing outside a filling station.

City centre traffic was disrupted for more than four hours as police gathered information at the cordoned-off scene.



Grim task: Police record evidence at the scene of today's shooting at a filling station in Pretoria where two taxi operators were gunned down

ity. "We were not ... Since my arrest (on May 4, ... eyes again. How can I, how do I ... negotiations were being looked at ...



About 300 taxis belonging to the Alexandra Taxi Association blockaded entrances to the Sandton police station in Johannesburg yesterday in protest against rivals appropriating their route. Station commander Eddie Prinsloo, left, accepted a memorandum from association secretary general Johnny-Boy Garma and chairman Amnon Zikalala. Pictures: ROBERT BOTHA



Alexandra taxi drivers stage protest

Bonile Ngqiyaza 209/10/96

HUNDREDS of minibus taxis belonging to the Alexandra Taxi Association blockaded entrances to the Sandton police station briefly yesterday in protest against rival taxis from Eldorado Park, Soweto and Roodepoort using the Sandton taxi route.

A memorandum demanding that the SAPS take action within seven days was handed to Sandton station commander Supt Eddie Prinsloo. Association chairman Amnon Zikalala said his association might be forced to take the law into its hands after the stipulated period if the police had nothing to report.

Zikalala expressed disappointment at the "indifference shown by traffic authorities" in resolving the dispute. Sandton police media relations officer Sgt Spook de Witt denied knowledge of the quarrel between the taxi groups and said that it was the first time it had been reported to the Sandton police.

Meanwhile, SABC radio reports that two taxi drivers were shot dead yesterday in continuing violence between the Uncedo and Bata taxi organisations in Port Elizabeth.

AVOIDING THE REAL ISSUES

FM 11/10/96
The wheels of Minister Sibusiso Bengu's educational apparatus grind painfully slowly. Only now is it offering something to improve teachers' competence and morale, both appallingly low.

But what it offers lacks creative thinking, let alone a strategy to produce improvement. It talks of "building capacity," presenting "a coherent theory of teacher education which is open to public scrutiny" and the need for "an integrated approach to the policies for teacher supply, usage and development."

It also plumbs the depths of banality

with observations such as: "learners should be active and interactive in their learning rather than passive recipients of knowledge."

Though it quotes from last year's National Teacher Education Audit, it has none of that study's sense of urgency. Instead, it says it's offering "a consistent conceptual framework." The declared aim, again, is policy, not strategy.

All of which is likely to have teachers groaning. There are 342 000 of them, constituting the largest single sector of the public service.

The policy document recommends they be registered, licensed for a period of years and relicensed only on "evidence of further professional development as part of life-long learning."

An agreement was reached earlier this year in the Education Labour Relations Council for salaries three years hence to be no longer based on qualifications but on classroom performance.

Teachers will eventually realise that neither step will improve their lot. They will be judged in conditions that deny most of them a chance to perform well — and there is no sign that anything is even being contemplated by the national and provincial education departments to improve those conditions.

A study of township schools in Gauteng conducted earlier this year by Wits University's Education Policy Unit spelt out the main problems black teachers and school principals see themselves facing. They are: grossly inadequate facilities and resources; poor leadership, management and administration; a climate of distrust, even hostility, among principals, teachers, pupils and parents; and a collapse of stability in the social environments surrounding schools.

The quandary facing the Gauteng Department of Education is well known. Faced with large real cuts in its budget, so that "poorer" provinces might receive

more funds from the central fiscus, it is unable to spend more than token amounts on improving schools and building more classrooms, let alone equip them adequately.

Does it matter? The Wits study reckons it does.

Facilities and educational results are clearly related, it asserts, because "the morale of schoolgoers and teachers alike

is deeply influenced by the physical environment . . . Every effort must be made to find new sources of funds."

None of this is addressed by the national department's discussion document. Instead, it talks of providing incentives for teachers to work in rural areas, of the need for "an integrated approach to education and training," of giving "attention to the composition, power and functions of a National Council for Teacher Education" and so forth — sug-

gestions that may have merit but ignore real and urgent problems.

What pupils, parents, teachers and principals need from Bengu is one dramatically new idea that would revolutionise the use of school buildings and teachers and give schooling an educational validity which it now lacks. Taking children out of the classroom for structured learning in other environments might be such an idea.

If such periods occupied sufficient weeks each year and if programming of school holidays was made more flexible, two groups of pupils could alternately use the same classroom. And all of them would be far better stimulated.

If Bengu and his advisers don't like that suggestion, they should produce another solution. They must stop hiding behind policy formulation. ■



Sibusiso Bengu

Sematan 11/10/96
(332)
**Taxi boycott protests
 killing of commuters**

DISGRUNTLED Pretoria township commuters, backed by police and soldiers, will boycott minibus taxis from Monday next week to protest against the slaying of innocent commuters in a taxi war, spokesmen said yesterday.

Soshanguve community policing forum chairman Mr Dan Mahlangu said at least 16 commuters had been killed and scores injured in taxi-related violence in the region since August.

"As long as taxi organisations declare war on each other, innocent people will continue to die," he said.

"We must have a way to tackle these people. Our only hope is to withhold our money, the money which makes them think they are brave."

Pretoria crime prevention head Director Piet van Rensburg said at least 150 police and defence force members would be deployed to Hammanskraal, Soshanguve, Mabopane and Pretoria on Monday.

Two light aircrafts, one from the SA Air Force and one from the SA Police Services, would patrol the area and road-blocks would be set up.

Mahlangu said alternative transport had been arranged for the more than 2 000 commuters likely to be affected by the boycott.

"We have already spoken to the North West Star and Putco bus companies as well as to Metro Rail," he said. "They undertook to help us as far as possible."

North West Star spokesman Mr Johan Stegmann confirmed that his company was aware of the planned boycott. "We will help stranded commuters where the need arises and within our available resources," he said.

Routes targeted by organisers include the Hammanskraal to Mabopane road and Makapanstad to Mabopane. A meeting to discuss the boycott with residents of Mabopane, Winterveldt and Soshanguve has been called for Sunday. — Sapa.

BULLETIN BOARD

We're helpless, say police after taxi rank mayhem

By SASHA JENSEN

Mayhem erupted at a taxi rank in Soweto when about 20 men armed with AK-47s jumped out of four cars and began firing randomly at passengers, drivers and pedestrians yesterday morning.

The Diepkloof taxi rank is the latest battleground in the ongoing taxi wars. The attack left 13 people in hospital, all of them seriously injured with gunshot wounds. Police said four of the wounded were critically ill.

SABC media relations officer Martin Mahlaba witnessed the shootings, which took place at 7.30am.

"Children and women ran in all directions from the Diepkloof taxi rank, which is seconds away from the Diepkloof police station. They all scampered everywhere to avoid the bullets. Armed men were open-



TRAPPED: Siphso Thobela, a victim of the chaos

ly running towards taxis at the rank near the old beerhall.

"The men were brandishing their firearms, striding down the street and shooting at everything that moved. People in a minibus stopped at the robots and threw themselves on top of each other to avoid being shot. Passengers shouted at the driver to move but three of the gunmen were standing in front of the bus, preventing him from moving."

Mahlaba, who was riding in a minibus, told how an old woman fell in the middle of the

road in the chaos and had to crawl on her hands and knees to shelter.

Christina Thobela was seen trying to wrest her son Siphso free after he had been trapped underneath one of the taxis while fleeing the bullets.

Soweto police spokesman Superintendent Govindsamy Mariemuthoo said police were helpless and could not put a stop to the violence. Police suspected the attack was motivated by competition for taxi routes.

"The police can do nothing about this violence. It is up to the taxi associations to sort this out and resolve their problems. All we can do is investigate the crime and hope that we catch the perpetrators. A lot of people have lost their lives in the taxi war."

In Soweto alone, 28 people have died and 35 have been injured in taxi violence this year.

Residents vow to boycott taxis

By Josias Charle

(332)

THE residents of Mabopane and Soshanguve have vowed to launch a taxi boycott following a number of violent attacks in which passengers have been injured or killed.

At a residents meeting held at the Giant Stadium in Soshanguve yesterday, residents decided to launch a taxi boycott from today.

It will only stop once there is a commitment from the taxi operators that the violence will come to an end, they said.

The affected areas are the routes between Soshanguve, Mabopane, and Hammanskraal.

So far more than 50 people have been killed or injured in about two months.

In the last few months violence has shifted from taxi operators to passengers.

Angry residents said it was high time the taxi operators "stopped their

nonsense and brought the violence to an end".

Taxi task team spokesman Mr Dan Mahlangu said countless meetings have been held with taxi operators but it seemed the people's pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

"The only way to stop this nonsense is by hitting them in their pockets, where it hurt most.

"If we can withhold our fare money maybe this will bring some sense into them. A boycott is the only way out," Mahlangu said.

On another matter, the residents decided that a march would be held to the offices of the Northern Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure with a view to protest against electricity cuts.

The council has been cutting off electricity to residents failing to pay their monthly accounts.

The residents decided to continue to pay the R80 flat rate while at the same time entering into talks with Eskom on direct billing.

day October 14 1996

Taxi war claims more lives

(332)
By LARA SMITH

Nov 14/10/96
Renewed taxi violence claimed the life of another driver in Diepkloof, Soweto, at the weekend.

Two other people were wounded in separate shootings.

SAPS spokesman Inspector John Shiburi said police were patrolling the area last night after four taxi-related attacks on Saturday. The attacks are believed to be linked to the violence between rival taxi associations in the township.

In the first attack, at 7.50am, the occupants of three cars opened fire on a vehicle believed to belong to a member of the Diepmeadow Taxi Association. The car was parked outside the taxi association's offices at the taxi rank.

No one was injured.

This was followed at 10am by an attack on a taxi driver of the Bara-Meadowlands Taxi Association as he was driving along the Soweto Highway near Diepkloof. He was taken to Baragwanath Hospital where he was treated for a gunshot wound.

An hour later, another Bara-Meadowlands driver was shot at by about 10 unidentified gunmen. It was not known whether he was wounded, Shiburi said. Shortly after this, a Diepmeadow Taxi Association driver was shot dead at the Diepkloof taxi rank.

One man was arrested at the scene for the possession of an unlicensed firearm. The gun's serial number had been erased.

Shiburi said police could not rule out the possibility that the attacks were linked to Friday's incident in which a large group of gunmen in four vehicles opened fire on the Diepkloof taxi rank, wounding 13 people, one of whom died later in hospital.

Commuters boycott taxis

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

ARL 14/10/96

Pretoria - Scores of peak-hour commuters today heeded a call to boycott minibus taxi operations between Mabopane and Hammanskraal.

The bus rank next to Mabopane railway station was a hive of activity as scores of commuters queued to catch buses, avoiding the nearby taxi rank in protest at the violence plaguing the industry.

The taxi rank, a stone's-throw from the buses, was deserted, with not a single minibus in sight, although Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) chairman Jacob Ledwaba indicated his group would resume operations today.

Policemen in two Nyala armoured vehicles were on standby at the rank.

Police spokesman George Francis said the situation was normal but that police would be on the alert throughout the day in case tensions flared up.

Johan Stegman of the North West Star bus service said that although there had been a significant increase in bus passengers this morning, there had been no need for the company to provide additional buses.

Mr Ledwaba said: "As far as we are concerned taxis are operating normally."

Wesley Mpawu of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta), LTO's rival in the taxi conflict, said his group supported the boycott.

Commuters support call to boycott taxis

By McKeed Kotlolo

SCORES of taxi commuters in the Mabopane/Winterveld/Hammanskraal area yesterday heeded the weekend call to boycott taxis in protest against the ongoing violence.

A meeting held at the Soshanguve Giant Stadium on Sunday and attended by Winterveld, Mabopane and Soshanguve residents resolved to embark on the boycott of taxis operating between Mabopane, Hammanskraal and Winterveld until the rival bodies stopped fighting.

Spokesman for Rietgat police, Captain John Mabaso, said the boycott was successful although the situation

was tense in the morning.

Mabaso said they had to deploy more policemen to increase patrols along the affected taxi routes and to ensure the safety of commuters.

He added that mini-road blocks were manned along the Winterveld/Soutpan Road which was used by members of the feuding Letlhabile Taxi Organisation and the South African Long Distance Taxi Association.

Meanwhile, chairman of the Soshanguve Community Policing Forum Mr Dan Mahlangu confirmed that only a handful of commuters used taxis yesterday morning.

He called upon leaders of the feuding taxi bodies to stop the violence which had

already claimed many innocent lives.

He said he was among the mediators (in the taxi violence) who had received death threats and "we are not going to be intimidated by cowards who are making those threats and we will not stop calling for a peaceful resolution to the problem".

He said the violence started with taxi operators only and now it involves commuters. "By killing innocent passengers, they were killing the hand that feeds them," he charged.

Mahlangu said instead of taking more lives, he urged those behind the killings to think of improving the taxi industry and work out better strategies to resolve their differences.

Sowetan 15/10/96 (332)

Taxi boycott launched

PRETORIA — Minibus taxis serving townships around Pretoria experienced a dramatic drop in business yesterday as disgruntled commuters, backed by police and the defence force, embarked on a taxi boycott, Soshanguve community policing forum chairman Dan Mahlangu said.

The boycott was called last week to protest against the killing of commuters in the continuing taxi war. At least 16 commuters have been killed in taxi-related violence since August.

Mahlangu said about 75% of an expected 2 500 commuters joined the protest which affected the routes between Hammanskraal and Makapanstand and Soshanguve and Mabopane.

Local taxi owners also supported the boycott. Mahlangu said bus companies were supplying alternative transport. — Sapa.

Zwelithini, Buthelezi meet in bid to heal rift

Farouk Chothia

DURBAN — King Goodwill Zwelithini of the Zulus and IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi are scheduled to meet at the monarch's Nongoma palace today in a fresh bid to resolve differences between them.

This will be the first meeting since President Nelson Mandela's effort to mediate between the two collapsed earlier this year as a result of differences over Buthelezi's status within the royal family.

IFP spokesman Themba Nzimande played up the significance of today's meeting, claiming the initiative to hold it had come from Zwelithini.

However, KwaZulu-Natal government sources said the provincial cabinet had initiated the meeting as part of the ANC-IFP peace process.

The sources said chiefs and members of the royal house had been asked to attend. It was in this context that Buthelezi, as provincial house of traditional leaders' chairman, was invited.

The sources said the meeting was nevertheless significant, since for the peace process to succeed, Zwelithini and Buthelezi would have to resolve the contentious issue of whether the latter was the monarch's traditional prime minister.

Meanwhile, Land Affairs Minister Derek Hanekom and KwaZulu-Natal premier Frank Mdlalose took a major step towards resolving differences over the Ingonyama Trust by agreeing at a Pretoria meeting to the establishment of a board of trustees to administer land falling under the Act.

Land Affairs director-general Geoff Budlender said there was agreement that only tribal land would fall under an amended Act.

Budlender said Zwelithini would no longer be sole trustee of tribal land. A board, acceptable to both governments and traditional leaders, would administer the Act.

In a day of irascious and acrimonious parliamentary education committee, NP education spokesman Renier Schoeman presented a legal opinion which said the committee had no right to make changes to the Bill.

NOVEMBER 15 1996

KTC schools caught in the crossfire

(332)
SABATA NGCAI

EDUCATION REPORTER

ARG 16/10/96
Teachers and pupils at schools in KTC near Nyanga fear for their lives after indiscriminate shooting in the taxi war, which resulted in two homes being petrol-bombed.

A teacher at John Pama Primary School said it was like living in a war zone during the violence yesterday.

"When we heard gunshots from the classrooms, children and teachers started crying," the teacher said. "Within seconds a shack was enveloped in a ball of flame.

"We told the caretaker to lock the school gates because we did not want to expose children to danger. Their parents came to fetch them later."

John Pama and Mkhanyiseli primary schools are in the heart of the settlement and whenever the taxi violence erupts, they are caught in the crossfire. Few pupils went to school today, most staying at home for fear of more violence.

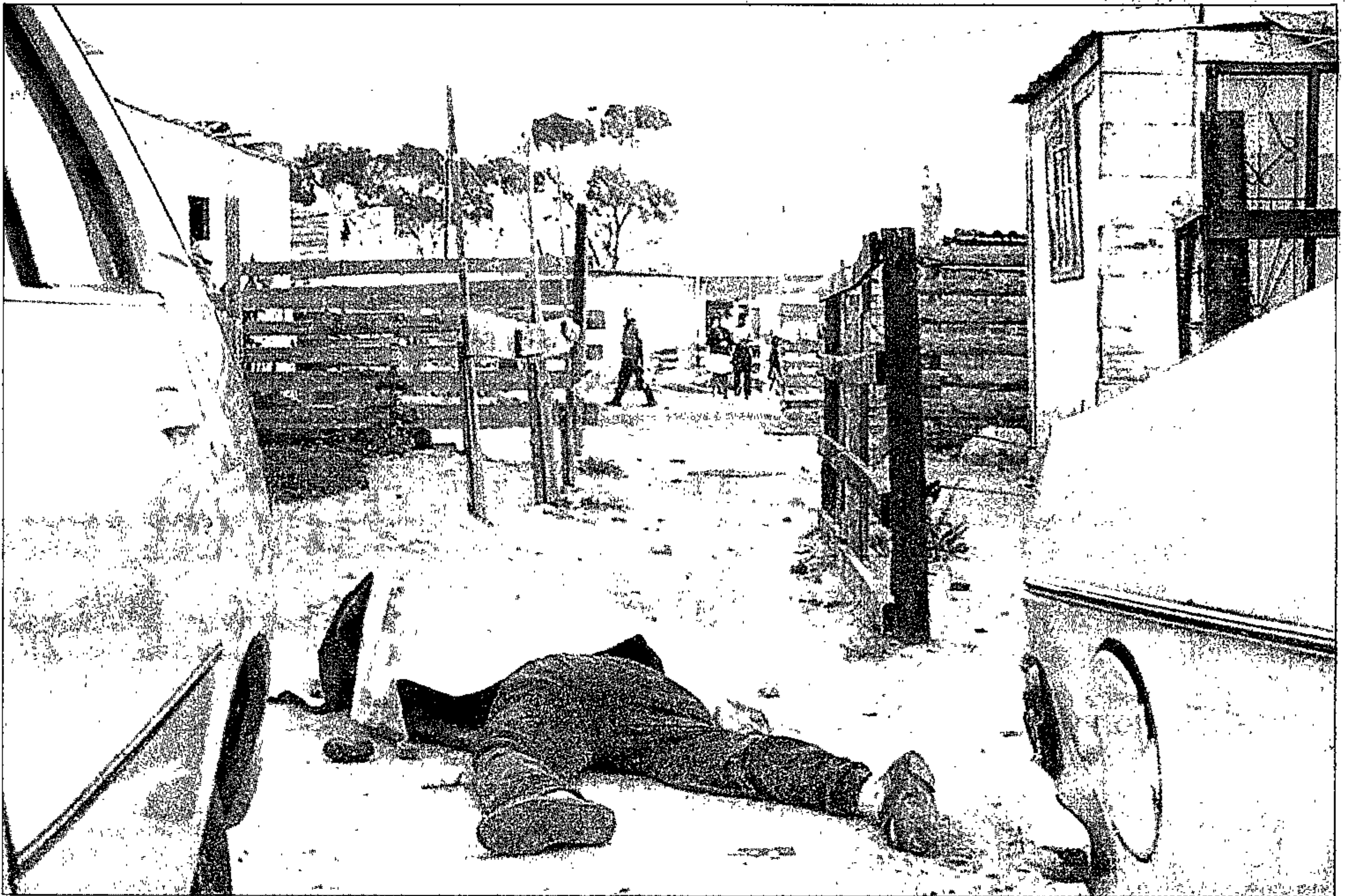
The schools are between the Nyanga taxi rank, known to be the stronghold of Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), and KTC, which is known to be dominated by the Convention for Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

A 10-year-old girl is in a state of shock after her home was petrol-bombed yesterday.

The Standard 2 girl said she was left with only her school uniform after the fire destroyed all her family's possessions.

"My mother saw the Cata taxi driver who petrol-bombed my home," she said. "He did it and hid in the nearby bush."

John Pama principal Xoliswa Sopapaza said there would be no afternoon classes from today for the safety of pupils and teachers.



OBED ZILWA

Feud casualty: this man was shot dead and several homes were burnt in renewed taxi violence which swept through the KTC squatter settlement

Man dies as homes burn in new taxi violence

ANDREA BOTHA AND ANDREW SMITH
STAFF REPORTERS

A man died and another was injured in new violence between the rival taxi associations Cata and Codeta which wreaked havoc in KTC.

Yesterday several homes were destroyed after being set alight by two petrol bombs, allegedly thrown by Cata minibus taxi owners.

Moments earlier, KTC residents allegedly fired shots at a Cata taxi. Witness-

es said shots were returned from taxis.

The new outbreak of violence came days after a fragile peace was brokered by ousted African National Congress parliamentarian Bantu Holomisa.

Police superintendent Ciska du Plessis said: "It's all very confusing. It seems that the driver of a Cata taxi was shot at by unknown gunmen and his home in Khayelitsha petrol-bombed from a car bearing the Cata insignia."

In the first incident Moses Prins was shot at while driving a taxi in KTC. Ten

shots hit the vehicle, injuring a passenger, but Mr Prins was unhurt.

The body of a man who had been shot was found later in KTC. Police have yet to release his name.

Superintendent Du Plessis said the two petrol bombings followed the shootings.

Codeta spokesman Howard Dyubeni said: "This is not a new outbreak of violence - the violence has never stopped."

Cata leader Stephen Williams said that he did not know what had happened at KTC.

(332) ARG 16/10/96

Rising costs result in big drop in minibus sales

Edward West

332
16/10/96
MINIBUS sales have slumped to 1 200 a year from 18 000 in the late 1980s, affected by spiralling vehicle and maintenance costs, violence and an inability to raise fares, industry sources said yesterday.

SA Black Taxi Association president Joe Mabaso said government-spearheaded Taxi Task Team proposals were being implemented by provincial governments, but industry prospects were unlikely to improve in the short term.

Toyota SA's Hi-ace was one of the last locally produced minibuses being sold. Samcor's Marathon and

Spectrum minibuses never sold well and Nissan's E20 ceased production, Econometrix economist Tony Twine said.

Toyota's George Foster said new minibus taxis were "prohibitively" expensive. Manufacturers had enjoyed margins of up to 20% in the past while dealers had taken up to 18,25%.

Mabaso said the financing and insurance premiums for a move to bigger 23-seat vehicles in the industry were being investigated. Also being studied was the introduction of diesel taxis, which government was ready to subsidise, but no decision had been made on the rand value of the subsidy.

light crime
BD 30/10/96
too little money

department could not wait for next budget cycle to make adjustments, for example where more prosecutors, were required in a particular area to deal with a surge in cases.

Omar said because most of the public's interaction with the justice system took place in the magistrates' courts, a major management system revision was under way.

This would involve, among other things, management being devolved from Pretoria to clusters of about 40 magistrates' courts.

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BD 30/10/96
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overtones of the attack, saying the political might have been the motive.

He said it was possible the criminals aligned with a "rival political organization" had wanted to rob a store and had killed the children to rob a store and "tification after."

Police spokesman Insp Vish Naidu said no motive had been established for the attack.

Meanwhile, the NP Kwezulu-Natal region called on Justice Minister Dhlaliso Omar to appoint a inquiry into the

The NP claimed that Zamani Hlangulela and Oscar Zungu had been killed a fortnight ago, and three people IFFP Mpumalanga leader Siphiso Mamba said the NP was involved in its "dirty game" by attempting to undermine a successful

of two NP members in violence alleged perpetrated by IFP supporters in Maritzburg, between Durban and The NP claimed that Zamani Hlangulela and Oscar Zungu had been killed a fortnight ago, and three people had been injured in a subsequent vigil. IFP Mpumalanga leader Siphso Mlambe said the NP was involved in its "old dirty game" by attempting to undermine a successful ANC-IFP initiative in the township.

Three wounded in taxi shooting

(292) Nov 17/10/96
PRETORIA CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a senior policeman's daughter, were wounded in Pretoria city centre when a gunman opened fire with an AK-47 on two taxis yesterday.

Nina Williams (19), daughter of National Service Evaluation head, Commissioner Tim Williams, was wounded in the leg while waiting for a taxi. Two members of the South African Long Distance Taxi Association were also wounded.

Rifle shots rang out in the vicinity of Dr Savage Road and Boom Street, with police initially stating that at least 32 bullets had

been fired from a block of flats overlooking one of the main taxi ranks in the CBD.

The sniper was apparently aiming at two minibuses which had stopped to pick up passengers at the corner of Bloed and Prinsloo streets.

Fifteen suspects were taken into custody and questioned by police. An AK-47 and a 9mm pistol were found at the scene.

Police set up early morning roadblocks in Shoshanguve today and continued to monitor the city ranks.

The boycott of minibus taxis on the Mabopane-Hammanskraal route continued yesterday.

Holomisa steers taxis to peace

CT 17/10/96

(332)

ERIC NTABAZALILA

THE umpteenth peace agreement was reached between the two warring taxi associations, Cata and Codeta, after a five-hour meeting chaired by expelled ANC MP, Mr Bantu Holomisa at a city hotel yesterday.

However, proposals already approved by the executive committees of the two factions had to be taken to members before it could be said that peace had been achieved, Holomisa said.

Holomisa, who paid for the conference room where the meeting was held, said: "I'm not going to be paid for what I'm doing here though the taxi associations are aware that I'm unemployed. I'm doing all

this for free and for peace."

Yesterday's agreement was concluded after the taxi violence had spread to KTC this week leaving one man dead and several homes destroyed by fire.

"There are certain proposals that need to be tabled to the taxi members before we can say we have a conclusive agreement that will help to bring about peace in Bellville and Khayelitsha — we will know by Friday, he said."

The taxi associations had approached Holomisa to mediate in the dispute.

Codeta's lawyer Mr Frans Coetzee said Holomisa was approached because he was a Xhosa and had military experience as the situation was "turning into a war".

Passersby hit by sniper in taxi clash

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

(332)
PRETORIA - Three people were wounded in the city centre here when a man with an AK-47 opened fire in a battle between rival taxi groups.

A sniper apparently aimed at two minibuses which had stopped to pick up passengers. The vehicle was damaged, but the three people wounded were walking along the pavement.

The shooting caused widespread chaos, with motorists and taxi commuters delayed for over an hour.

Three suspects were taken into custody. Police seized an AK-47 rifle and a 9mm pistol. The AK-47 was found in the hallway of a filling station after police had surrounded the building, suspecting a gunman was trapped inside.

A businessman in the area said a stranger had warned him to leave the area as there was to be "war" about 4pm.

"The man just came to me and said I should clear out quickly because there was to be war," he said.

Police said there was conflict between the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) and a rival taxi organisation.

Violence

Shack blaze

ANDREA BOTHA AND MARIO WYNGAARD
STAFF REPORTERS

Continuing violence in KTC was the backdrop for peace talks between the warring taxi groups Cata and Codeta and ousted African National Congress deputy minister Bantu Holomisa.

The taxi association representatives and Mr Holomisa met for several hours at a city hotel yesterday to discuss the latest outbreak, reaching a peace agreement late in the afternoon.

Cata and Codeta agreed to share the Bellville and Khayelitsha taxi ranks and to honour the other points of the 29th peace initiative, which they signed weeks ago.

But in KTC, meanwhile, a man was seriously wounded in a drive-by shooting and a shack was set alight.

The man was shot in the stomach and back as he stood in front of his shack.

A witness said six taxis drove past the shack and two shots were fired.

He could not tell to which taxi association the taxis belonged.

The man was rushed to the local clinic but his condition deteriorated and he was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital.

Later a taxi driver's shack in Terminus Road was set alight.

A neighbour said a blue car stopped in front of the shack and two men asked her if anyone was home.

"I told them nobody was home and then I left. Later I saw the shack burning."

Patience Zumana, wife of the owner of the shack, and her baby Athule were at a neighbour's house. "When I returned I saw my house burning and people trying to put out the flames."

She said her husband was a private taxi driver and did not work for Cata or Codeta.

Codeta spokesman Howard Dyubeni said he did not know of any new shooting incidents since talks with Mr Holomisa.

"I don't know if the new agreement will work but we had to agree on something because people were dying," he said.

Cata president Stephen Williams could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile in Mitchell's Plain yesterday, police confiscated 26 licensed guns for ballistic tests after a standoff between Cata and Codeta during which members of both sides drew their guns.

The police reaction unit, assisted by soldiers, escorted Codeta members away from the scene. Cata members dispersed peacefully after the guns were confiscated and Codeta members returned to Khayelitsha.

taxi war peace talks

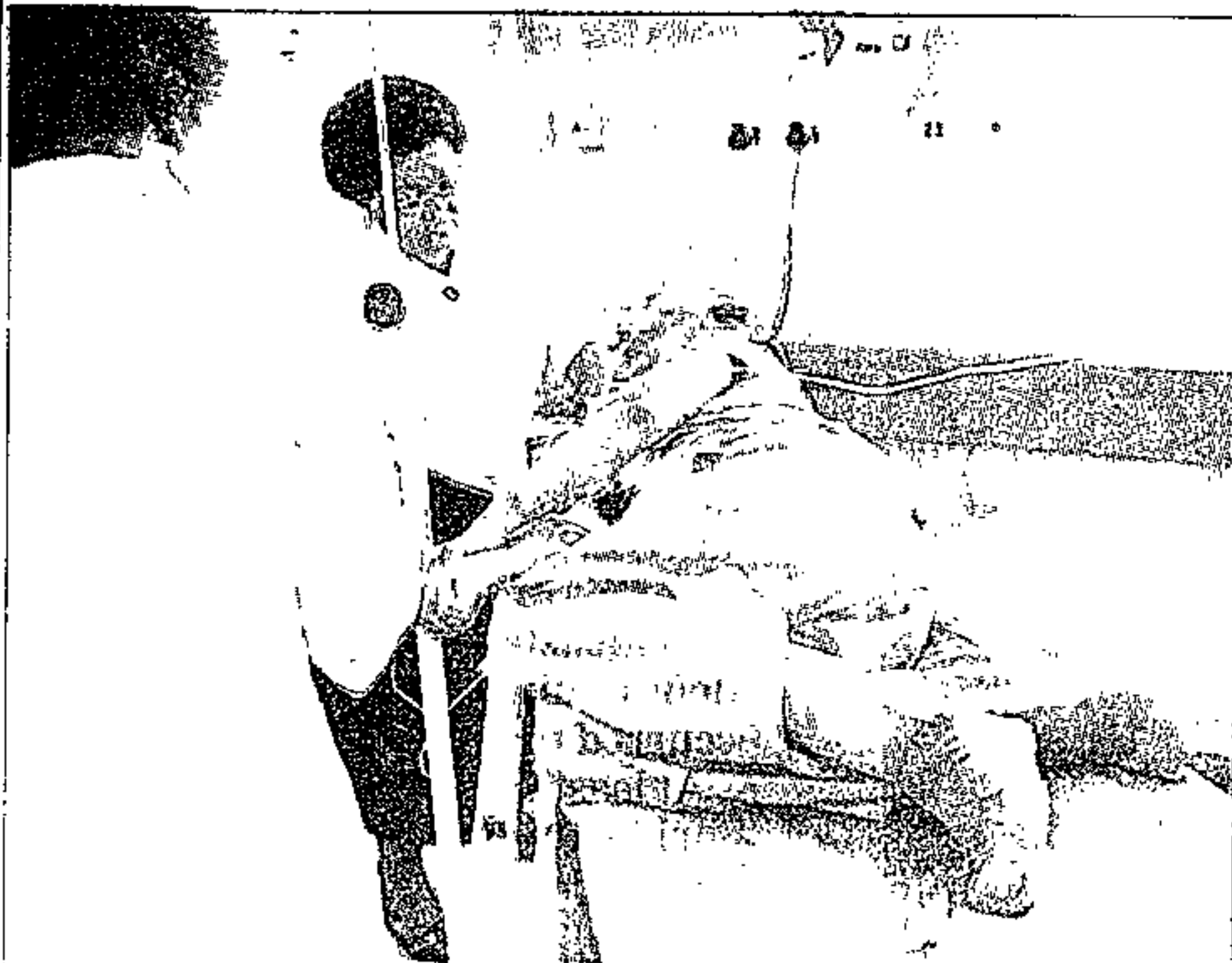
APL 17/10/96 (332)

s, man hurt in drive-by shooting



OBED ZILWA

In vain: a KTC resident tries to douse flames engulfing a shack after more taxi violence erupted in the area



Taxi war victim: a man hurt in a drive-by shooting lies in the KTC clinic



Shocked owner: police talk to Patience Zumana, owner of the burnt shack

Taxis block off streets

0017/10/96 (332) (43)
PROTESTING taxi operators brought traffic to a standstill, threatened to petrol bomb Joubert Park post office and to take Telkom employees hostage if their telephone lines were not restored in Johannesburg's Joubert Park by yesterday evening.

More than 60 meter taxis from Maxi Taxi blocked streets at Joubert Park post office after Telkom technicians refused to work overtime and restore lines.

A Maxi Taxi manager said the decision to block traffic at the post office was taken after futile attempts to have lines restored.

She said when the drivers tried to contact Telkom, they were told the public relations officer was out of town and would be back only on October 28.

Telkom and post office employees at Joubert Park could not leave the premises because all the exit passages were blocked.

Tension was defused after the chief technician said he was sending technicians immediately to restore the lines.

The drivers gave Telkom an ultimatum: restore the lines or they would return and block the streets. — Sapa.

14 in court over taxi rank shooting

By McKeed Kotlolo

FOURTEEN MEMBERS OF the Pretoria United Long Distance Taxi Association appeared in the Pretoria Magistrate's Court yesterday on charges relating to Wednesday's shooting at the main city taxi rank.

They appeared before Mr M Killian but were not asked to plead. The case was postponed to October 24.

They are Mr Amos Mahlangu, Mr Moses Kgabo, Mr Jeremiah Mahlangu, Mr Japie Mashiane, Mr James Kgomo, Mr Jacob Mahlangu, Mr James Magula, Mr Bongani Dladla, Mr Nene Mabunda, Mr John Skhosana, Mr Samson Themba, Mr Hendrik Mahlangu, Mr Zolani Mahlangu and Mr Alfred Msiza. They are all in custody.

Their appearance followed the shooting and wounding of several peo-

(332) Sowetan 18/10/95
Spokesman for LTO says boycott has not had an effect on their business

ple at the Bloed Street taxi rank.

A spokesman for police investigating taxi violence in Pretoria, an Inspector Crouse, yesterday refused to give any information. "I do not give information over the phone. This is an instruction from above."

However, Captain Morne van Wyk confirmed the arrest of 15 people but could not say if all of them would be charged. An AK-47 rifle and seven 9mm pistols were confiscated and taken for ballistic tests.

Van Wyk said the police, supported by the army, used a helicopter and manned roadblocks yesterday in their campaign against taxi violence.

Meanwhile, the Letlhabile Taxi

Organisation, which operates in the Mabopane/Makapanstad/Hammanskraal routes, has claimed that the boycott is having no effect on their operations.

LTO spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba said: "Up to now we are not affected by the so-called boycott. It is business as usual."

Ledwaba said the violence in the Mabopane/Hammanskraal area, which has claimed 15 lives so far, "is not between various taxi bodies, but between certain members of the associations hiding behind the taxi groupings".

He, appealed however, to the affected parties to meet and resolve their differences.

Families flee amid fears of new taxi war attack

(332) CT 18/10/96
STAFF WRITER

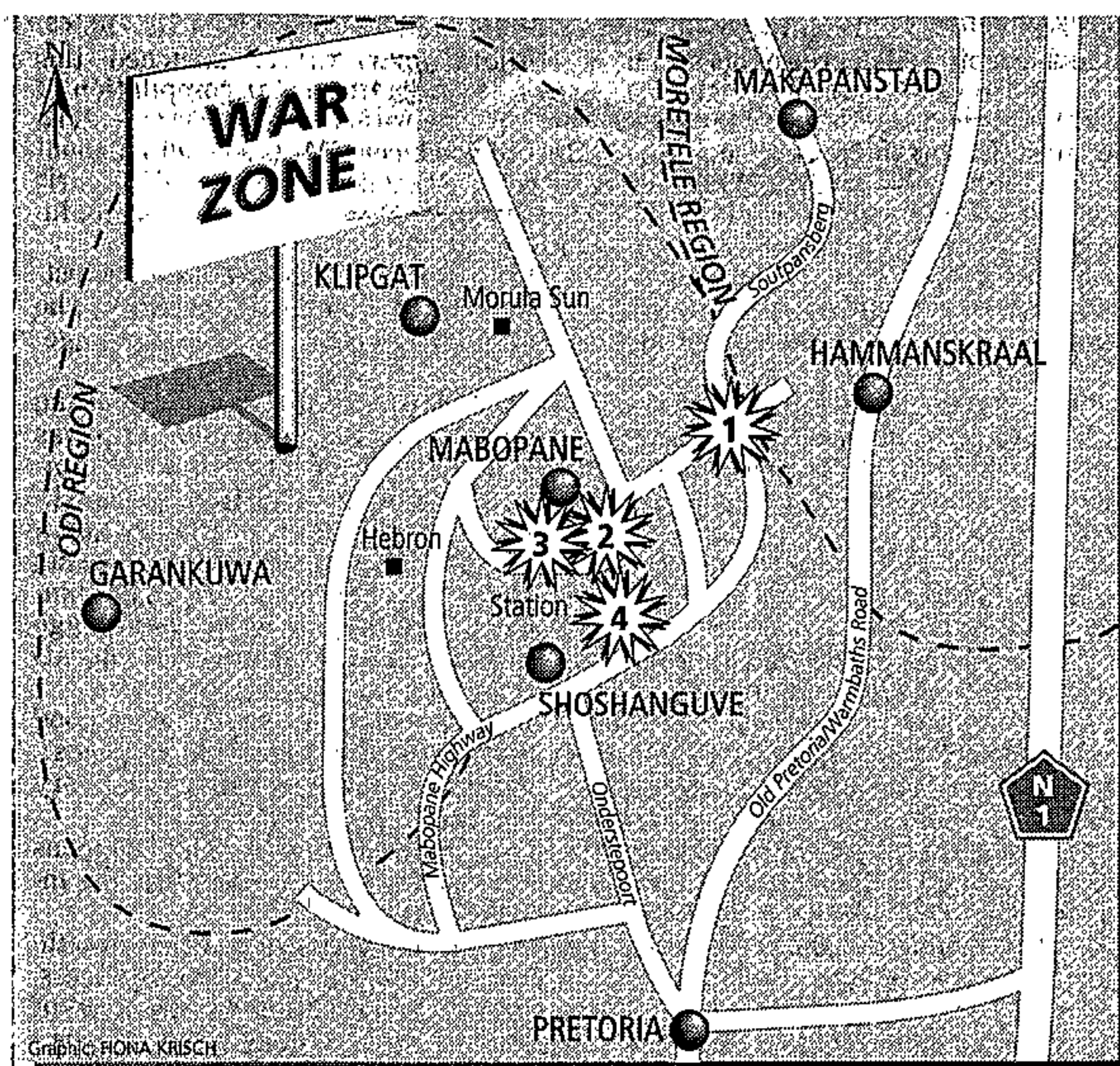
ABOUT 20 Black City families vacated their shacks yesterday fearing an attack from neighbouring KTC. This followed reports of a white sedan circling the camp with its occupants taking down the addresses of Cata taxi owners.

Mr Lungile Mgcina of the Sanco Black City committee said the community was expecting an attack from KTC in response to several shack-burnings and shootings in KTC earlier this week.

The fleeing families were not involved in the taxi industry, but feared that if one shack were torched the entire camp would burn.

One person has been killed and several seriously injured in drive-by shootings over the past few days.

Mgcina said he had received reports from Cata members that the white car carried three Black City women who were pointing out the houses. A meeting was to be held last night to discuss the issue.



FLASHPOINTS... taxis of the Lethlabile Association are allowed to go as far as 1 and use the rank at 2. They may not use ranks 3 or 4



STOP OR ELSE... taxis with the wrong stickers risk gunfire beyond this point
(see 1 on diagram)
Picture: JON HRUSA

Danger paves the route to success

ST 20/10/96

(372)

OWNING a minibus taxi is a dream cherished by many South Africans who have little education and few job prospects.

In the US, many young men see success in sport as their escape route out of the ghetto; in South Africa owning a taxi is the road to self-emancipation and riches.

It means being your own boss, wearing a suit, driving a BMW or Cressida, and living in a large house.

For many taxi owners and drivers, however, the road to success is paved with hard work and danger.

Frank Sambo, a taxi driver aligned to the Lethlabile Taxi Organisation, has been driving a taxi from the Hammanskraal taxi rank in the North West Province to Pretoria for five years.

A father of three, he works 15 hours a day and earns about R1 000 a month.

His job has put him in the line of fire more often than he cares to remember. "I have ducked more bullets than many soldiers in a war zone, but I won't give up," he said.

He is adamant, however, that the taxi industry is his lifeline.

His day starts at 5am when he wakes up, gets dressed and checks his taxi before driving from his tin hut in a squatter camp in Majaneng, Hammanskraal.

"I leave home at 5.30am and pick up early-morning commuters at the rank, where I join the queue and wait my turn for the first trip to Pretoria."

Sometimes he spends the night at the rank in his taxi to be first in line.

His taxi, originally a 12-seater, has been modified with a middle seat that takes four more passengers and — to make more money — Sambo squeezes three more passengers in the other seats to make it 19. Because of the extra seat, passengers cannot move their legs during the 45-minute trip.

But it is the only way Sambo can pay all

his costs and make a decent living.

He has to pay the owner of the taxi R650 a day between Tuesdays and Thursdays, and R750 between Fridays and Mondays — payments known as "checkings".

He has to fork out money for oil and petrol and pay his own parking tickets and traffic fines. The owner is responsible only for the cost of repairs.

The taxi violence has taken its toll on his income. "I used to make between R200 and R300 a day for myself, but many people have turned to buses and it is difficult to meet my checkings," he said.

Peter Mohale, a 32-year-old taxi owner aligned to a rival body, the Soshanguve Taxi Owners' Association, started saving money to buy a taxi while he was in high school. To raise the cash, he sold sweets and peanuts.

He dropped out of school in Std 9, got a driver's licence and secured a job as a driver for the owner of a taxi fleet.

He stayed in the job for four years, leaving in 1991.

"I studied the way he was running his business and, when I was sure I could run mine as well as him or better, I bought my first minibus taxi."

He bought a second minibus in 1992 and a third this year.

Today, he is the proud owner of an Audi 500SE, and his young wife is studying towards a law degree.

He has no desire, however, to rise in the ranks of the Soshanguve taxi association. "Being a taxi official is like walking in a minefield."

He said the violence was caused by overcrowding on routes. All kinds of people were buying minibuses and taxis were flooding the road, he said.

"The taxi business is in a terrible mess because of the violence," he said. "If it continues, the industry will collapse in five to 10 years."

'PW ordered Khotsso blast'

Lawrence 22/10/96

By Mzimasi Ngudle

FORMER president Mr PW Botha personally ordered the 1988 bombing of Khotsso House, the headquarters of the South African Council of Churches in Johannesburg, former police commissioner General Johann van der Merwe told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission yesterday.

Van der Merwe, the first witness to testify in the Johannesburg City Hall in the amnesty applications of five security policemen who have confessed to human rights abuses, also named two National Party cabinet ministers who approved gross human rights violations.

"During 1988, I received an instruction from Mr Adrian Vlok, then minister of law and order, that Khotsso House was to be damaged by explosives to such an extent that it could no longer be used."

"According to Vlok, this instruction had come from president PW Botha personally," said Van der Merwe.

He said former police minister Mr Louis le Grange had approved the use of the "zero handgrenade" - timed to ensure that people throwing such grenades would be killed instantly.

Modified grenades

Van der Merwe said he had decided that suitably modified handgrenades were the only way to stop African National Congress activists from killing policemen.

"I then made a recommendation to General Johan Coetzee, who in turn presented it to law and order minister Louis le Grange, who approved it," he said.

Van der Merwe then instructed Brigadier Jack Cronje to hand over modified handgrenades to activists under the guise that they had been supplied by the ANC.

'According to Vlok, this instruction came from president PW Botha personally'

activists were killed or injured when they launched armed attacks against the homes of policemen."

TRC lawyer Advocate Cocky Mpshe said the handgrenades had killed nine or 10 activists.

The handgrenade killings constitute 16 incidents out of 50 gross human rights violations on which five former security policemen will testify.

The incidents include the killing of Pretoria medical practitioner, Dr Fabian Ribeiro, and his wife Florence, the Eastern Cape Pebo Three - Mr Brian Nyalunga, Mr Joe Jele and Mr Piet Nhui - and the killing of nine KwaNdebele activists.

In their joint statement to the TRC yesterday, the five security policemen, Brigadier Jack Cronje, Colonel Roelf Venter, Captain Wouter Mertz, Captain Jacques Hector and Warrant-Officer Paul van Vuuren, said they had decided to take responsibility for their past after they were deserted by the National Party, which they had helped keep in power.

They regretted their past deeds and called upon former president Mr FW de Klerk and their superiors to explain the orders they gave them to commit gross human rights abuses.

After reading their statement, their lawyer, Mr Roelf du Plessis, applied to the commission to subpoena Transvaal

State witnesses who will testify against the five in a pending criminal trial.

Amnesty Committee chairman Mr Justice Hassan Mall said the committee would reserve its judgment on the application.

The application was opposed by D'Oliveira's lawyer, Mr Torrie Pretorius, on the grounds that it would prejudice subsequent criminal trials should the five be refused amnesty.

The five "seriously doubted De Klerk's denial that the former Cabinet and its State Security Council had never authorised apartheid atrocities".

"We ask, do not desert us further. Do not turn your backs on us. Help us."

They vowed to make a full disclosure of their deeds, saying they believed that, contrary to their superiors and NP leaders, "the time for the conflict was past".

"We call upon our superiors and leaders of the previous government not to deny responsibility but to stand by their people and admit responsibility for what was done by us in our endeavours to keep them in power."

Authorising actions

"We call upon them to explain certain orders given to us - about which we shall testify - and to admit authorising actions outside the normal processes of the law."

"We believe that the TRC is a necessary mechanism to obtain the truth. Time for deception is past. Time for denial is past. Time for justification is past," they said in the statement.

They said they expressed "compassion and regret to the families of those who have suffered as a consequence of our deeds".

The five made their amnesty applications shortly before D'Oliveira issued their warrants of arrests.

● See Pages 2 and 4 - How young



Former state president PW Botha



Former police commissioner

Army moves into KTC to quell taxi violence

ST(CM) 20/10/96

(332)

By KEN VERNON and JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

POLICE patrols backed up by army units have moved into Cape Town's troubled KTC squatter camp to control violence between rival taxi groups.

The move comes as the Peninsula steels itself for a long hot summer of violence from taxi rivals who have turned to using arson to intimidate township residents caught in the cross-fire of the warring groups.

Monitors from the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee (UMAC) issued the violence warning this week after gunmen from one of the groups attacked residents of the sprawling KTC squatter camp, setting shacks alight with firebombs and then shooting at residents trying to put out the flames.

In another outbreak of arson early yesterday, the young mother of a four-week-old baby was forced to flee as her make-shift house was set alight.

The woman, who did not want to be named, believes she was targeted because her boyfriend is a member of the Cape Organisation for Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

An ANC councillor for the area, Gladstone Ntamo, claimed members of Cata, (Cape Amalgamated



BURNT OUT . . . The KTC woman who had to flee when her shack was set alight in taxi violence **Picture: KIM LUDBROOKE**

Taxi Association) have threatened to kidnap school children in their bid to force community support.

After attacks earlier this week residents retaliated by setting up street barricades and shooting at taxi hit squads cruising the area.

After an urgent meeting between community leaders and police on Friday, it was agreed that police and traffic police — backed by army units — would step up patrols in the troubled area, said Ntamo.

He said the violence had broken out when gunmen from Codeta had attacked the taxi rank of Cata, and then hid among local residents.

Cata gunmen in turn burnt the houses of residents suspected of hiding the Codeta gunmen.

Residents yesterday braved the rain and marched to the nearby Guguletu police station, where they delivered a memorandum calling for an end to the violence.

Station Commissioner Andrew Langeveldt said a meeting between police, taxi associations and mediators was scheduled to take place tomorrow.

A Codeta spokesman yesterday confirmed that the organisation had obtained a Supreme Court interdict allowing members to pick up passengers without being harassed or intimidated by Cata drivers.

"All of this violence has been predictable and we have warned the police on numerous occasions, sometimes very specifically, but they seem unable to act," said Steff Nel, a UMAC monitor who has been dealing with the Cape taxi wars for the past 10 years.

In this week's outbreak of fighting in KTC one taxi driver was shot dead, another wounded and at least three homes destroyed by fire, smashing a fragile peace agreement brokered by former ANC deputy minister Bantu Holomisa earlier this week.

According to Nel this was the 41st such agreement to be dishonoured in the past three years.

He said that in the past three years more than 300 shacks had been destroyed in taxi-related violence, while at least seven people had been killed, and he warned that there was no end in sight to the killings.

"The war between Cata and Codeta has become bedevilled with politics and is being used as a political football while the township residents suffer," he said.

Sources close to the industry say that while Codeta is closely aligned to African National Congress elements in KTC, an ANC stronghold, Cata is a conservative organisation, but is known to be courting the Pan-Africanist Congress.



CONCERNED . . .
Leading businessman George Foster says the survival of the minibus taxi industry is essential to the well-being of our economy. But in the face of the prohibitive costs of buying, maintaining and running a minibus taxi, the minibus taxi industry could find itself in trouble. It needs help – for the sake of commuters and the economy as a whole.

332

Save the minibus taxi industry!

CP 20/10/96

THERE are several vital areas relating to the South African minibus taxi industry that require urgent attention. Should these areas not be addressed, the minibus taxi industry as we know it today could die, which will undoubtedly impact very severely on this country's already hard-hit economy.

This is the view of leading businessman George Foster, who is dealer principal of Foster's Toyota (the dealership which sells the single largest number of taxis in this country) and chairman of the Foster's Group.

Fifty percent of the Foster's Group is owned by McCarthy Retail.

"The minibus taxi industry in this country is under extreme pressure for a number of reasons.

"Government must address this situation. With this country's poor public transportation infrastructure, workers rely on the minibus taxi industry to get them to and from work. The service provided by the minibus taxi industry is therefore essential to the well-being of the economy of this country," Foster pointed out.

The problem areas to which Foster refers include the price of minibus taxis, servicing and maintenance costs, fuel costs, the availability of finance and the cost of insurance.

It is common knowledge that new minibus taxis are prohibitively expensive, a situation which has seen new taxi purchases spiral downwards from 18 000 sales in 1988 to an all-time low of 1 200 last year.

Foster said a Toyota Hi-Ace 16-seater costs R120 000 (including VAT) and that an Iveco Turbo Daily 24-seater, for which he also has the agency, costs R153 900 (including VAT).

"For the taxi operator who wishes to update his fleet, these costs are crippling," Foster commented.

He said that, ideally, the Hi-Ace should cost R85 000 and the Turbo Daily R115 000.

"This could be accomplished by eliminating the VAT and excise duty payable on these vehicles. Manufacturer and dealer margins also need to be drastically reduced.

"Manufacturers have enjoyed margins of up to 20 percent in the past, while dealers have taken up to 18,25 percent. Dealers were meant to treat taxi owners as fleet operators and therefore only take a margin of 8,25 percent but, in many cases, they ignored the guideline and took the full 18,25 percent."

He said that he'd like to see the dealer's margin reduced to 6,25 percent while the manufacturer's margin should drop to a mere 5 percent.

"This obviously applies to existing models where the set-up and tooling costs have been amortised. There's no need to introduce new models into this market. The current models are more than ideal for the job," he said.

The second aspect of the taxi in-

dustry which must be addressed, according to Foster, is that of servicing and maintenance costs.

"There is a perception that franchised dealers are expensive and, to a certain extent, that's true," Foster pointed out.

"A taxi driver going to a dealer to have his vehicle repaired can be charged the outrageous price of R180 an hour just for labour. Add to that the price of parts and the mileage a taxi does and you can see why it becomes unthinkable for the taxi owner to take his vehicle for professional repair. And it is this professional repair which is so sorely needed within the industry."

At Foster's Toyota, the labour rate is only R90 (including VAT).

"I'd like to call on other dealers to follow our example," urged Foster.

He added that yet another recent innovation which should assist the taxi operator is the introduction of reduced parts prices by certain vehicle manufacturers.

Another major cost to the taxi operator is that of fuel.

There are over 200 000 minibus taxis operating in the country and each taxi has an average monthly fuel bill of R2 704 (for 1 300 litres). This translates into an annual fuel bill of R54 080 000. If bus companies enjoy government subsidies of 18c per litre, a subsidy should also be applicable to the taxi industry.

"This would mean a saving of R235,30 per taxi per month, which would benefit the industry enormously."

A fourth factor that Foster would like to see addressed is the availability of finance.

"This has always been a major obstacle as the financial institutions are wary of providing finance to taxi owners and operators as they are viewed as a high risk. I'd like to see the government establishing a fund which will provide collateral security to the financial institution."

Finally, Foster would like to see the aspect of insurance being addressed.

"The taxi industry is viewed as a high risk area because of the proliferation of accidents, violence and hijackings. But government must put pressure on the insurance industry to reduce its rates.

"Even taking these factors into account, insurance companies are charging double what they should be. Up to R22 000 is being charged a year on a Hi-Ace. A private individual wouldn't pay any more than R10 000," Foster said.

In conclusion, Foster pointed out that these changes would not only benefit the minibus taxi industry, but also the commuter.

"It's a fact that the bulk of commuters are being transported to their places of work by taxi. The survival of the taxi industry has important implications for our economy."

Workers to get stake in Airports Company

(332) ST(MT) 20/10/96
THE government is to offer employees a 10% stake in the Airports Company when it takes the first steps towards privatisation of the state transport sector, writes CAROL PATON.

Randall Howard, secretary-general of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said this week proposals put forward by the government and still to be considered by unions suggested the government would split 49% of its shareholdings between employees, a strategic equity partner and a black group. The government was likely to remain a majority shareholder.

He said the employee stake also raised the possibility of seats on the board. The government's package would have to satisfy union concerns such as human resource development. Time frames had not been discussed, but Howard said "an enterprise restructuring committee had been set up and the real work would now begin".

Schools can hire additional teachers

By Adam Cooke

Schools will have the right to increase their complement of teachers with private income, Gauteng Education MEC Mary Metcalfe has said.

In a move to rebut perceptions that the redeployment of teachers would force schools to reduce their pupil to teacher ratio, Metcalfe said governing bodies could hire more staff.

"According to the present funding model, private money can be used to supplement a school's income," she said.

Her comment comes at a time when many (mainly historically Model C) schools have expressed concern at the policy

of rightsizing. This policy is an attempt to address an inherited unequal distribution of teachers which sees certain schools having up to 70 children to a teacher while others have around 20 children per teacher.

According to the department, 85% of the budget for schools is spent on salaries, which needs to be more evenly spread across the province.

To correct the problems of distribution, teachers will be redeployed and voluntary severance packages introduced.

Schools will be able to maintain a high number of teachers per pupil by employing teachers at their own cost to replace those lost through rightsizing.

321

Star 21/10/96

Foreign aid for teacher training

(321)
from 21/10/96

By Rafiq Rohan
Political Correspondent

PRESIDENT Mandela is confident that multi-million rand foreign funding to aid education in South Africa has been secured.

However, this money will not be used to provide for voluntary retrenchment packages.

Mandela said in Parliament last week that on many occasions, in meeting with foreign leaders, they offered assistance in achieving South Africa's goals of transformation.

He said that due to the "critical" shortage of funds in the national budget to take care of education priorities, he wrote a number of letters to several heads of state asking for support for the important educational tasks.

"I am pleased to report that the response was overwhelmingly supportive. For this we are deeply appreciative.

"While funding for voluntary retrenchment packages will not be possible from foreign donors, specific pledges towards the capacity building of our teacher corps as well as the retraining and redeployment of teachers have been received."

Some of the more significant confirmed donations come from countries like America, Canada, France and Taiwan.

The USA has donated about R650 million to support teacher training; Canada has given R60 million for teacher training initiatives; Germany has given about R15 million also for teacher training; about R65 million from France was received to be used for the redeployment of teachers to less favoured areas; the Swiss have donated R4,8 million to transform the education system; the Irish have given over 2 million Irish pounds while Taiwan has offered R25 million for education support.

AIR TRAVEL *Transport chief says complaint was lodged too late*

SAA left standing on runway

AUDREY D'ANGELO

Cape Town — A last-ditch attempt by South African Airways (SAA) to prevent the launch of the British Airways-Comair franchise on October 27 has come too late, Johan Biermann, the deputy director of transport regulations, said on Friday.

SAA lodged a complaint with South Africa's international and domestic licensing councils last week that the agreement allowed British Airways to operate a domestic air service in this country without the appropriate licence.

Biermann said on Friday that the complaint obliged the International Air Licensing Council to call a meeting with the national carrier and Comair, but 21 days' notice was required for this, which meant it would be held after the launch.

Leon Els, SAA's senior pub-

lic relations manager, said the complaint had been made following talks with the civil aviation authorities and an approach to Mac Maharaj, the transport minister, in an attempt to stop the franchise.

Mike Myburgh, the chief executive of SAA, said on Friday that the franchise could lead to the loss of foreign exchange earnings and jobs in the South African aviation industry.

It set a precedent which would "allow any international operator to franchise a nominal South African operator and to become a full participant in the South African aviation market".

Myburgh said franchises of this nature had not been allowed anywhere else in the world "other than between European airlines within the European Union where a unified air space is only months away from implementation".

(332) CT(BR) 21/10/96
The national carrier's complaint said the franchise would mean that active and effective control of Comair would "no longer (be) in the hands of a licensed South African operator".

But Piet van Hoven, the managing director of Comair, said this was not the case. He said full and effective control would remain in the hands of Comair's management, which would not be changed. British Airways had not taken any equity stake in Comair, which was still South African-owned. He expected the tie-up with British Airways to result in more tourism to South Africa and more jobs.

SAA's complaint, if upheld, could have serious implications for plans by foreign airlines to buy an equity stake in Sun Air and develop it as part of their own system. Sun Air is due to be privatised early next week.

Three die in Soweto taxi shooting

Three people were shot dead and three injured when gunmen opened fire on a KwaZulu Natal registered taxi in peak traffic on the Soweto Highway today.

The Sizwe Taxi Association driver, who asked to remain anonymous, said he pulled off the highway to speak to another taxi driver at about 7.30am.

"I had just stopped when a white Nissan Sentra drove up alongside us. The next minute they opened fire," he said.

Police investigators said the taxi operated on the route between Johannesburg and Dundee in KwaZulu Natal.

"We have found several spent 9mm and Tokarev cartridges on the scene," a detective said.

The body of one man lay sprawled next to the taxi, a second lay in the back seat and a third lay on an embankment nearby. —

Crime Reporter

(332) 22/10/96

Staff might get a place in the Sun

(332) CT(M) 22/10/96
AUDREY D'ANGELO

Cape Town — Sun Air is likely to be privatised by March or April next year and, although its strategic partner will be chosen by the government, the staff are expected to have a say in the matter, Johan Borstlap, Sun Air's managing director, said yesterday.

"I am sure the staff will be offered a stake in Sun Air, and they will align themselves with whichever prospective partner looks best for us," he added.

Borstlap was reacting to news that South African Airways (SAA) had lodged an objection with South Africa's domestic and international licensing councils to British Airways' franchise agreement with Comair on the grounds that it would enable a foreign airline to enter this country's domestic market without an appropriate licence.

Mike Myburgh, SAA's chief executive, said it would set a precedent for other foreign airlines to compete in the domestic market through a franchise.

Borstlap said he did not believe Sun Air would be swallowed up by an international airline after privatisation. "This brand is well established and well accepted in the market place."

He said more than one foreign airline had shown an interest in taking a stake in Sun, including Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic Airways. "But Richard will have to stand in the queue like everyone else. It is possible that our strategic partner might not be an airline at all."

Borstlap and David James, Virgin's new general manager in southern Africa, said there could be no objection to their present code-sharing agreement enabling passengers to travel on both airlines using one ticket. This was an accepted practice and SAA had a similar arrangement with a British domestic airline.

Borstlap said he expected the international aviation market to divide into groups of allied airlines, with Sun becoming part of one group.

Five people killed, three wounded in taxi shootings

RD 23/10/96

(332)

PRETORIA — Five people died and three were wounded in shootings yesterday related to taxi feuds, police said.

Sapa reports that a Mabopane, Pretoria, couple were killed in a drive-by shooting near their home while three people were killed and three wounded in a taxi-related shooting on the Soweto highway southwest of Johannesburg.

Spokesman Snr-Supt Hannes Joubert said taxi owner Sam Masemola and his wife were in their car about 1km from their home when four shots from an AK-47 rifle were fired at them by occupants of a silver Jetta.

Masemola, who was in his late forties, died on the scene. His wife was taken to the nearby Legae Clinic where she died.

Police suspected the incident was related to taxi violence in the Mabopane area.

In the Johannesburg incident the occupants of two minibus taxis opened fire on a third minibus taxi as they drove past it on the highway just after 7am. Three people were killed and three wounded.

Bonile Ngqiyaza reports that police and community representatives said a lack of information on how planned financial assistance by government to the minibus taxi industry would work, might have sparked recent clashes between taxi associations in Pretoria and Northwest.

SAPS and greater Pretoria community police board representatives said yesterday associations were competing for influence over routes and taxi operators in the "misguided assumption" numbers would be the overriding factor when finance was allocated.

Pretoria community leaders and civic organisations called last week for a boycott of minibus taxis after numerous meetings failed to put an end to taxi violence in the area, Greater Pretoria Community Police Board chairman Brutus Manana said.

"We think it is greed which is driving them. There is intimidation and violence from all sides."

SA Long Distance Taxi Association (Saldta) Region 1 president Wesley Mpawu denied yesterday

impending financial assistance had anything to do with the killings. The industry had experienced the same problems for years, before there was talk of financial assistance.

Areas affected by the boycott are Soshanguve, Mabopane, some parts of Garankuwa and Hammanskraal in Northwest, Manana said.

SA Taxi Drivers Union (Satdu) spokesman Maurice Bokaba blamed the carnage on government's slow pace in implementing the National Taxi Task Team recommendations and suggested strict law enforcement would solve the problem.

SAPS spokesman Capt George Francis said 25 people had been apprehended in connection with taxi violence this year, but lack of evidence and the unwillingness of witnesses to come forward meant many would be acquitted.

Only five people had been prosecuted successfully this year, he said. All were fined from R400 to R4 000 and released because of the minor nature of their offences.

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IMPORT PERMIT 'ABUSED'

Chinese buses confiscated

CT 24/10/96 (372)

CUSTOMS OFFICIALS have confiscated 20 buses imported by Golden Arrow Bus Service because the buses didn't match the import permit description, **JET VAN EEGHEN** writes.

TWENTY double-decker buses, decorated with Chinese characters and the names of destinations definitely not on local routes, have been rusting in Table Bay Harbour for the past three months. And they will stay there — at least for the foreseeable future.

They were part of a deal by Golden Arrow Bus Services to import 98 second-hand buses from Hong Kong to upgrade its ageing fleet, but have been confiscated after a dispute between Golden Arrow and the Department of Trade and Industry over import permits.

The buses were bought by Golden Arrow earlier this year to augment its

existing fleet, spokeswoman Mrs Jeanne Welsh said.

"Golden Arrow needs new buses but cannot afford to pay around R900 000 for a new one. These double-decker buses, which were refurbished in 1994, cost us only R160 000 each."

According to a Golden Arrow in-house magazine, its fleet is deteriorating rapidly, when there is a strong growth in commuter numbers.

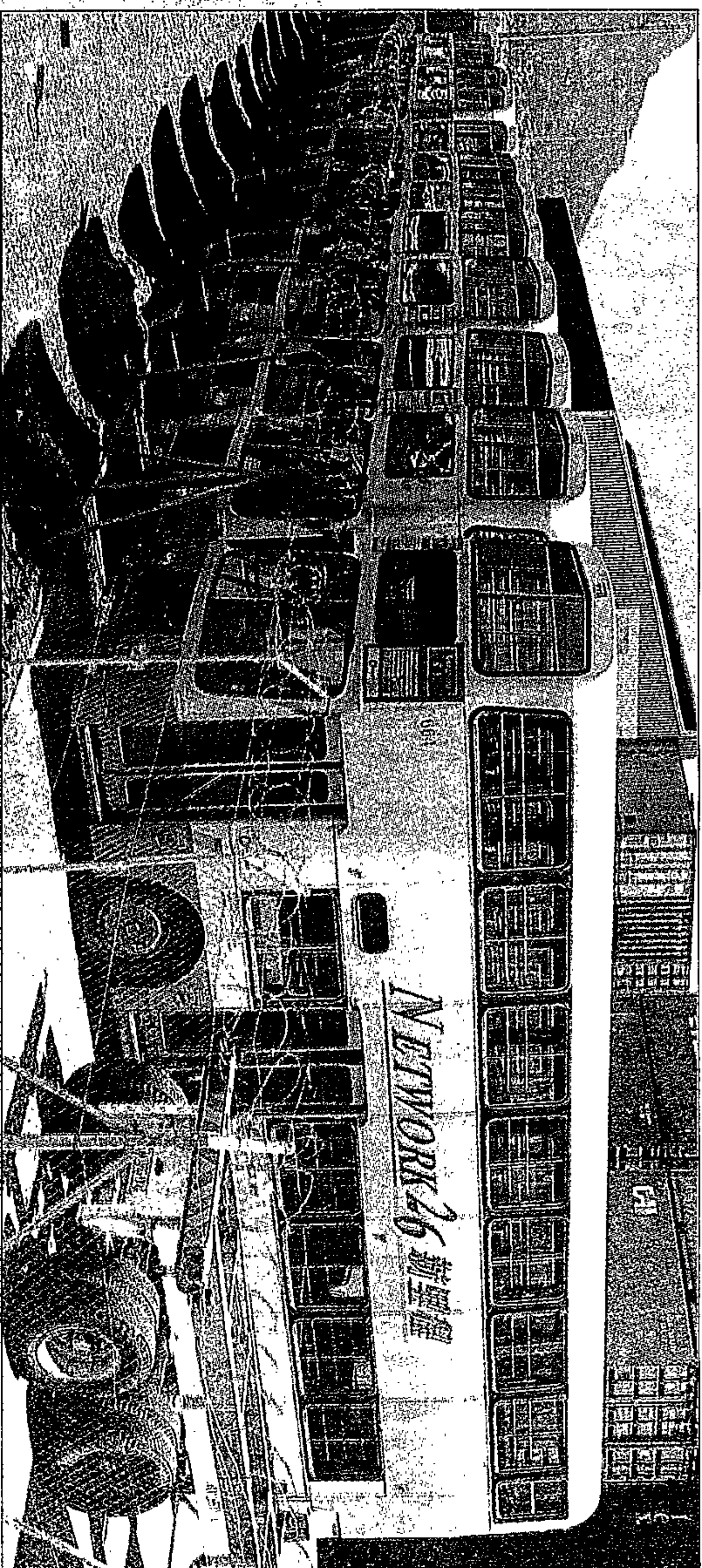
After Golden Arrow's own import application had been refused, the company was approached by a Johannesburg-based concern, CED Marketing, to use its import permit for another type of bus.

"As the buses went through, customs must have noticed that the permit did not match the vehicles, and contacted the Department of Trade and Industry," DTI spokesman Mr Ismail Lagardien said yesterday.

"The department deemed this an abuse of the import permit as the wrong goods were being brought into the country."

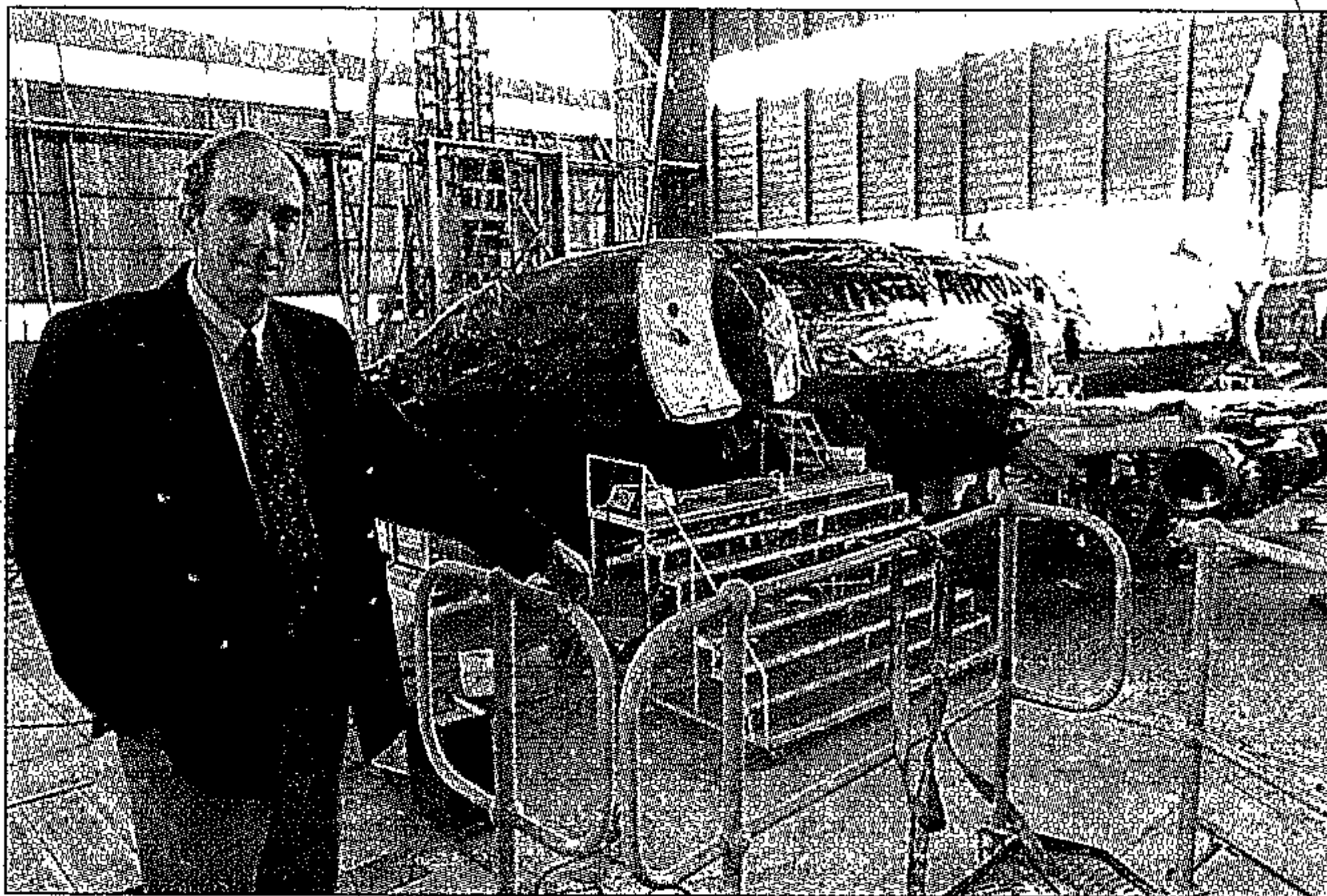
"We cannot develop and implement trade or industrial policy if we do not have respect for the legal process and for the customs and excise system of the country — which is being revamped quite significantly, to tighten up on leakage and on abuses of import permits such as may have been the case here," said Lagardien.

Whether there is going to be a court case on this, depends on CED Marketing," said Lagardien.



RUST IN PEACE: These double-decker buses, imported from Hong Kong, have been standing at Table Bay docks for the past three months while Golden Arrow Bus Service and the government wrangle over import permits.

PICTURE: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA



WAITING FOR TAKE OFF Piet van Hoven with one of the Comair aircraft that will show off the airline's new livery on Sunday

PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

BA and Comair expect boom

AUDREY D'ANGELO

Johannesburg — Air travel to South Africa could double within the next five years, Piet van Hoven, the managing director of Comair, and Robin Renwick, a director of British Airways (BA), said yesterday.

Renwick said South Africa should have one of the biggest tourism industries in the world, but tourism only ac-

counted for 3 percent of the country's GDP.

He said BA and other carriers would have to increase their frequencies to South Africa to cope with the expected demand.

Comair also expects a 15 percent rise in feeder traffic from BA's international flights because of its new franchise with BA, which will take effect on Sunday.

Van Hoven presented the new-look Comair at the World Trade Centre yesterday.

He said Comair would enlarge its fleet as more capacity was needed on main South African routes, but the airline's fares would remain competitive.

Its route network would link with BA at Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Harare and Gaborone.

(332)

CT (BR) 25/10/96

Taxi war may be spreading to city centre

(332)

STAFF WRITER

CT 25/10/96

THE simmering township taxi war seems to be spreading to the central business district, with several shootings on the Cape Town station deck earlier this week.

About 200 taxi drivers and industry officials held a relatively low-key demonstration to the provincial buildings in Dorp Street yesterday, where they told Health and Welfare MEC Mr Ebrahim Rasool — standing in for Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane — that they would not allow the Cata taxi group to run them off the deck.

The delegation included representatives of the National Taxi Task Team, the Western Cape Taxi Task Team, the Peninsula Taxi Association (PTA) and members of the Mitchells Plain, Kensington, Hanover Park and Atlantis taxi organisations. Unofficial talk in the crowd was of a major taxi demonstration to Parliament, possibly on Monday.

The station deck taxi operators claimed Cata was responsible for shooting at a pair of PTA taxis and a Codeta taxi on Wednesday at the deck terminus.

CT 25/10/96

17 000 teachers take retrenchment option

(321) M+G 25-31/10/96

Andy Duffy

NEARLY 17 000 state school teachers have applied for voluntary retrenchment, most of them senior experienced staff disenchanted with government's education shake-up.

More than 13 000 of the voluntary severance applications come from teachers in Gauteng (severance requests from 9% of its teachers), the Western Cape (requests from 17% of its teachers) and KwaZulu-Natal. The requests have to be approved or blocked by the provinces' education departments by year-end.

The figures are the first the national education department has received from the provinces since teacher redeployment and cutbacks started earlier this year.

The staff shake up is central to government's drive to redress past imbalances in education funding — proposals agreed by the Education Ministry and teacher unions in February.

Department officials say the numbers suggest few teachers are accepting redeployment. But the resignations will allow new posts to be created in areas deemed understaffed.

The door has also been left open to re-employ those leaving on temporary contracts, running for up to a year. "We don't want to paint ourselves into a corner," Roelf du Preez, the department's deputy director general of human resources, says.

The cost of the departures has still

to be quantified. But Du Preez says an average severance package will be more than R376 000 — most of it paid by the state pension fund.

"The losses are mainly among the older people because [the package] is more viable for them," Du Preez says. "With the option of redeployment one can expect this kind of reaction."

The largest teachers' union, the National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa, says the level of retrenchment requests underlines the impracticality of teacher redeployment. Many of those going are setting up in private education. "Redeployment has not been taken to by teachers because it's impractical," executive director Huw Davies says. "We're disturbed at the loss of a high level of expertise."

Gauteng, the Western Cape, the Free State and the Northern Cape are trying to marry the severance requests with staff cuts forced by government's drive to equalise teacher/pupil ratios. Staffing requirements mean matching the two is not assured.

More than 6 800 of Gauteng's 48 000 teaching posts are to be shed by December 1997 — 3 300 are supposed to go by the end of this year. The Western Cape is expected to shed 12 000 of its 34 200 teachers — 6 000 by the end of next month.

A task team of education department and state expenditure officials will go to the provinces next month to cost the resignations. The take-up of

redeployment offers, and the prospect of creating new posts with the funds freed up by the resignations, will also be assessed.

Davies says it is unlikely new adequately trained teachers can be found to go into understaffed areas, even if such new posts were to be created. Government has undertaken to cover the cost of severance packages only for the four provinces deemed to have excess staff.

Much of the cash is being sought from foreign donors. Du Preez says the UK, US, Germany, the European Union and the Republic of China have all shown interest in funding the programme. But it is not clear whether the donors want to fund severance packages or other parts of the education programme.

Gauteng education department chief co-ordinator for right-sizing Dennis Molaba says there is broad support from the province's 1 952 schools for its three-year reshape. There has been opposition from the coloured community, with schools in Eldorado Park refusing to establish committees to draw up right-sizing plans.

But he says it is unlikely reallocating staff resources will be completed by 1998, which could force compulsory retrenchments.

The Western Cape's education and cultural affairs MEC, Martha Olckers, says many of the voluntary severance applicants applied "because they don't want to be redeployed somewhere haywire."

Bus petrol-bombed as taxi war widens

(332) ARG 25/10/96

A Golden Arrow bus has been gutted in a petrol bomb attack at the Bellville taxi rank in what is apparently an extension of the taxi war between Cata and Codeta.

Golden Arrow spokeswoman Jeanne Walsh said no one was injured in the attack on the bus.

The vehicle was standing at the company's terminal at the

time, she said.

"The driver was pulled out of the bus by the attacker who then threw the bomb into the bus," she said.

The interior of the bus was

destroyed.

"The fire department got the blaze under control very quickly but nobody has had a chance to assess the damage," Ms Walsh said. — Staff Reporter

27/16/10/96 &

(332)

Siege as taxi

war flares up

RESIDENTS EXPECTING MORE VIOLENCE FOLLOWING THE SIGHTING OF TWO BOMBS IN KTC-CONTROLLED AREAS OF THE SHANTY TOWN OF KTC TO MOVE OUT OF THEIR HOMES AMID THREATS THAT THE ENTIRE SHANTY TOWN WOULD BE RAZED.

ROGER FRIEDMAN writes

All able-bodied men were mobilised last night to defend their community as the war of attrition between competing taxi organisations forced people living around the edges of KTC to move out of their homes amid threats that the entire shanty town would be razed.

Two houses were petrol-bombed late yesterday afternoon and one of them was gutted when residents and neighbours were prevented by gunfire from extinguishing the flames.

Soon afterwards, residents had to act quickly to prevent the destruction of more houses, while men on the back of an off-white truck lobbed more petrol bombs from Great Dutch Road, near the Nyanga terminus.

At the scene, city councillor for the area Mt Gladstone Ntamo said he had heard that the Cata taxi organisation believed KTC residents were harbouring rival Codeta taxi organisation members who had attacked Cata.

Ntamo said three residents with no ties to either taxi organisation had died in the past month, the most recent being an elderly butcher kidnapped and found dead at Monwabisi beach a few days ago.

As residents placed rocks across the road to prevent vehicles speeding past the community hall — a precaution against drive-by shootings and bombings — Ntamo appealed to the Cata leadership to control its members.

He also appealed to the government to exercise control over the taxi industry — "by force".

Several armoured police and military vehicles circled the area. The only taxis playing their trade in the area bore the Cata emblem. Residents said Codeta had been barred from the terminus.

Ntamo, himself a member of Codeta until

earlier this year, said he had received reports that KTC youth were firing on Cata taxis along NY78 and NY5.

A community meeting last night to discuss the issue decided that residents would march to Guguletu police station on Saturday to demand that the violence be controlled.

Mr Cornwell Gqabe was resting at home and his children were playing outside yesterday when he woke to find the house on fire. Blinded by smoke, he managed to stumble outside. Then people started shooting at the house, preventing the fire from being extinguished.

Ntamo was bitter that the police seemed relatively disinterested in the taxi conflict and its effects on his community compared with the great attention they have lavished on People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (Pagad).

The Pagad-gangster stand-off had resulted in fewer deaths over the same period, he said.

"We have now deployed the people to protect KTC. I don't know what will happen tonight but the people are patrolling. All the boundaries of KTC will be protected by our men to await an attack, which is expected against our people. If people are going to attack the area, I promise you there will be big chaos."

He blamed the police disinterest on the National Party provincial leadership. The Western Cape had experienced almost continuous taxi violence since 1986, he said.

People living on the edges of KTC began moving out of their homes in response to the earlier petrol-bombings. They were moving their possessions into the heart of KTC, away from the boundary roads.

Provincial transport MEC Mr Leonard

Turn to Page 3



REFUGEE: Dusk settles over the Cape Flats as Mrs Virginia Mchunu moves out of her KTC home because of taxi violence. "I'm scared that if they burn my house, I won't have any clothes," she said. **PICTURE: BERRY GOOD.**



SAA launches price war as Comair flies BA

Star 28/10/96 (332)

By PRISCILLA SINGH

SAA started a price war yesterday by reducing 12 000 air fares over Christmas on domestic flights by up to 60% as Comair took to the skies in British Airways colours.

Comair's franchise agreement with BA means the UK airline's passengers can use Comair for local travel instead of SAA and the national flag carrier is responding by selling - only from today until Thursday - the 12 000 discounted tickets which will be valid from from December 16 to January 19.

Economy-class return fares between Johannesburg and Cape Town will cost R593 and return fares between Johannesburg and Durban R342. The normal economy-class trip costs R889.

Comair has called SAA's claim that it is guilty of industrial espionage "nothing but a dirty tricks campaign".

SAA claimed in a newspaper yesterday that a Comair employee had broken into its computerised reservations system and stolen vital passenger information.

SAA alleged that the Comair employee, whose name was

known to SAA and the police, had used an SAA employee's code to enter the system.

SAA spokesman Leon Els said the matter had been reported to the police and the business practices committee, which is chaired by Professor Louise Tager, who is also chairman of Transnet.

Comair commercial director Bert van der Linden said yesterday SAA's "campaign to smear Comair's name" was likely to backfire. "It is clear that SAA regards our franchise agreement with British Airways as a major threat and has thus resorted to underhanded techniques to try to

maintain its advantage in the marketplace.

"We regret that SAA released the allegations to the press on the date the Comair-British Airways franchise became effective," Van der Linden said.

Els denied this allegation and said SAA had first discovered the Comair employee tapping into the system in August and put out a surveillance operation to monitor the situation.

"Auditors Coopers and Lybrand confirmed that a Comair official had tapped into the system and extracted vital information."

Five more die in ongoing

Cape taxi war

(232) May 28/10/96
Cape Town - Five people were shot dead in ongoing taxi violence in the Western Cape at the weekend, police said yesterday.

The body of Golden Arrow bus driver Oscar Mulder (60) was found next to his burnt-out private vehicle at Nyanga bus terminus on Saturday.

Shots were fired at a taxi in Guguletu at about 6pm on Saturday. The driver, Zandisile Mbunye (35), and a woman passenger, Nothini Gedile (25), were fatally wounded.

Two hours later, shots were fired at two taxis on tow near Manenberg. One driver was shot in the head and died at the scene. The other was wounded in the back. A boy (15) who was a passenger in one of the taxis was fatally wounded.

About 15 minutes later, shots were fired at a taxi in Nyanga, wounding the driver. - Sapa.

Bus firm targeted as six die in bloody weekend

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

(332)
ARG 28/10/96

Six people died and four were injured in a bloody weekend of taxi violence in the Peninsula.

A Golden Arrow bus inspector, 60-year-old Oswald Mulder of Kensington, was found dead beside his burnt-out car at Nyanga bus terminus.

Police said Mr Mulder had a fatal injury in the chest, believed to have been a gunshot wound. The possibility that the killing was related to the taxi war is being investigated. Four 9mm spent cartridges were found at the scene.

In another attack, stones were thrown at a Golden Arrow bus at the terminus, injuring three passengers and causing damage of nearly R3 000.

A minibus taxi driver, 35-year-old Zandisile Mbunye, and his 25-year-old passenger, Nothini Gedile, were shot dead when their vehicle was fired on at the intersection of NY108 and NY1 in Guguletu.

Three people were killed when shots were fired at two taxis, one of which was being towed, on the Bishop Lavis-Heideveld offramp near Manenberg.

Both drivers were killed and Simpiwe Cecil Mzozwana was shot in the head. Police said he was 15. The names of the other two have not been released.

Police superintendent John Sterrenberg said the incidents were related to the war between rival taxi associations Cata and Codeta.

Taxi foes head for more strife

Riot police and armoured vehicles move in

(332) ARG 29/10/96

JOHAN SCHRONEN AND JUDY DAMON
STAFF REPORTERS

After a weekend of taxi war-related bloodshed, tension mounted at the Bellville taxi rank today as rival minibus operators threatened to clash over commuter routes.

Four squads of riot police, 10 armoured vehicles and foot patrols were on hand to keep the lid on the threatened violence.

Police spokesman Wicus Holtzhausen said police were hopeful the latest arrangement for the rival groups to operate from separate zones at the Bellville rank would result in peace.

But Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) representative Stephen Williams sees the agreement as volatile and says it could spark more violence. "We are willing to work peacefully together and share the rank but they cannot have the Khayelitsha route exclusively," said Mr Williams.

Legal adviser Franz Coetzee, acting for the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), said his clients were "happy" with the new deal.

The Khayelitsha-Bellville route belonged exclusively to Codeta as agreed on September 20.

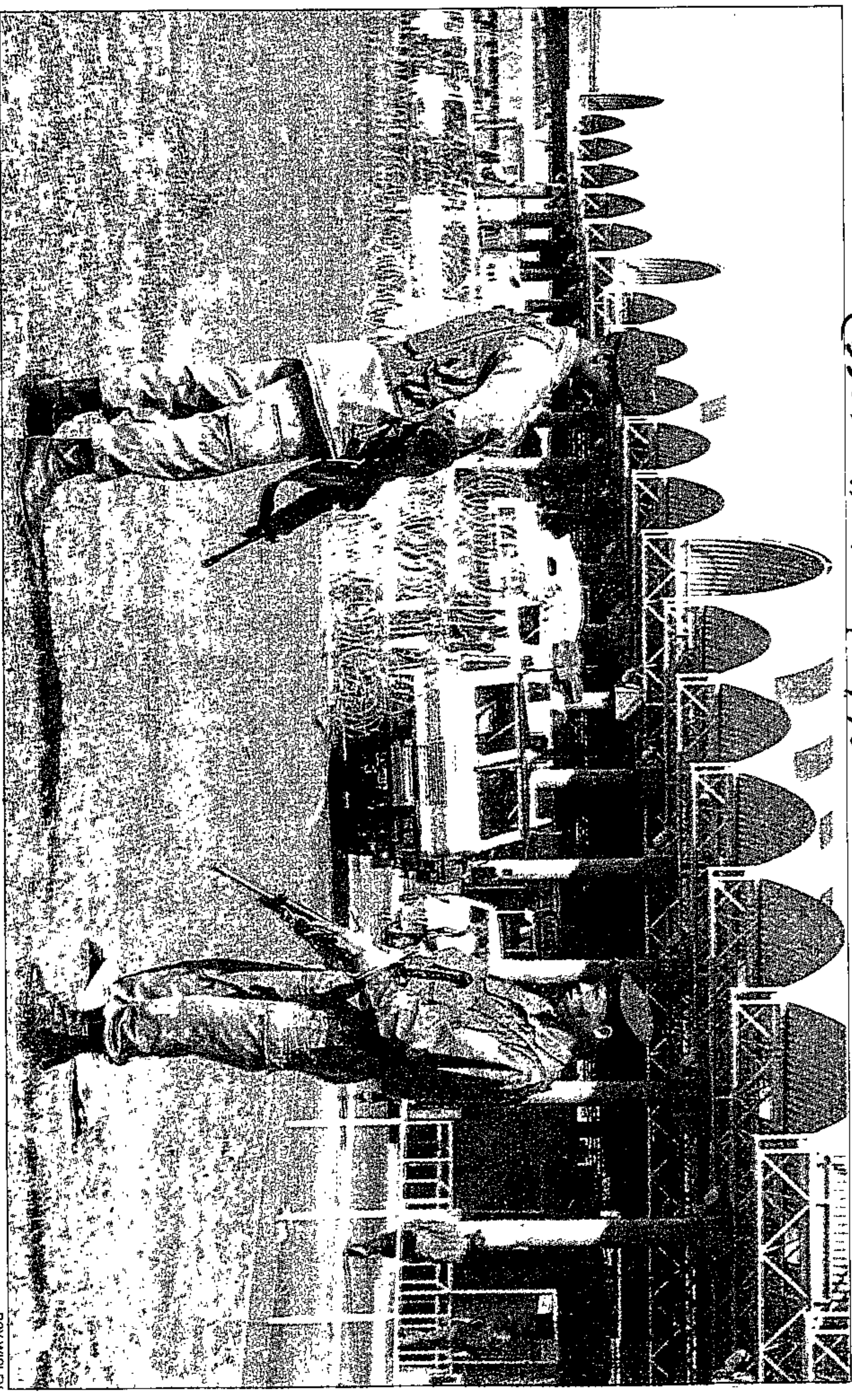
Captain Holtzhausen said 30 peace agreements between the organisations had been signed and broken.

After the latest agreement of separate zones at Bellville, police rolled out barbed wire to demarcate each group's territory.

Police contained several squabbles which erupted between Cata and Codeta drivers today.

They also had a helicopter on standby at Ysterplaat.

A Golden Arrow Bus Services spokesman said the company would appeal to Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel,



ROY WIGLEY

On guard: soldiers guard the Bellville taxi rank to prevent renewed violence between rival operators

provincial Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and the police to get public transport back to normal.

The company has also appealed to Transport Minister Mac Maharaj to take steps at national level to end the violence in the transport industry countrywide as soon as possible.

A Golden Arrow inspector, Oswald Mulder, 60, of Kensington, was shot dead and his private car set alight near the Nyanga terminus at the weekend.

The company is offering a R50 000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of his killers. Just before Mr Mulder was shot, stones

were thrown at a bus.

The company withdrew its buses from the terminus but after police presence was stepped up and the army was called in, it operated normally. Last Thursday the driver of a Golden Arrow bus was dragged from his vehicle and a petrol bomb was lobbed into it at the Bellville rank.

Taxi attack: woman shot

(332) ARG 29/10/96
A pregnant woman was seriously wounded and at least one minibus taxi was damaged when a man opened fire on the Cape Town Station deck taxi rank today. The injured woman, a hawker in her thirties, was shot in the back and was taken to hospital for an emergency operation.

Police found at least one vehicle damaged by the gunfire. A policeman on the scene said the attack appeared to be related to the taxi war. — Crime Correspondent

See page 3

Warning of chaos if Bara

rank closes

(332) 844 30/10/91
BY SELLU MOTHABAKWE

Soweto Bureau

Thousands of Soweto taxi commuters will be stranded if the Greater Johannesburg council forges ahead with plans to close the Baragwanath rank next week, and drivers have warned that the move could cause chaos.

Greater Johannesburg Metro Council transport committee chairman Peter Horwitz said this week that the rank would be closed from November 7. The council had already given notice in the Government Gazette. Only a peace pact between warring taxi associations would stop plans to close the rank, he said.

Soweto Taxi Association deputy chairman Lucas Msibe is among those who believe there will be chaos if the rank is closed. He said he expected the matter to be discussed in a meeting with the Gauteng Transport Department today, although the issue was not on the agenda.

Witwatersrand African Taxi



ANDREAS VLACHAKIS

Facing shutdown ... the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council says the Baragwanath taxi rank, Soweto's biggest, will be closed next Thursday if warring taxi factions don't enter into a peace pact.

Association (Wata) vice-chairman Sam Khoza described the decision to close the rank as unfair.

He said alternative transport had to be organised before the rank was closed because taxi associations which were not involved in the taxi feuds, as well as the public, should not be penalised

for the wrongs of a few.

Zola Taxi Association driver Doctor Hlangu said he depended on the Baragwanath rank for his livelihood. Taxi driver Bongzi Buthezi said taxi drivers were not at fault as the fighting was among taxi owners. Wata drivers Xolani Nkosi, Joseph Zikalala and Tha-

biso Mpuso said they wanted a continued police presence at the ranks.

In contrast, Kopanang Basotho taxi organisation members Matete Matekane, Nokufa Dangalela and David Mofokeng said the rank should be closed until a solution to the violence was found.

Sadtu blames former officials

(521) / Sowetan 30/10/96

By Charity Bhengu

THE South African Democratic Teachers Union suspects that the leaking of matric exam papers was a deliberate exercise by former officials of the defunct education departments to embarrass the new government.

Sadtu provincial education conveyor Mrs Pinkie Mncube said at a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday: "We have a strong suspicion that the leak is caused by the former officials of the ex-education structures of the apartheid regime."

She said their suspicions arose from the fact that the examiners of the Gauteng department of education comprised officials of the defunct departments of education.

"It appears that only those who have access within the department are the ones who could have caused this high level of sabotage," she said.

Sadtu was perturbed about reports that the standard of the examinations was very low.

The debate over the standards of education had traditionally been "a very racist and elitist one". Many reac-

tionaries who complained that the standards was low were geared to disrupt the new education and transformation process in the country.

Sadtu said they were opposed to the idea of the universities raising their entry standards because of these claims.

Sadtu's organiser for Gauteng, Mr Xolani Nduna, said: "We want to place on record that the leaking of matric exams is not a new phenomenon. For many years the ex-Black DET has experienced this."

"It is hypocritical and racist for the National Party and its allies to point fingers now when, in fact, they are the cause for this problem by their ideology of apartheid."

Sadtu deputy-president Edwin Pillay said: "It is all right to point out the irregularities so that they can be dealt with accordingly, but it is unfair for the political parties to exploit the situation for their own political gain, creating even more anxiety among matric pupils."

"Creating emotions among the people to embarrass the government in power will not be productive at the end of the day."



Solly Mabusela, Sadtu's assistant general secretary, and Pinky Mncube, provincial education conveyor for Sadtu, at a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday.
PIC: ELIZABETH SELAKE

SHOOTING IN CITY CENTRE

Two passengers killed in taxi war crossfire

THE WESTERN CAPE Taxi Task Team, angry that the Coda-Codeta war is endangering commuters, is to march today. **CYNTHIA VONGAI** and **ERIC NTABAZALILA** report.

A PASSENGER was shot dead on the Eastern Boulevard, another died and four were wounded in Lansdowne Road and a woman was slightly injured on the Cape Town station deck yesterday as the latest peace agreement between taxi-factions lay in shreds.

Hawkers and commuters on the station deck ran for their lives as Cata and Codeta factions exchanged fire and police tried to control the situation.

Police spokesman Captain Wicus Holzhausen said a Cata driver had been arrested on a charge of attempted murder and a firearm confiscated.

Other taxi associations, caught in the crossfire on the station deck, left the rank and operated from Strand Street.

A short while later, during rush-hour on the Eastern Boulevard, the occupants of a white Isuzu truck and a Toyota Hiace minibus — suspected of being Cata taxis — fired nine shots at a Codeta minibus as it turned into Melbourne Road on its way into the city.

A 50-year-old man in the

minibus was shot in the chest and died.

Police said they did not know whether there were other passengers in the minibus. They found the taxi, with the body in it, abandoned. Another passenger, fearing for his life, had jumped over a four-metre wall and broken both ankles. He was taken to Groote Schuur Hospital.

Half an hour later, between Lansdowne and Duinefontein roads, a man died and four other passengers were wounded when Cata and Codeta members opened fire on each other.

Mr Junaaid Peters, spokesman for the Western Cape Taxi Task Team (WCTTT) said other taxi associations had had to leave the station deck as they did not want to put commuters' lives in danger.

"We are not going to tolerate this as our business is being jeopardised by the taxi war between these two organisations," Peters said. "The war is no longer between Cata and Codeta, but between all taxi associations operating at the station deck."

"Cata's trying to take over all the taxi ranks around here."

The WCTTT and Codeta would march to Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane's office this morning to give him and Safety and Security MEC Mr Gerald Morkel a memorandum calling for the eradication of the taxi violence and the threat to commuters.

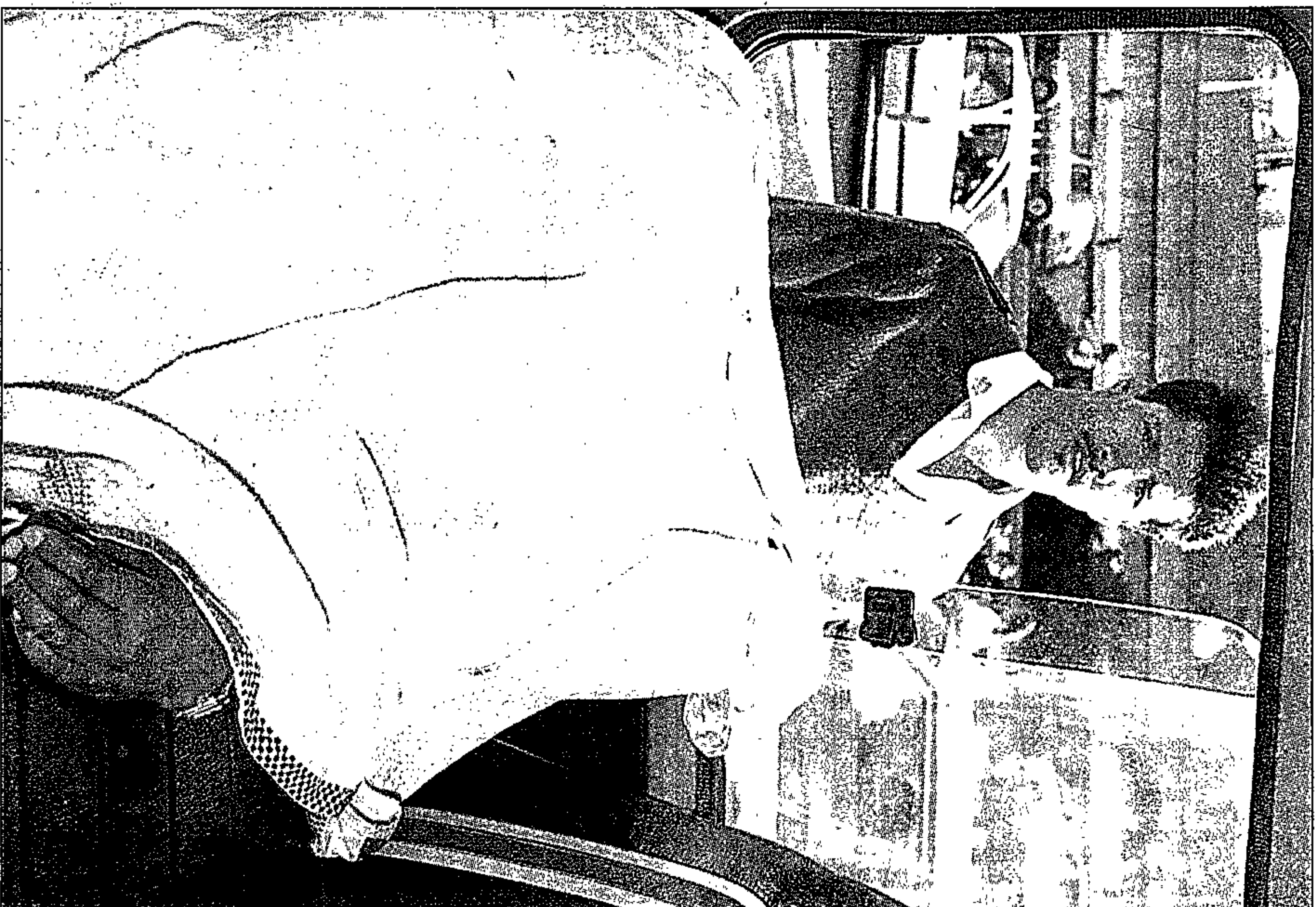
"We feel Ramatlakane is incapable of doing the job and we need somebody else to do it. There is no law in this province, no policing," Peters said. "Do they want us to form another Pagad to look at the taxi violence?"

Axed deputy minister of environmental affairs and tourism Mr Bantu Holomisa recently tried to broker peace in the taxi industry.

Mr Reggie Malimba, of Codeta, said Holomisa's efforts had been fruitless because they came at a time when Codeta had a court order preventing Cata from intimidating Codeta members.

● WCTTT appealed to taxi operators, drivers and commuters to support today's march and warned that taxis would not operate before lunchtime.

Police have appealed to witnesses to the shootings to call the toll-free Crime Stop number 0800-11-12-13.



SHOCKED:

A police officer looks at the body of a man who was killed on the Eastern Boulevard during a shooting between taxi factions Cata and Codeta yesterday afternoon. **PICTURE: GARTH STEAD**

Hired hitmen linked to new taxi :

AKG 30/10/96 (332)



Wrong man: police search a student caught up in the taxi conflict which flared anew on the Cape Town station deck yesterday afternoon

OBED ZILWA

war killings

ASHLEY SMITH
STAFF REPORTER

(332)

ARG 30/10/96

The Peninsula taxi war has erupted again, with eight hours of clashes between rival taxi associations in which two more people died and six were injured.

Police have linked at least one of yesterday's killings to taxi assassins who sell their services to the highest bidder.

The link between hired gunmen and several taxi war deaths has recently been the focus of police investigations in the Western Cape and nationally.

Anton van der Merwe of the priority crimes unit said that a passenger in a taxi linked to the Cata group and who was fatally wounded near Philippi yesterday may have been the target of professional hitmen.

"It is clear from the pattern of the bullet markings on the taxi that the person who fired at the vehicle was a very good shot," Inspector Van der Merwe said.

Four people had been wounded in the shooting, which was apparently a revenge attack for the slaying of a Codeta taxi owner barely two hours earlier, he said.

Codeta and Cata taxi drivers took their battle to the streets of the Cape Flats yesterday after a strong police contingent at the Cape Town station taxi rank deterred them from attacking each other there during the morning.

Around 4.20pm Codeta taxis left the deck, pursued by taxis affiliated to Cata.

At 4.30pm the body of a Codeta man was found in a taxi at the Melbourne Road exit from the Eastern Boulevard.

■ The Cape Argus Political Correspondent reports that resolution of the bloody taxi wars could be in sight with plans for the issuing of new permits by February.

Announcing this today, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj said it was simplistic to suggest the solution to the taxi war was just to enforce the law.

"That is not feasible given what we inherited and the anarchy in this industry," Mr Maharaj said.

He said the taxi industry had become a byword for violent lawlessness.

Implementation of reforms was starting in all provinces, but a lot remained to be done by the transport department in conjunction with police and the justice system, to end violence.

The process of registering until-now illegal taxis had already started and in the Western Cape so far 1 000 applications had been processed, Mr Maharaj said.

By February, the provincial department of transport would have compiled a data base of taxis and by then the permits which would have been issued could not be the subject of disputes.

Taxi Feature

Natal taxi industry improving

(332) *Southern* 31/10/96

Task team set to restructure the taxi operations in the province

By Ntokozo Gwamanda

A NEW spirit of co-operation has embraced the KwaZulu-Natal taxi industry and it is well on its way to becoming a force to be reckoned with within the public transport sector.

In response to national Government initiatives to restructure the taxi industry, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for transport Mr. S'bu Ndebele established the KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Task Team to drive the restructuring and formalisation process in the province.

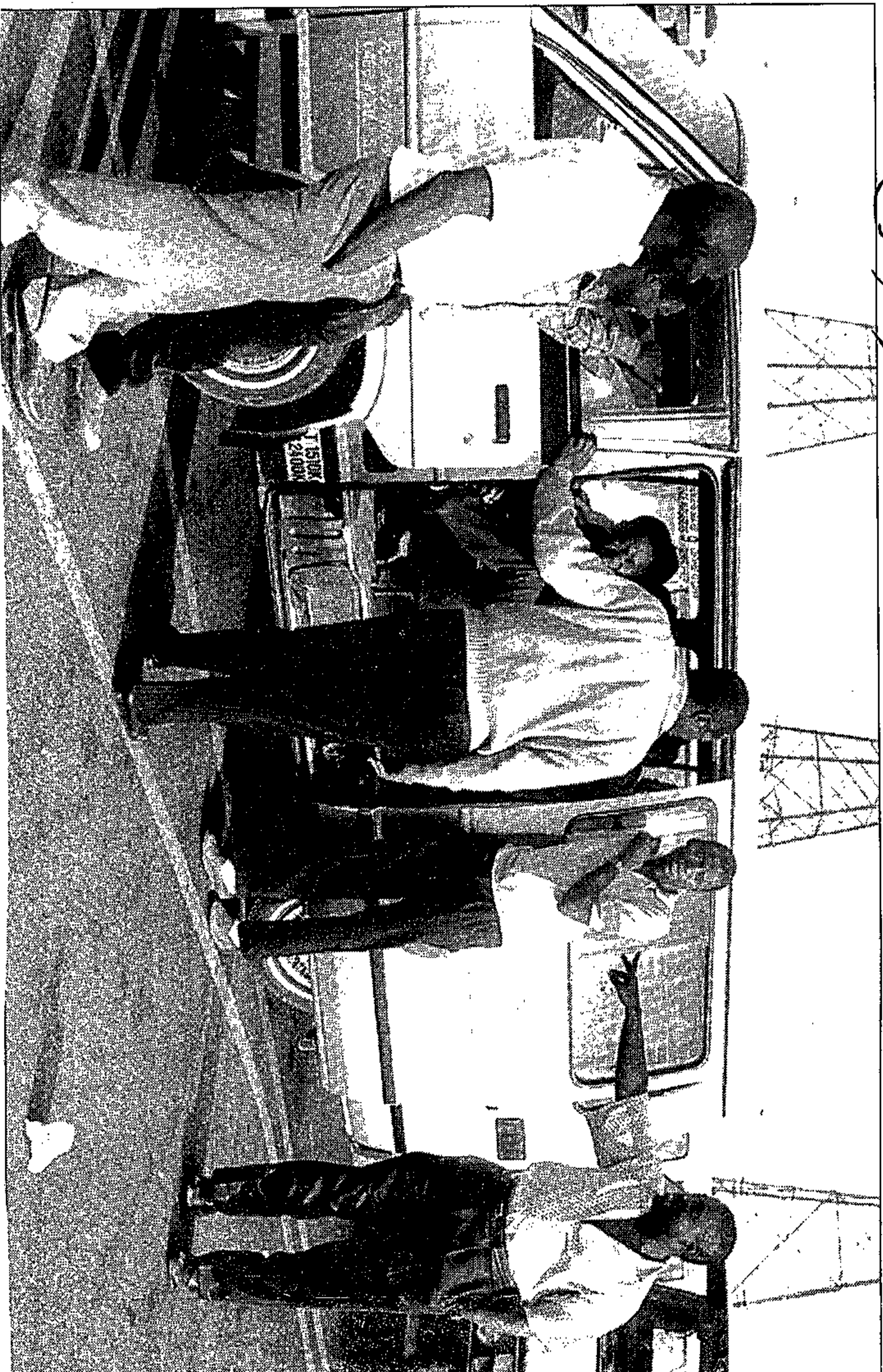
The task team was divided into economic assistance; regulation and control; conflict resolution and education and training committees.

With the help of the task team, strong partnerships developed between the taxi and government representatives, as well as among the taxi representatives themselves.

This has led to the successful implementation of the restructuring process in KwaZulu-Natal.

Provincial registrars

The National Taxi Task Team recom-



mended that the key to development and transformation of the taxi industry would be the appointment of provincial offices in each province.

Ndebele officially opened the Provincial Taxi Office on August 31 1996 which also opened the doors to a new era in the taxi industry in KwaZulu-Natal.

Mr George Mahlaleta, who has been pivotal in the transformation process as chairman of the taxi task team, was appointed by Ndebele as the KwaZulu-Natal taxi registrar.

The taxi office now acts as a permanent communication and liaison mechanism between the taxi industry and its members, and between the taxi industry and the provincial government.

It is also a customer care centre for commuters who wish either to complain about or compliment drivers, operators or the service they receive.

The office, under Mahlaleta's leadership, is now in the process of setting up a training database and co-ordinat-

The taxi industry has successfully been restructured in KwaZulu-Natal.

ing the implementation of training programmes. Among the training needs identified are literacy and numeracy, advanced driver training, basic vehicle maintenance, current legislation, customer care, operations management and leadership training.

Courses are also being structured in business management, which will include labour relations, financial management, fleet management and administrative skills.

Illegal operators

The once-off fast track legalisation process has resulted in illegal operators coming forward in an effort to legalise their operations.

Staff of the provincial taxi office and the offices of the Local Road Transportation Boards in Pietermaritzburg and Durban have been assisting members of the taxi industry to complete the legalisation forms.

The legalisation process runs in conjunction with the registration

process as associations and their members need to be provisionally registered before the legalisation forms are processed.

The KwaZulu-Natal Taxi Task Team in conjunction with the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport has started a series of regional workshops throughout the province. These workshops are aimed specifically at taxi associations and their members to explain the programmes related to the restructuring and formalisation of the industry.

Task of formalisation

This process has been designed to reach every association in the province in an attempt to assist the industry in the task of formalisation.

At these workshops, members of the task team and staff of the taxi office are on hand to offer advice and assistance. Workshops have already been held in Newcastle, Dundee,

Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg, Ixopo and Kokstad during October this year.

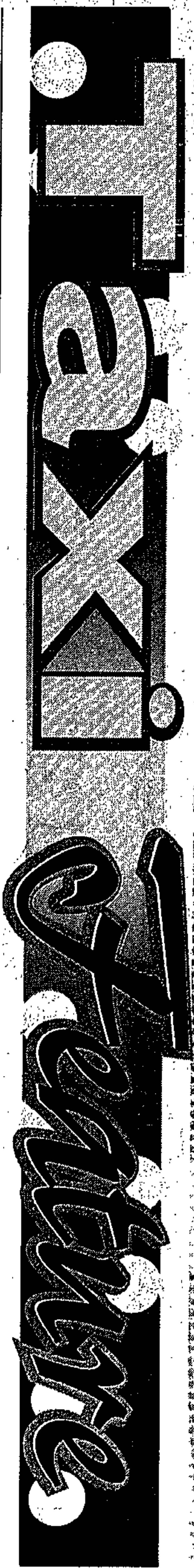
Workshops will be held in Port Shepstone on November 6, Pinetown on November 7, Vryheid on November 11, Durban and Nongoma on November 12, Empangeni on November 13, Ulundi on November 14, Greytown on November 19 and Stanger on November 20.

Training programmes

This new era in the life of the taxi industry is a great boost for small entrepreneurs to realise their potential, learn through organised training programmes, benefit from formal registration and legalisation and strive to provide a safe and secure transport service for all commuters and road users.

For more information about the regulation process or the regional workshops, please contact the provincial taxi office on (031) 303-1385/6 or fax (031) 303-1781.

Souetan
31/10/96
332



W Cape taxi industry experiences growth

By Ntokozo Gwamanda

THE operators of minibus taxis have voluntarily grouped themselves into 136 associations.

The associations serve as a body for co-ordination of operations and liaison

with the respective communities and authorities.

Shortly after taking office, the Western Cape MEC for transport formed a Taxi Task Team to address problems experienced by operators.

Public Road Carrier Permits, issued

in accordance with the regulations of the Road Transportation Act, are required for each minibus taxi.

Most of the permits have been issued since 1991.

The age and condition of the vehicles varies considerably and although a

roadworthy certificate must be renewed annually, the mechanical condition of some vehicles shows deterioration and the environment is also particularly harsh and keeping them in shape requires additional effort from operators.

The minibus taxi service in the Western Cape underwent rapid growth since 1987 when 66 routes were operated mainly as short distance feeder routes (less than 10km). The longest route operated was 18km. However, by 1994 a total of 162 routes operated, including longer line haul services of up to 48km in length.

Not active

Although long distance associations are not active in the Western Cape, it is evident that there is also a substantial increase in the long haul services.

Although taxi fares have historically increased in tandem with the bus fares, they are generally cheaper than bus fares.

This is particularly true for distances of 6-20km. At distances greater than 40km the taxi fare is still cheaper than the bus fare.

In the light of the above it is vital that minibus taxi operators get registered and legalised.

(332) 3110196
Sowetan

Bara taxi rank may get reprieve

(332)

BY SELLO MOTLHABAKWE

Soweto Bureau

Star 31/10/96

The Greater Johannesburg council said a long-term solution might be found to the ongoing taxi feuds in Soweto, following yesterday's five-hour meeting with six taxi operators.

Co-chairman of the Greater Johannesburg Council negotiating team, Sibusiso Buthelezi, said they were optimistic that the Soweto taxi operators would present workable proposals which might pre-empt the planned closure of the Baragwanath rank on November 7.

The council recently announced plans to close the rank due to ongoing violence between warring taxi associations.

Buthelezi said broad agreement had been reached on the process to be followed. All the parties, including representatives of the taxi associations, would brief their principals before submitting proposals.

Man killed in taxi shooting on N2

ET 31/10/96

ERIC NTABAZALILA AND RONALD MORRIS

AN OBSERVATORY man was shot dead last night when Cata and Codeta taxi factions opened fire on each other on the N2 during rush-hour traffic.

Police spokesman Captain Wicus Holtzhausen said Mr Francois du Plessis, 40, of Norfolk Road, was driving his bakkie on the N2 near the Langa turn-off at about 6pm when he was struck in the chest by a stray bullet. He died later in Groote Schuur Hospital.

Also last night, eight people were seriously injured when 20 Codeta taxis opened fire on a city-bound Cata taxi on the N2.

The driver of the Cata taxi, Mr Rixon Duli, said he had picked up 13 passengers in Langa at about 6pm and was heading towards the city when 20 Codeta taxis travelling in the opposite lane started shooting at him.

Police said 31 cartridges were found at the scene of the incident, and seven passengers and one bystander were shot and taken to Tygerberg Hospital. Minutes after this shooting the factions again shot at each other in Borchards Quarry Road, Nyanga, but it was not known if there were casualties, Holtzhausen said.

Earlier, a march by taxi operators almost turned ugly when one of its leaders told the marchers that Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane regarded the Western Cape Taxi Task Team (WCTTT) — which organised the march — as an illegitimate structure.

The marchers demanded to meet Ramatlakane and Safety and Security MEC Mr Gerald Morkel, but the MECs declined, saying they would study a memorandum from the marchers before setting up a meeting on Monday.

Concern as thousands of teachers apply for severance

By ADAM COOKE

Thousands of Gauteng teachers have applied for voluntary severance packages, a situation which has left teacher organisations concerned at a possible decline in skilled staff.

Among the 4 012 members of the teaching profession who have applied for the packages in the province, are 584 school principals, 176 deputy principals, 890 department heads and 2 534 teachers.

Responding to the figures re-

leased by the Gauteng Department of Education yesterday, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, the country's biggest teacher organisation, said the voluntary severance packages should only facilitate the redeployment of teachers and should not be taken on a massive scale.

"We do not want to see a reduction in the number of teachers in circulation - there are not too many teachers, they are just concentrated in particular areas," said Sadu spokesman Kate Skinner.

Democratic Party provincial

leader Jack Bloom said the move represented a vote of no confidence in Gauteng's educational future.

'Best and brightest' being lost

"Many of the best and brightest teachers are being lost from the educational field altogether," he said.

Association of Professional

Teachers executive director Hugo Ackermann said the figures were not unexpected and his organisation supported the principle of equity. But he warned: "We are keen to retain as much of the teaching expertise as possible, and the policy of rightsizing does bring with it a lot of uncertainty for teachers."

He said the APT would rather have individual schools themselves identify areas where there was excess staffing in order to correct the imbalances.

The teachers have applied for

the packages over the past months after the national Education Department announced its rightsizing policy, which aims to introduce a more equitable pupil/teacher ratio across the board.

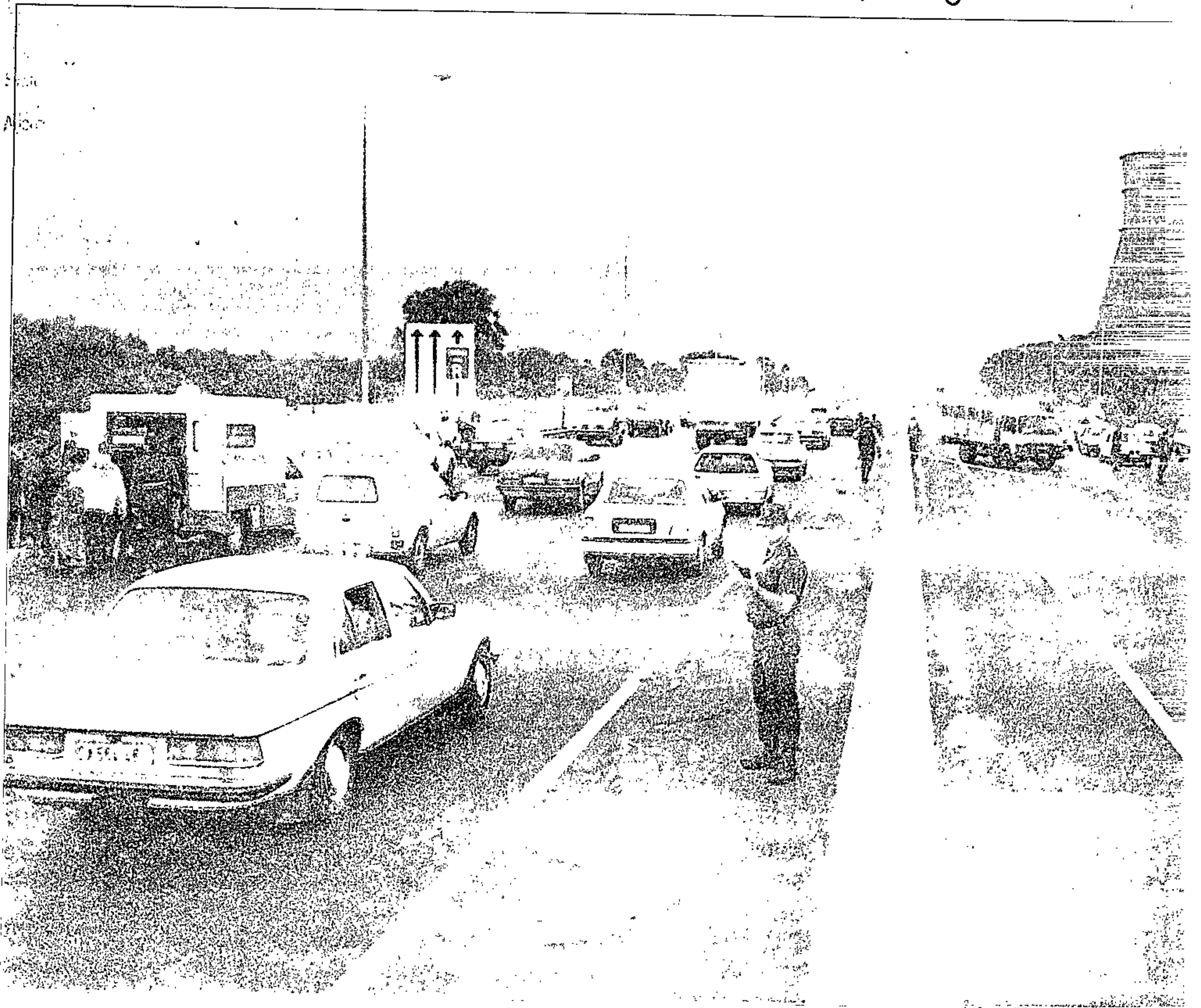
This has called for a redeployment of teachers to schools that are understaffed and is in line with the Government's policy of trimming down the public service. Teachers have been given the option of applying for the voluntary severance packages.

HIGHWAY ANA:

Taxi shootouts turn N2 i.

(3327

ARG 31/10/96



War zone: traffic halts and soldiers patrol the N2 near Athlone – the freeway once again becoming a hell run. A gun battle killed a motorist yesterday

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN AND ASHLEY SMITH
STAFF REPORTERS

The N2 highway, one of Cape Town's main arteries and its link with the outside world through the airport, has again become a deadly hell run – this time because of the taxi war.

But today a top-level police meeting thrashed out a plan to "smother" the conflict by beefing up policing on the ground,

intensifying patrols at flashpoints and using more air surveillance.

The N2 became known as the hell run in the early 1990s when there were many stoning attacks on motorists.

Now feuding taxi factions have turned the highway into a war zone where they wage sporadic gun-battles.

The latest one yesterday claimed the life of sportsman François du Plessis of Observatory, who happened to drive through the

flying bullets. Six people were wounded.

And as taxi war chaos spilled into the city itself, emergency talks got under way at national and provincial level.

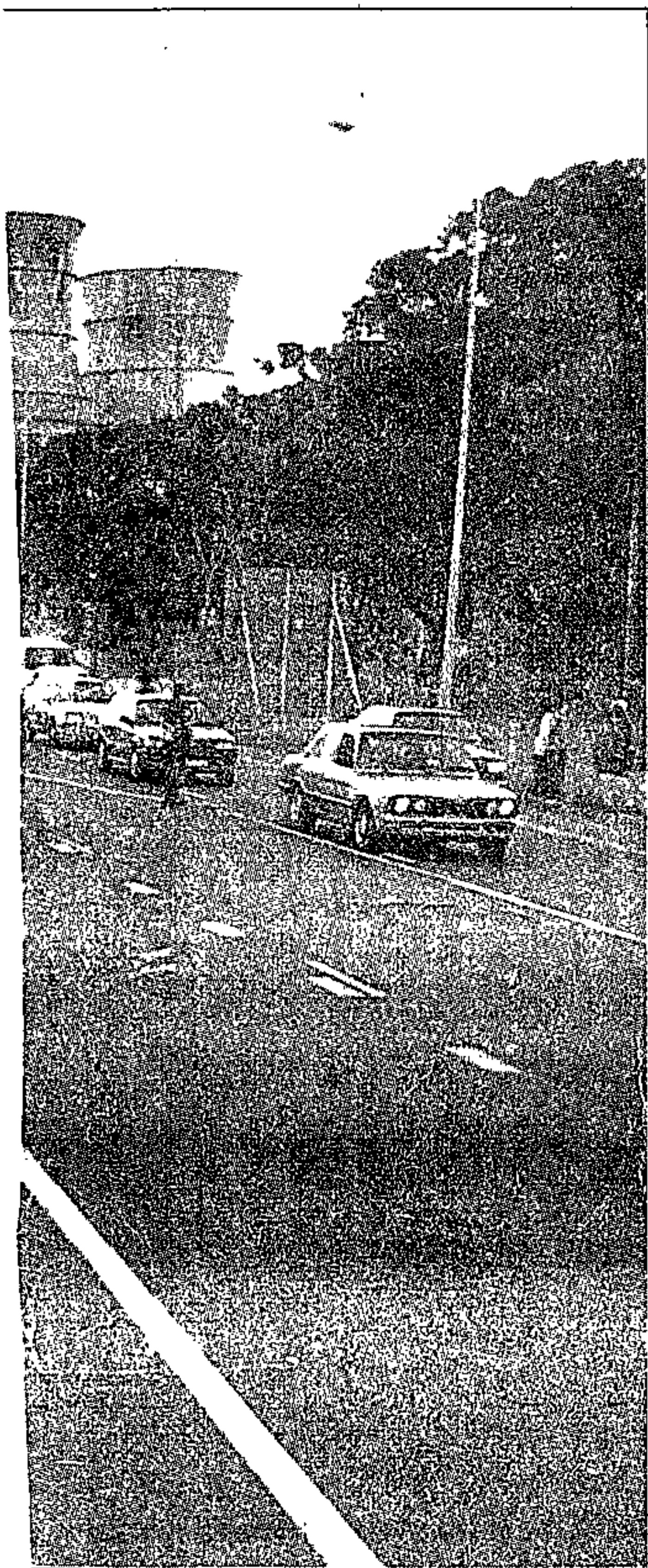
Commissioner George Fivaz today held an urgent planning session in Pretoria on taxi violence in various regions, including the Western and Eastern Cape.

And an urgent meeting, led by provincial commissioner Leon Wessels, thrashed out the latest moves for a big clampdown

RCHY HITS CITY

nto deadly hell run again

(332) ARG 31/10/96



OBED ZILWA



ROY WIGLEY

Snarl-up: taxis today cram into Strand Street to avoid the violence-plagued station deck

on taxi violence in the Western Cape.

Senior police spokesman John Sterrenberg said in addition to extra police on the ground, the air wing would also be used more frequently for surveillance.

The various area commissioners are to make available more members, assisting the public order police, who have their hands full with the taxi war and Pagad

To page 3

Waterfront shuttle wins order against taxi body

ARG 31/10/96

(332)

The Peninsula Taxi Association has been ordered by the Cape Supreme Court to stop assaulting, harassing or intimidating staff and passengers of V&A Waterfront Shuttle Services.

Shuttle Services director Esa Yacoob yesterday obtained an interdict against the PTA and 22 of its members after alleging they had subjected his staff to a campaign of harassment and abuse. He said they had damaged the service's taxis and prevented tourists and commuters from using them.

Mafia-style tactics used in taxi violence

(332)

57 suspected hit squad members,
including police, among 363 arrested

SAPA

Perpetrators of taxi violence were increasingly making use of mafia-style hit-squad tactics, Commissioner George Fivaz said yesterday.

"This is illustrated by the arrest this year of no fewer than 57 suspected taxi hit-squad members among the 363 suspects arrested in general for taxi violence," Fivaz told reporters in Pretoria.

Four suspected hit-squad members arrested were policemen.

Fivaz said the police were working covertly to expose hit-men, and closely with those involved in the taxi industry to expose police members involved. Intimidation was, however, a major problem.

"People are complaining about the involvement of police members, but they are not coming forward with information," Fivaz added.

"Possible witnesses are terrified by their situation."

The police had requested the Department of Justice to consider setting up a witness protection programme.

Fivaz said 136 people had been killed and 208 injured this year in 335 incidents of taxi violence.

Last year, 195 people were killed and 281 injured in 530 incidents.

Families and innocent bystanders were increasingly becoming the victims of taxi wars.

"Although taxi violence has declined sharply in general, the latest violence shows that underlying tensions and rivalry outside

South African Police Service control can still ignite widespread taxi feuding," Fivaz said.

He said renewed taxi violence in recent weeks had been sparked by monopolisation drives by big taxi associations and intensified internal rivalries.

"Such factors are beyond the control of the SAPS and will require urgent government intervention."

Fivaz called for the firmer implementation of taxi regulations. He said this task was mainly the responsibility of the Transport Ministry.

"Everything possible, on both governmental and policing levels, must be done to prevent the latest violence from again igniting full-scale taxi warfare as seen in 1995," he said.

To this end, the SAPS and the South African National Defence Force were planning to beef up existing covert and overt operations to contain taxi violence in the runup to the holiday season.

National Standards and Management Services divisional commissioner Andre Pruis said the nine provincial joint security committees would meet today to make proposals to this end.

Possible additional steps included the use of light aircraft and helicopters, the setting up of a reaction force, and the installation of video cameras at large taxi ranks.

The joint security staff committee, comprising top police and defence force officials, would meet again on Tuesday to discuss and evaluate the proposals from today's meeting, Pruis said.

Kingpins in past bloody conflicts still lead today

ROGER FRIEDMAN

WARRING Western Cape taxi bosses, like gang leaders and drug dealers, are seemingly always out of the reach of the police.

According to police sources — official police comment was unobtainable yesterday — the same men who were perceived as key roleplayers in the taxi conflicts of the past are still plying their trade today.

Many of the present leadership — on both sides — are the same leaders who were in operation in the bloody taxi war of 1992-93.

Their names appear in the Goldstone Commission report on taxi

violence, where they were implicated as being involved in violence.

As in gang-related cases, bringing the perpetrators of taxi violence — or their controllers — to book often fell down due to intimidation or the disappearance of witnesses.

Simply put, evidence was impossible to obtain, the police sources said.

But a non-governmental organisation, the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee (UMAC), yesterday disagreed with the unofficial police assessment, laying the blame for the renewed violence squarely at the door of the police.

"The biggest problem is that the

police are fundamentally incompetent," said director Mr Stef Snel. "They were trained militarily and have been unable to develop any initiatives or creative approaches to the problems they have to overcome."

"The only motivation the police appear to respond to is public embarrassment, whether you are talking about taxi violence, gangsterism or Pagad."

"And obviously, the more the violence encroaches on management's traditional constituencies — for example the Waterfront, Sea Point or the N2 — the more likely they are to react," he said.

TAXI violence has plagued the country this year and in the Western Cape every peace deal brokered has been shattered by yet more deaths. Since January there have been at least nine widely publicised pacts between the warring parties, and before the ink had dried on any of them more people have died. In 1996 at least 45 people, many of them innocent passengers and passersby, have died as the war that stalks the highways grinds on relentlessly. A new task force has been proposed by Premier Mr Hennus Kriel — time will tell how effective it will be.

No traffic (332) officers in CT 1/11/96 townships

**ROGER FRIEDMAN
AND PETER DENNEHY**

UNROADWORTHY taxis, unlicensed taxis, warring taxis, taxis full of gunmen ... but nary a traffic policeman in sight.

"We don't have traffic jurisdiction in those areas," said deputy city administrator Mr Allan Dolby. "The old Ikapa administration never appointed any traffic officers. So there has never been any traffic enforcement in those areas."

"Redeploying staff to the old Ikapa areas (including Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu) will mean reducing services in other areas."

The only traffic services being offered in these areas are the painting of street markings and traffic education in schools, said Dolby.

Early this week he turned down a request from the police, army and communities affected by the taxi war to deploy traffic officers at roadblocks near the Nyanga terminus.

Since the roadblocks went up — without traffic officers — on Monday, the taxi conflict has spread away from the old Ikapa areas to the N2 freeway and central business district.

Dolby said the proclamation making local government sub-structures a legal entity included a clause stipulating that traffic offi-

□ Turn to Page 3

No traffic control

□ From Page 1

cers or peace officers would only have jurisdiction in the areas where they were appointed.

"Our officers, therefore, have jurisdiction over the old Cape Town municipal area and portions of other sub-structures."

The proclamation did allow for the clause in question to be changed by the sub-structure concerned, and also envisaged an unbundling process incorporating the transfer of staff and assets by the end of next June.

"The council must decide on the matter. As much as I'd like to have equal services overnight, to do so would require a political decision," Dolby said.

The Cape Town City Council resolved yesterday to ask Premier Mr Hernus Kriel to extend the powers of traffic officers.

In the council chamber, ANC councillor Mr Hanief Tiseker said

the problem had come up recently that the city's traffic police have an area of jurisdiction still defined in terms of the old municipal boundaries which exclude black townships.

A provincial proclamation will have to be changed to allow Cape Town's municipal traffic police to perform their duties in the townships, either on their own or in support of police and the army.

Traffic police continued to do their work outside the old Ikapa areas this week.

On Wednesday police, assisted by traffic police, issued 169 summonses after examining taxis. Fifty-seven taxis were impounded, provincial police Deputy Commissioner Adam Blauw said yesterday. Dozens more taxis were impounded yesterday, with the one warring faction, Cata, claiming their vehicles were being singled out for police attention.

(332) CT 1/11/96

TRANSPORT UNDER SIEGE

Will another task

Ct 11/11/96

332

THE Western Cape's taxi business has become an industry of death. This year there have been at least eight widely publicised peace agreements between rival factions. They have been broken time after time, resulting in at least 45 deaths. **JACKIE CAMERON, ERIC NTABAZALILA and CHRIS BATEMAN** report.

AS this year's taxi violence death toll rose to at least 45, Western Cape Premier Her-nus Kriel yesterday proposed yet another task force to try to stem the blood flow.

At least 12 people have been killed around the Peninsula this month in taxi-related violence. More than 127 people have also been injured this year.

There have been at least eight peace pacts between the major taxi factions Codeta and Cata this year, and politicians estimate there have been as many as 40 agreements brokered between the two groups in the last two years.

There have also been repeated announcements of government, city council and police "crackdowns" on taxi violence — and taxi organisations have also vowed to get "ruthless" with members who ignore peace pacts.

Despite all the public promises, handshakes and meetings, the violence has continued and many commuters are now refusing to take taxis out of fear that they will join the growing list of innocent bystanders and passengers who have fallen victim to the feuding.

The fighting has moved from taxi ranks and spilled onto major highways and the city centre, sparking fears that the city's tourism industry has been dealt another serious blow.

Transport MEC Mr. Leonard Ramatlakane said he had brokered at least 25 of the 28

failed peace agreements so far and that he took "the strongest exception," to people claiming he was not giving enough attention to the problem.

There were "strong indications" that hired and paid assassins carried out "dirty missions".

Cata and Codeta should arrest trigger-happy operators and then move for the refusal of bail — a step he would personally back, Ramatlakane said.

Both Cata and Codeta yesterday again committed themselves to peace.

Cata spokesman Mr Philip Mboja said: "Our solution ... is that every taxi association must be allowed to operate on all the routes."

Codeta spokesman Mr Reggie Malimba said: "We are very much committed to peace, that is why we have asked the court to intervene in protecting our members as well as the public."

At a press conference yesterday, Kriel unveiled yet another series of talk sessions aimed at solving the problem.

He said taxi groups, police, intelligence services, the army and the relevant provincial MECs would be

invited to join a task group that would meet twice weekly, from next week.

"They'll have to do three things: secure the safety of the public, evaluate what's happening, and advise me on what we can do."

Kriel said he would also ask police to ensure that "heavily armed" personnel "guarded" Nyanga and Bellville taxi ranks.

When asked what would make this task force more effective than any of the others that had been assembled over the past two years, he said: "This one will be more representative and will meet on a more regular basis."

"I can't guarantee that this will solve the problem. After a month, if we haven't solved the problem, we'll take a harder line."

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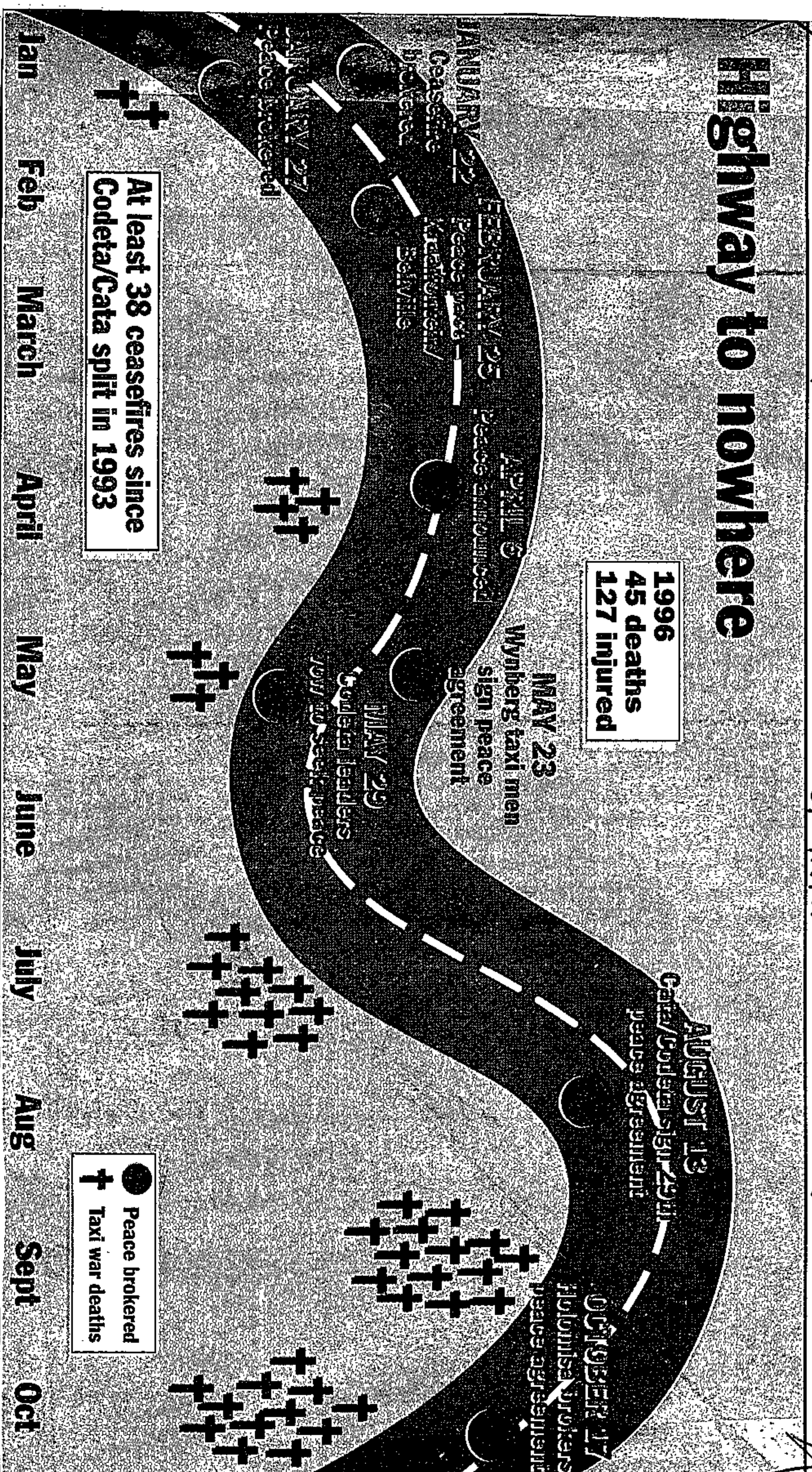
force joining taxi peace?

CT 11/10/96

(332)

Highway to nowhere

1996
45 deaths
127 injured



PUTCO (332)

DRIVING IN THE DARK

PM 1/11/96

Managing Putco under present conditions must be like driving a bus along a dark country road at night without headlights. To make matters worse, the road has a number of potholes.

- **ACTIVITIES:** Mass transport service operator.
- **CONTROL:** Carleo Enterprises 52,5%.
- **CHAIRMAN:** A Carleo. MD: E M R L Oldham.
- **CAPITAL STRUCTURE:** 26,4m ords. Market capitalisation: R84,6m.
- **SHARE MARKET:** Price: 320c. Yields: 7,5% on dividend; 19,8% on earnings; p:e ratio, 5,1; cover, 1,8. 12-month high, 515c; low, 300c. Trading volume last quarter, 198 000 shares.

Year to June 30	'93	'94	'95	'96
ST debt (Rm)	nil	20,4	nil	20,4
Debt:equity ratio	n/a	0,13	n/a	0,08
Shareholders' interest	0,61	0,54	0,61	0,64
Return on cap (%)	8,3	9,2	10,7	4,2
Turnover (Rm)	424	480	552	579
Pre-int profit (Rm)	19,0	24,0	32,6	14,7
Pre-int margin (%)	4,5	5,0	5,9	2,5
Earnings (c)	77	66	85	44
Dividends (c)	40	38	44	24
Tangible NAV (c)	527	534	708	848

The big hole Putco hit in financial 1996 was, to use the words of chairman Albino Carleo, the "nonincrease in the passenger subsidy for the first nine months of our financial year."

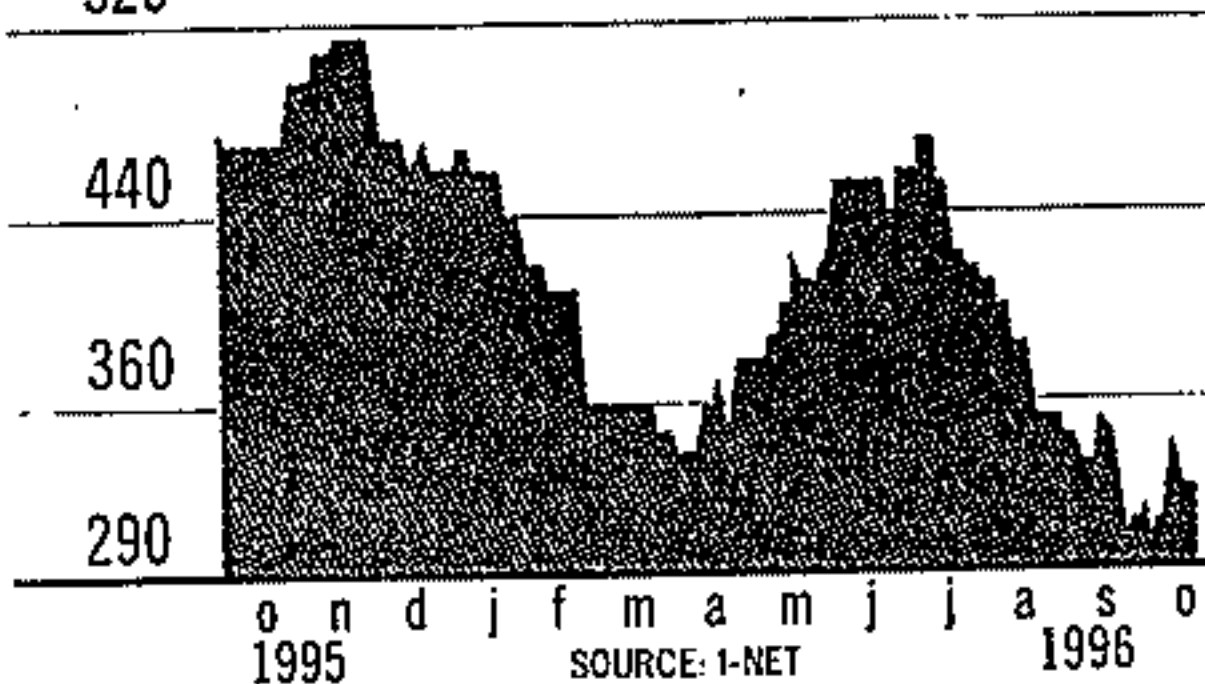
It came close to taking the wheels off. Turnover fell in real terms, operating profit was halved and EPS hit a low not seen since 1991, when Putco recorded a small loss.

The operating numbers also took a knock, particularly disappointing after signs of recovery at operational level a year ago. Passenger numbers declined by 2,3% to 85m (up 6% in the previous year) and kilometres travelled increased by only 1% (7%).

Growth of 4,7% in group bus operating revenue was wiped out by an 8,7% increase in operating costs, apparent in the paper-thin pre-interest margin of 2,5%.

Fortunately, Putco's traditionally strong balance sheet did not suffer too much damage, though the previous

Putco
Cents
520



year's net cash holding of R10,6m turned to net debt of R19m. However, Putco still earned interest of R5,3m over the financial year.

There are a few flickers of light on the horizon, but much remains unclear. Government is still finalising its transport policy review process (perhaps by year-end), which will lay the policy framework for the future management of public transport.

Carleo sees two positive factors which he believes could lead to "slightly better" results this year: an increased subsidy to be announced in February — "for the past 18 months, the subsidy increase has only been 8%, so the next increase should be more" — and increased revenue from Putco's 10% fare increase announced in October.

He also believes that the introduction of new, interim contracts for an average of three years — negotiated between the Transport Department and the SA Bus Owners' Association — could have a positive, more stable effect on the industry.

But none of these factors can realistically offer much comfort to investors in the short term. The potential for recovery is there, but remains clouded by politics on the one side, as government tries to formulate a new policy, and by a vibrant, if chaotic, private taxi industry on the other.

For now it's hard to regard the share as anything but speculative. *Shaun Harris*



HANNES THIART

Watchdogs: police check minibus taxis on the Cape Town station deck today

Lock up drivers found with guns, says Ball

MICHAEL MORRIS
ON THE OLYMPIC BID

ARLT 1/11/96

Cape Town's chaotic taxi situation is "simply an absurdity" and taxi drivers found carrying guns should be locked up, says Olympic Bid chief Chris Ball.

"There is no reason taxi drivers should carry guns. In fact, if I had the power to do it, I would ban guns," he said yesterday. "Any taxi driver carrying a gun should be locked up for five years at least," he added.

His strong comments followed another day of taxi strife in the city, the international perception of which could harm Cape Town's bid for the 2004 Games.

International Olympic Committee evaluators will visit Cape Town in a month's time to assess the technical aspects of the bid and the suitability of the city as host.

Addressing a select group of 15 school pupils recently nominated as Olympic Bid "ambassadors", Mr Ball noted that the bid had served as a catalyst for the most con-

structive anti-crime initiative yet launched in Cape Town. The initiative was forged at a top-level meeting in the city this week. A multi-disciplinary group is to meet within two weeks to draw up strategies and set targets.

He said Cape Town was a lot safer than many of the other 10 cities bidding for the 2004 Games but a decisive action plan to deal with lawlessness was still needed.

"People need to know that if they break the law, someone will jump on them."

End taxi war or face shutdown, Kriel warns foes *Groups given a month*

ASHLEY SMITH AND JUDY DAMON
STAFF REPORTERS

Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel has given the taxi industry a month to resolve the escalating conflict between Codeta and Cata or face permanent closure.

He warned yesterday that if the bloodshed and mayhem between the rival taxi associations continued, his government would have no alternative but to encourage the wholesale use of buses and trains by commuters.

Mr Kriel's office and representatives from townships affected by the latest wave of violence have announced several strategies to stop the conflict.

But neither Codeta nor Cata has made any new moves to end the violence which has claimed nine lives this week and turned the N2 highway past the airport into a hell run.

The tense stand-off between Cata and Codeta over which has the right to operate from the Cape Town station deck taxi rank in the city centre remains unresolved.

The situation is on a knife-edge, with Cata and Codeta strongholds being guarded against possible attacks.

The police community forum in Gugule-

tu has announced moves to help the army set up roadblocks to stop taxi drivers with unlicensed firearms.

People in areas such as Nyanga and Philippi would also be approached to help, said forum chairman Daniel Ladingwe. Mr Kriel has appointed a task team headed by provincial Police Minister Gerald Morkel and Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane.

Two senior members each from the police, the national defence force, National Intelligence, Cape Amalgamated Taxi Associations (Cata), the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta), the Golden Arrow bus company and Metrorail have been invited to be on the team, which will meet every Monday and Friday.

Their tasks are to ensure public safety, meet regularly for evaluations and to advise Mr Kriel on what can be done.

Heavily armed police have been assigned to watch the Nyanga and Bellville taxi zones under instruction to "act without lenience" against perpetrators of violence.

Although 40 peace initiatives have crashed in the past two years and several similar task teams have failed, Mr Kriel was hopeful this team would succeed.

Taxi chaos brings them out in force

ANDREA WEISS AND JOHAN SCHRONEN
STAFF REPORTERS

Police, soldiers and traffic police are being deployed in areas affected by Cape Town's taxi war.

As authorities moved to stop the growing conflict, the Cape Town station deck taxi rank was calm but tense today after violent clashes this week.

Traffic officers at the old Strand Street taxi rank, where it is now illegal to pick up

and drop commuters, were today directing taxis to the station deck which has been declared safe after a shooting there on Wednesday.

On the deck, at least 30 policemen, some with shotguns and wearing bulletproof vests, searched for firearms and other dangerous weapons and checked registration and public driving permits.

The operation caused a slight delay in the traffic flow on the deck but commuters and a large number of operators accepted it

in the interests of their own safety.

A senior traffic officer on the deck said the situation was calm but he feared "just one spark in the barrel could cause havoc".

The police have unveiled a contingency plan to increase visible policing in conjunction with the defence force.

They said they would increase presence at taxi ranks and deploy additional members of the public order unit. The effect of

Turn to page 3

Police, army traffic cops fight 'war'

From page 1

this would be to increase joint police and defence force patrols. The police helicopter and municipal and provincial traffic police would also help.

And in a further move, Cape Town municipality is to ask Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel to allow traffic police to be deployed across municipal boundaries.

The Cape Town council decided at its monthly meeting to urgently address the issue of the deployment of traffic officers.

Outside the civic centre where the council met yesterday, the station deck rank was deserted as visible evidence of the war in which nine people were killed this week.

The council said it deplored the continuing violent conflict in the minibus taxi industry and offered its support to provincial Minister of Transport Leonard Ramatlakane and Minister of Police Gerald Morkel who are heading a new task team.

The council said an "all-out effort cutting across party-political lines" was needed to resolve the problem in the long term.

Traffic officers are restricted to certain areas because of a provincial proclamation that until unbundling of local authorities in July, work should continue to be carried out within the old municipal boundaries.

This means traffic officers employed by the former Cape Town city council are not deployed in the Ikapa area, which has no traffic officers of its own.

The council also resolved yesterday that trade unions and other municipalities be consulted on implementing the resolution.

Police Commissioner George Fivaz has warned that renewed taxi violence was a blow to major police "successes" against perpetrators of violence.

CAPE ARGUS ISSUES

Now's time for minibuses men to legitimise industry

Two mornings ago, as hundreds of taxi drivers and operators marched on the Western Cape legislature, national Transport Minister Mac Maharaj was at Parliament spelling out some valuable home truths about the minibus commuter industry.

In Wale Street, the Western Cape Taxi Task Team handed provincial Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and his police counterpart, Gerald Morkel, a memorandum which described killings, other forms and threats of violence and said "the systematic decline" in the profitability of the industry was unbearable.

The march on the legislature came in a week in which eight people lost their lives in taxi-related violence which left a trail of tragedy and despair from the eastern suburb to the Eastern Boulevard.

The violence has been ascribed by Mr Ramatlakane and police to the involvement of paid, skilled assassins.

The provincial task team is absolutely right in saying such lawbreaking and turmoil is unbearable.

But it's making a serious error in mentioning profitability in the same breath, thus raising existing and prospective oper-

ators' hopes about a brighter day in which the pie of opportunity will grow into an inexhaustible source of basic income for some, wealth for others.

The fact is - and this was one of the things Mr Maharaj emphasised in his media briefing - out of 130 000 minibus taxis ferrying two million passengers each day, 60 000 operate without official permission.

Clearly, no self-respecting, growing democracy can countenance such mass flouting of the law while it simultaneously struggles to pawn an inheritance of civil disobedience and ungovernability, and disturbing levels of private and public-sector corruption.

Mr Maharaj said: "One of our most difficult and demanding tasks has been the regulation of the minibus taxi industry which - in spite of the valuable service it has offered to hard-pressed urban commuters since the apartheid years - has become a byword for violent lawlessness and brought great hardship and suffering to many thousands of innocent users."

He also warned that the description "hard-pressed" soon would apply not to

HEARTS & MINDS



TYRONE SCALE

urban commuters, but to taxi operators.

The reason is self-evident: there are too many seats and too few bums; and, in the course of the scrap for commuter numbers that could decline even further once rail and bus systems are upgraded and expanded, even honest-to-goodness taxi operators are forced to employ less honesty and goodness to survive.

This state of affairs will be unbearable, as it will threaten the livelihood of more than 100 000 families.

But, unlike the other unbearable such as violence, this unpalatable truth will be with us for a while.

Many a prospective taxi operator seems

to have realised this already, which was why Mr Maharaj was able to report that there was no significant increase in the number of private operators entering the market.

That leaves his department, and particularly the National Task Team, with the mission of implementing recently agreed recommendations on the regulation of the taxi industry.

Part of these negotiated agreements (achieved between the task team and taxi associations around the country) revolves on the question of the actual constitutions of taxi associations.

In terms of the agreement, associations nationally have agreed to democratise themselves, make their leaderships fully accountable internally and publicly, and to commit themselves to the ordering of a hitherto anarchic and often physically lethal enterprise.

All of this will be written into the constitution of each taxi association and into individual operators' licencing permits.

However, a big problem is enforcement.

To make his new vision stick, Mr Maharaj needs to know that his counterparts in safety and security and justice will

round-up violators of the new ethic, and take them all the way through the courts.

But in the light of restraints such as a moratorium on the hiring of police personnel and inherited inefficiencies in systems such as justice, such guarantees are hard to come by.

It is against this background that the shootings, the marches, the threats, the rhetoric and the negotiations should be viewed and conducted.

Taxi associations share, with the Government, the very serious responsibility of communicating the full picture throughout the taxi marketplace, and to stick to existing agreements, instead of making further threats that are bound to be acted on by ignorant constituents.

This is not a time for gun-toting mobsters to pull rank.

This is a chance for strong, representative leadership to negotiate in good faith, in the interests of public safety and economic prosperity, and even to begin to think about creating another place in the sun for those who are bound to join the ranks of the unemployed once they are shed by the minibus industry.

Hit squads a feature of taxi violence

RD 1/11/96

(332)

PRETORIA — Perpetrators of taxi violence were increasingly using mafia-style hit squad tactics, police commissioner George Fivaz said in Pretoria yesterday.

"This is illustrated by the arrest this year of no less than 57 suspected taxi hit squad members among the 363 suspects arrested in general for taxi violence," Four suspected hit squad members who had been arrested were policemen.

Fivaz said police were working

covertly to expose hit men and with those in the taxi industry to expose the police members involved. Intimidation was a major problem.

The police had asked the justice department to set up a witness protection programme.

Fivaz said 136 people had been killed and 208 injured this year in 335 incidents of taxi-related violence. Last year 195 people were killed and 281 injured in 530 incidents.

He said renewed taxi violence had

been sparked in recent weeks by the monopolisation drives of big taxi associations. "Such factors are beyond the SAPS's control and will require urgent government intervention." He called for firmer implementation of taxi regulations, saying this was the task of the transport ministry.

Eena reported that in the Eastern Cape five taxi organisations yesterday met the premier and the MECs for transport and safety and security in a meeting brokered by the Transkei

Chamber of Commerce to appeal for the government to take immediate measures to stop the violence.

Linda Ensor reported from Cape Town that Western Cape premier Herinus Kriel yesterday established a task group of the MECs of police and transport, representatives of SANDF, National Intelligence Agency, bus company Golden Arrow, Metro Rail and two taxi associations. Its function will be to monitor and plan action on taxi violence. — Sapa.

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ND 11/11/96

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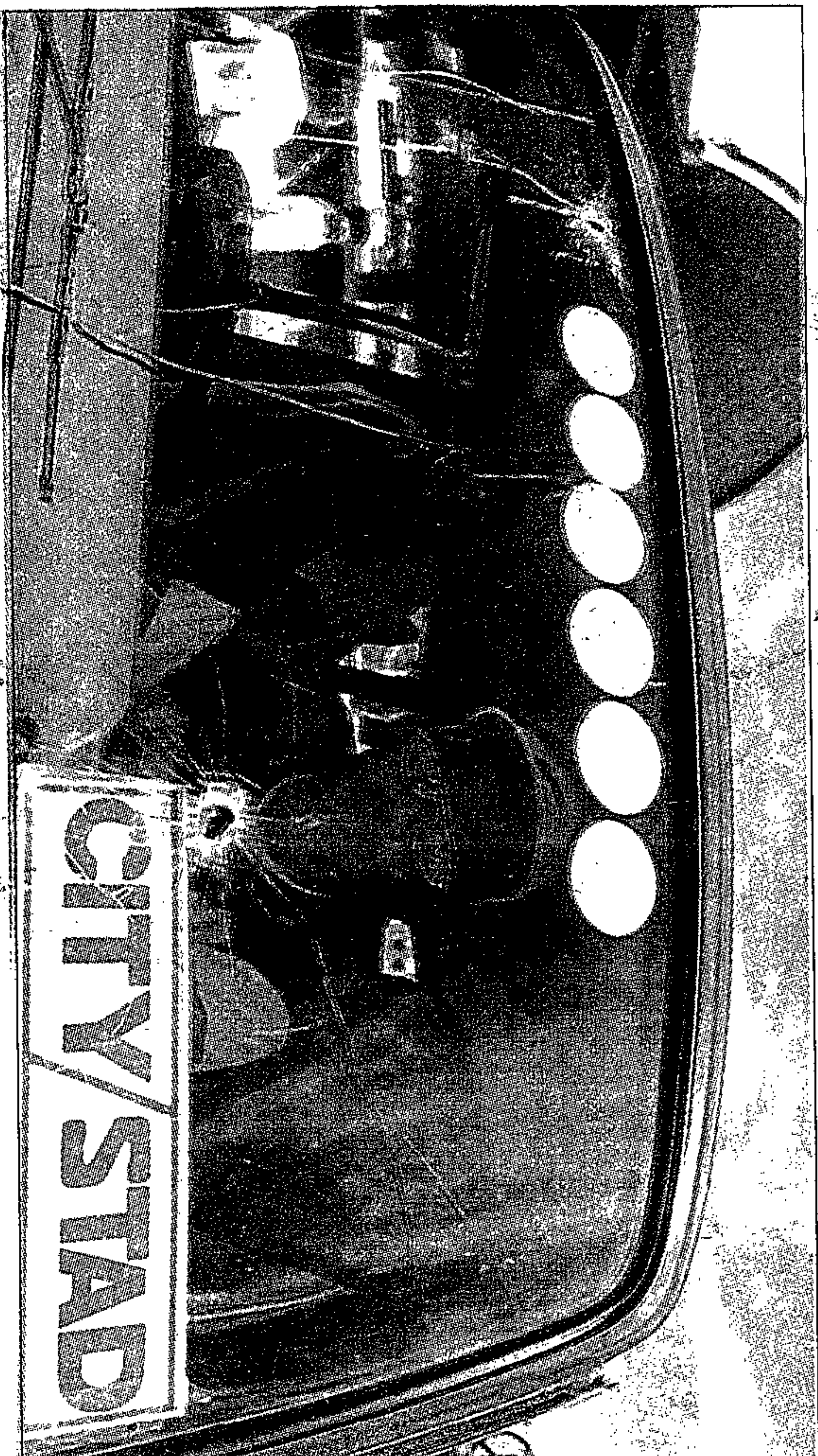
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ickdown looms in taxi war

(322) ST(CM) 3/11/96
 By Ken Vernon



SIGN OF THE TIMES . . . A taxi driver looks sullenly out at the world through the bullet holes in his windshield that bear mute testimony to the violence that hit the city centre this week

THE Western Cape government is considering imposing a partial state of emergency to control the taxi violence that has hit Cape Town.

Informed sources say other measures under consideration include the confiscation of taxis and the imprisonment, under emergency regulations, of members of taxi organisations known to be part of the ongoing taxi war.

Sources close to the provincial parliament said the drastic measures were regarded as a last resort, but added that provincial leaders were at their wits' end to try and come up with solutions to the ongoing violence.

Premier Hannus Kriel this week gave the warring taxi operators a month in which to sort out their industry. He appointed yet another task force to come up with a solution, but behind the scenes he is considering tougher action.

The developments come after a week of violence in which five people have been killed and at least five wounded in running gun battles between rival taxi organisations fighting to control ranks.

At least 12 people have been killed in the past month in taxi violence, and more than 90 since the problem arose in 1989.

The latest fatality was an innocent bystander, Francois du Plessis of Observatory, who died on Wednesday after being hit by a stray bullet when he drove into a gunfight underway on the N2, a road that was turned into the hell-run last seen in the 1980s.

Police backed by SANDF soldiers and the police air arm hit the streets yesterday and Friday to try and contain the shootings that have seen commuters scurrying to find alternative modes of transport from the sprawling Cape townships.

Police spokesman Superintendent John Sterrenberg said six people had been arrested in connection with acts of violence, and 13 handguns had been confiscated.

In addition, traffic police had cracked down on taxis and 87 summonses for various traffic offences had been issued.

Another 59 taxi operators had been ordered to report to licensing authorities to have their vehicles tested within seven days.

Despite the crackdown the violence has continued.

Yesterday morning two commuters were wounded, one seriously, after two taxis loaded with gunmen opened fire on each in Mitchell's Plain.

Police recovered a large number of spent 9mm cartridges at the scene, but by last night no arrests had been made.

Sterrenberg warned the police actions were only a stop-gap measure.

"We cannot put a policeman on every corner and that is what is needed if the taxi operators do not get their own house in order and begin to obey the law," Sterrenberg said.

● See Page 4

TRANSPORT *Virgin plans may force cutbacks*

BA threatens to jettison SA flights

CT (BR) 5/11/96 (332) (269)
AUDREY D'ANGELO

Cape Town — British Airways (BA) has warned it will cut its four weekly flights to Cape Town unless it is granted extra flights to South Africa to compete with Virgin Atlantic's plans to expand its new South African business.

The threat heightens the competition between the British carriers and will probably put local authorities under great pressure to license further flights between South Africa and Britain, irrespective of South African Airways' (SAA) ability to use them.

John Hanlon, BA's general manager in Africa, said yesterday that BA's 17 flights to South Africa would probably be cut back to 14 to accommodate Virgin's plans if the request for extra flights was refused. The cuts would probably include all four of BA's non-stop flights to Cape Town, which bring in 1 600 passengers a week.

"Cape Town is undoubtedly the top tourist destination in South Africa and we have been marketing it in the UK. We hope ultimately to have a daily flight there because there is scope for tourism to grow," he said.

He said stopping the flights would affect jobs in the Cape Town area but BA would not be able to cut its Johannesburg flights because Johannesburg is its main business destination and thus attracts most premium-class passengers, bringing in a higher yield.

Britain and South Africa allow each other's airlines 21 flights a week between the countries. BA has 17 and Virgin three, so one of them can get another flight. Virgin, however, wants six flights a week by next year and is

aiming at a daily flight.

If BA is allowed extra flights, a similar number would have to be allocated to a local carrier, but SAA, which flies 13 times a week, including two non-stop flights to Cape Town, does not have the aircraft to handle extra flights so other local carriers could be tempted on to the route.

Britain's civil aviation authorities will look at the position later this month. "Since they favour competition they are likely to make us cut back to allow expansion by Virgin," said Hanlon. "But this could be avoided if the South African licensing authorities make more frequencies available."

BA and Virgin have a long history of gloves-off competition, culminating recently in a British libel case that won Richard Branson, Virgin's owner, millions of rands. The companies are still fighting in US courts.

Leon Els, SAA's senior public relations manager, said the airline did not regard BA's application for more frequencies as a threat. He said SAA did not have BA's capacity, but in any case it had "not been part of SAA's planning" to take up its full allocation of 21 frequencies to London.

Hanlon said BA did not intend to increase the number of its flights this year, but it wanted eventually to have two flights a day to Johannesburg and one to Cape Town. He was confident the market could absorb expansion by BA and other carriers.

David James, Virgin's general manager in South Africa, said: "We are quite happy for British Airways to have 21 frequencies provided we have seven. This country should be moving towards completely open skies to build its tourism industry."

Transport department to seek court order for taxi operator information

Bonile Ngqiyaza

BD 6/11/96 (352)

THE Western Cape transport department will file an urgent application in the Cape Town Supreme Court today forcing rival provincial taxi associations to provide it with a list of taxi operators and their routes.

The move followed failure by the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association to comply with a department deadline on Monday to submit the information, spokesman Douw Steyn said yesterday.

He said a taxi task team set up last weekend by premier Hernus Kriel had resolved on Monday to investigate the possibility of outlawing the carrying of firearms on public transport.

It had also been decided to bar people with criminal records from participating in the team's proceedings.

Steyn said the transport and public works MEC Leonard Ramatlakalane had given notice that proposed amendments to the province's Road Transport Act would be discussed today.

The department had also given taxi

association operators until the end of this month to surrender their old permits and apply for new ones — in line with the recommendations of the national taxi task team.

An SAPS spokesman said a sting operation last week had led to 64 minibuses being declared unroadworthy and 169 fines, of which R18 000 had been paid, being imposed.

Meanwhile, an Eastern Cape meeting on taxi violence attended by transport department representatives, the safety and security MEC and local government representatives last weekend has recommended that local authorities take over the allocation of taxi ranks to taxi operators.

Provincial transport department spokesman Cinga Nokwe said transport MEC Mandisa Marashe had requested a meeting with the provincial commissioner of police where the taxi violence issue would be discussed.

The conference followed Eastern Cape safety and security MEC Dennis Neer's statement that authorities were aware of hit squad camps where operators were trained for attacks.

Court bid to end taxi strife

DENNIS CAVERNELIS
SUPREME COURT REPORTER

(332)

ARG 7/11/96

Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane has applied in the Cape Supreme Court for an order forcing warring taxi organisations Cata and Codeta to comply with a peace agreement and have their permits amended.

The minister is asking that the organisations be interdicted from operating outside routes agreed upon in an agreement brokered in September.

He is also calling on them to have

their area or radius permits amended to route permits as agreed.

In an affidavit he said some operators had area permits and others radius permits.

Conflict resulted because their routes were not defined.

December 4 has been provisionally set for the application to be heard.

Mr Justice G A Kuhn said the strife and mayhem involving taxi operators had to be resolved urgently.

However, Judge Kuhn said he was not prepared to make an order yesterday as the taxi bodies had to have an opportunity to present their case.

Cape bid to enforce taxi agreements is postponed

Linda Ensor

332

60 7/11/96

CAPE TOWN — A Supreme Court judge refused to proceed with an urgent application by the Western Cape government for two rival taxi organisations to submit lists of their operators and routes, until replying affidavits were filed.

The refusal by the Cape Organisation of Democratic Taxi Associations, the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association and six individ-

ual taxi operators to comply with an agreement they signed two months ago led provincial transport MEC Leonard Ramatlakane to bring the application in the Cape Town Supreme Court.

The application was opposed and postponed to a date to be arranged by the parties. While refusing to proceed until the respondents had time to file affidavits, Justice GA Khun said it did not appear Ramatlakane's applica-

tion could succeed as the agreement he was trying to enforce had no legal or contractual basis.

Ramatlakane hoped a court order would force the taxi associations' members to keep to agreed routes, register with the National Taxi Task Team and surrender all radius permits as they had agreed to do on September 20. The parties have signed eight agreements this year — all of them broken shortly after being signed.

Consultants cost Gauteng R120m

Kevin O'Grady

332

60 7/11/96

THE Gauteng government had spent more than R120m on employing 1 053 outside consultants and 129 firms of consultants during financial 1996/97, it was disclosed yesterday.

DP provincial MP Ian Davidson, who requested the data in the Gauteng legislature, said some of the sums spent on consultants appeared excessive and one — R5,4m spent in 18 months on one consultant doing inner-city research for the education department — was "outrageous".

Other payments Davidson said seemed extraordinarily high were: R44,5m spent by the public transport, roads and public works department on 129 consultants during the 1996/97 financial year.

R11,6m spent by the housing and land affairs department on 26 consultants; and R420 608 spent by the welfare and population development department on consultants during a period when figures supplied in the legislature showed that no consultants were employed by the department.

Davidson said the reply by premier Tokyo Sexwale raised more questions than answers, and he intended to ask for details of the consultants' identities, the period of their contracts, total cost per contract and the nature of work undertaken.

In response to questions by Davidson, Sexwale also disclosed that several departments placed no limitations on the ability of consultants to subcontract additional consultants.

BANK HOLDINGS LIMITED

Bara taxi rank won't close just yet

Soweto Star 7/11/96 (232)
By SELLO MOTLHABAKWE
Soweto Bureau

The threatened closure of the Baragwanath taxi rank – scheduled to have taken place tomorrow – has been shelved for the time being while discussions on its future take place.

Greater Johannesburg Council traffic committee deputy chairman, Sibusiso Buthelezi, said after a meeting between the committee and Soweto Trans-

port Services, Diepmeadow Taxi Association (DTA), and Bara-Meadowlands Taxi Association (BMTA), that further meetings had been scheduled.

He said he was unable to disclose details of the talks until he had reported to the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council and Gauteng Transport Ministry.

Yesterday's meeting was overshadowed by a shooting yesterday at the Diepkloof taxi rank, about 5km north of the

Baragwanath rank. Police arrested two men, believed to be from the DTA and the BMTA, in connection with the shooting.

The council has said that a taxi association agreement on peace and operating schedules is a pre-requisite for revoking its threat to close Baragwanath.

If the associations fail to convince council they have a workable plan, police backed by the army would be deployed to enforce the closure.

Friday, November 7, 1996

PE taxi driver gunned down in unceasing war for territorial control

(332) X/10/11/96
Port Elizabeth – Ongoing taxi violence in Port Elizabeth has claimed another life, with an Uncedo taxi driver being shot in the head by an unknown gunman, it was reported yesterday. The incident comes only hours after the resumption of operations by Uncedo.

The taxi association surprised mediators and other taxi operators by operating again yesterday after eight weeks of being off the road as a result of its taxi feud with rival taxi group, Bata.

Earlier, Bata taxi operators warned that the move by Uncedo to resume operations would result in innocent commuters suffering in the ongoing conflict between the two groups.

Police said they have no further information relating to the death of the 35-year-old taxi driver yesterday morning. – Sapa.

3 taxi drivers shot, attackers arrested

Three Pretoria taxi drivers were injured when gunmen opened fire at a taxi rank in Rietgat near Soshanguve yesterday morning.

Police spokesman Captain Morné van Wyk said the three attackers, allegedly members of the SA Long Distance Taxi Association, were arrested at the scene.

Those injured were apparently members of the Federated Long Distance Taxi Association, and were admitted to the Soshanguve Clinic.

Van Wyk said one of them was seriously hurt.

About eight taxis were hit in the shooting which occurred at 10am.

The three suspects were expected to appear in the Pretoria North Magistrates' Court before the end of the week, Van Wyk said. – Sapa.

POLICE CHIEF WANTS WARRING FACTIONS TO TALK

Crack officer assigned to netting taxi killers

(332) ET 11/11/96

CAPTAIN JOHAN KOTZE has a daunting task as new head of the Taxi Task Unit. He says his priority is to arrest those responsible for the violence. **DAN SIMON** writes.

A POLICE officer who played a key role in investigating the notorious Station Strangler murders has been assigned the tricky task of apprehending Cape Town's shadowy taxi war killers — and helping to close the shameful chapter of violence that has claimed 66 lives this year alone.

Former murder and robbery unit detective Captain Johan Kotze has been appointed to replace Superintendent Theo Kleyman as head of the Taxi Task Unit — a mission he says makes him nervous.

Besides being instrumental in arresting Afzal Sarfaraaz Simons, convicted of one of the murders believed to be linked to the Station Strangler, Kotze was at the forefront in arresting the attackers responsible for the Shoshobane Massacre in which 18 people died in KwaZulu/Natal last Christmas Day.

Kotze, attached until late last week to the vehicle hijacking unit, has inherited 312 case dockets relating to the taxi war.

These detail a litany of violent incidents, including those in which 66 people have died and 151 people have been injured this year.

This year, 78 people have been arrested in connection with taxi violence. Some are out on bail while others are being detained as they have not been granted bail or are awaiting court appearances.

A number of firearms have been seized and are undergoing ballistics tests.

Kotze said some of the 312 case dockets referred to incidents going back to June last year. However, many cases dating back to the early 1990s remain unsolved.

Horifying statistics?

"Yes, they are if you think that they (the cases) concern people who are daily transporting thousands of members of the public," Kotze said.

However, he acknowledges he faces a difficult task in apprehending suspects as the nature of the Peninsula taxi war is sporadic eruptions of violence.

Kotze said his brief was straightforward.

The highest priority was for him and his team of 16 detectives to go out in the field and arrest those involved in the taxi violence, he said.

Kotze would also initiate talks between the warring groups, Code-ta and Cata, and try to convince their members it was imperative that they resolve their differences peacefully.

The root causes of the violence, Kotze said, were greed and money.

"People who control the ranks make a lot of money and that is what sparks off a lot of the violence."

"It tends to be a power-based thing with the money. It's definitely not political."

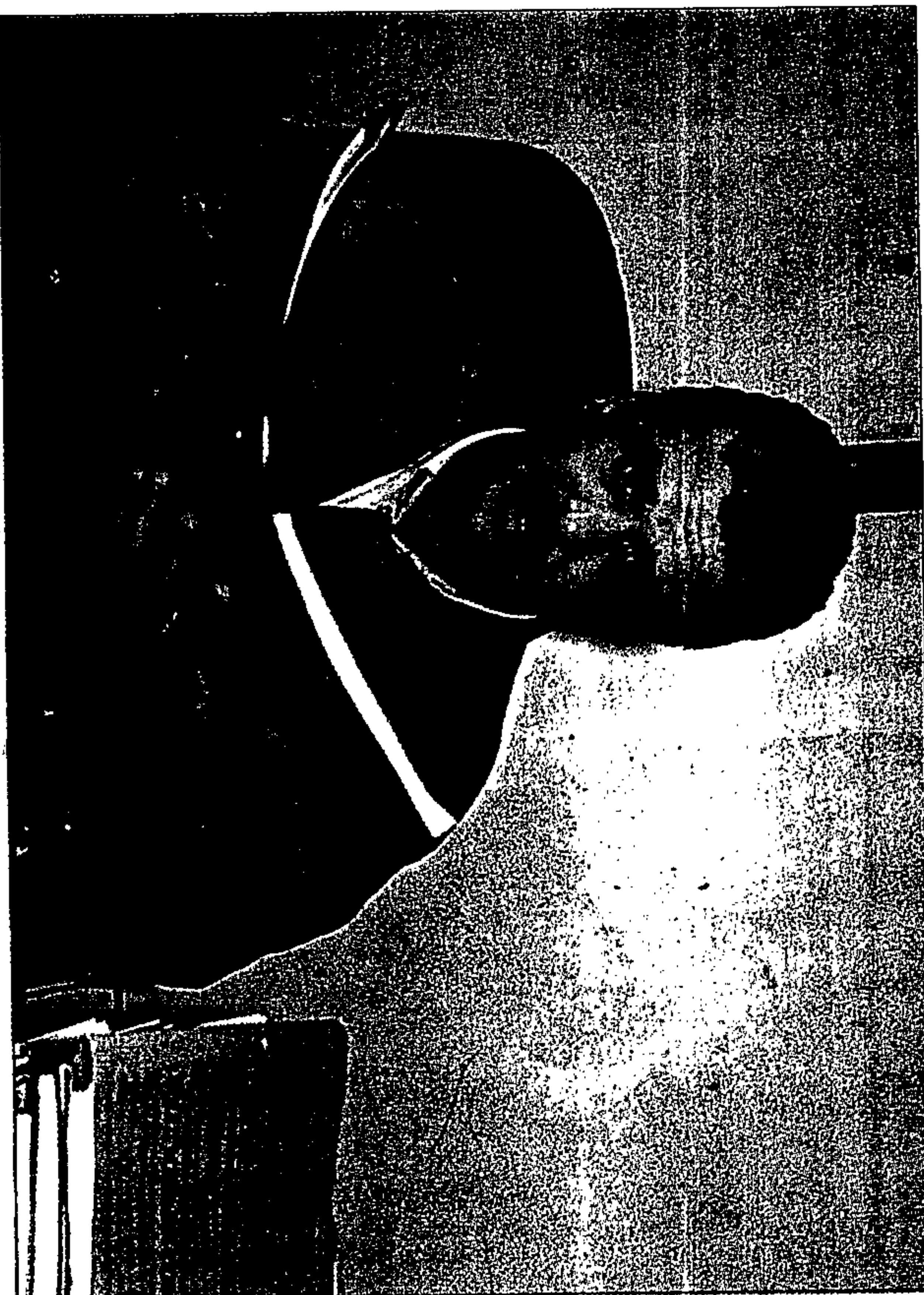
Kotze said he had a difficult task to accomplish and did not want to speculate about his chances of success in stopping the violence.

"I hope I have a lot of success, but it's not going to be easy. This violence has been going on since 1990."

A lot of people have tried to solve it time and again, but the violence keeps flaring up again.

"This type of violence comes from actual lawlessness."

On the question of taxi hit-



ON THE TRAIL: Captain Johan Kotze, new head of the Taxi Task Unit, gets to work reading one of the 312 dockets, connected to the taxi war violence, that he has inherited.

squads, Kotze said it appeared that there was a small group of people behind the violence.

"It's too early to say whether taxi hit-squads are being trained in the Eastern Cape, but there is information that hit-squads are being used here in the violence."

"When we arrest the suspects,

we will oppose bail to the fullest of our ability."

It was time that members of Code-ta and Cata began abiding by the law, Kotze said.

"The law is not there to be played with but to punish them if they get on the wrong side of it."

"I believe the taxi war can be

stopped if we can get a commitment from the various taxi groups not to try to kill each other but to sort out their problems peacefully."

The government realised there were flaws in the taxi legislation and was working to resolve these problems, Kotze said.

"They are working on measures

which I think will help to control the taxi industry better."

As of this week, Kotze will be reporting weekly to the head of the Violent Crimes Unit, Director Leonard Knipe, and other senior provincial leaders on the progress he has made in curbing the festering violence.

PICTURE: DAN SIMON

Two arrested for taxi rank killings

Sowetan 11/11/96 (332)

By Josias Charle
and Bernard Sathekge

TWO SUSPECTS WERE ARRESTED after five people, including a woman taxi driver, were killed during an AK-47 rifle attack in Maboloka near Brits at the weekend.

Four of the victims included three passengers and a taxi driver. More than 10 other people were injured during the attack.

Police arrested two men and it is understood they have confessed their involvement in the attack.

According to police, four men in a Nissan Sentra drove into Maboloka taxi rank and one of them opened fire with an AK-47 rifle spraying 51 rounds

Three men arrested and stolen guns destined for hit squad confiscated

around the rank.

Two of the dead people have been identified as taxi driver Ms Elizabeth Pholosi (38) and passenger Ms Ntswaki Mooko (32).

The three other passengers, including a man, a woman and a schoolgirl, have not yet been identified.

In another taxi violence-related incident, Pretoria police arrested three men and confiscated stolen weapons allegedly destined for a hit squad hired by the South African Long Distance Taxi Association.

Police spokesman Captain Morne van Wyk said the taxi violence unit and flying squad, reacting to information from a source, stopped a Saldta taxi in Muckleneuk, Pretoria, after following it from Mamelodi.

Two suspects were arrested and a .38 special revolver, a .22 pistol, a handgun and ammunition confiscated.

Van Wyk said the other suspects told police they had been on their way to deliver the weapons to an unidentified Saldta official at the Dairy Mall taxi rank in Pretoria.

NEW TURN IN CONFLICT

MEC locks out

local taxi bosses

CT 12/11/96

(332)

TAXI ASSOCIATIONS say they are willing to work with the provincial government, but are unhappy with MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane's "unilateral" decision-making. **ERIC NTABAZALLA** reports.

THE chairmen of various Western Cape taxi associations found themselves locked out of their government-owned offices in Roeland Street yesterday, after the offices were closed by Western Cape MEC for Transport Mr Leonard Ramatlakane.

Mr Achmat Dyason, speaking on behalf of the locked-out chairmen, claimed that Ramatlakane was contravening a court interdict restraining him from interfering with the Western Cape Taxi Task Team (WCCTT).

He claimed that Ramatlakane had an interdict restraining members of WCCTT from saying anything to their members that would lead them to boycott the registration of taxis.

"Ramatlakane brought a court order against the leaders of the taxi industry, but we had a court interdict restraining him from interfering with us," said Dyason.

"Now he is locking our office. Where is he expecting us to have our meetings?" he asked. "We are not going to be deterred by him just closing the doors on us."

He said the government was not playing its part in organising the taxi industry.

"This is a blatant example of them

trying to divide the industry — Ramatlakane is not willing at all to negotiate with us," said Dyason.

He said the taxi associations were "very willing" to co-operate with the government to solve problems in the industry, such as ending the violence and registering taxis. But, he said, the associations had a problem with the MEC as he always took unilateral decisions.

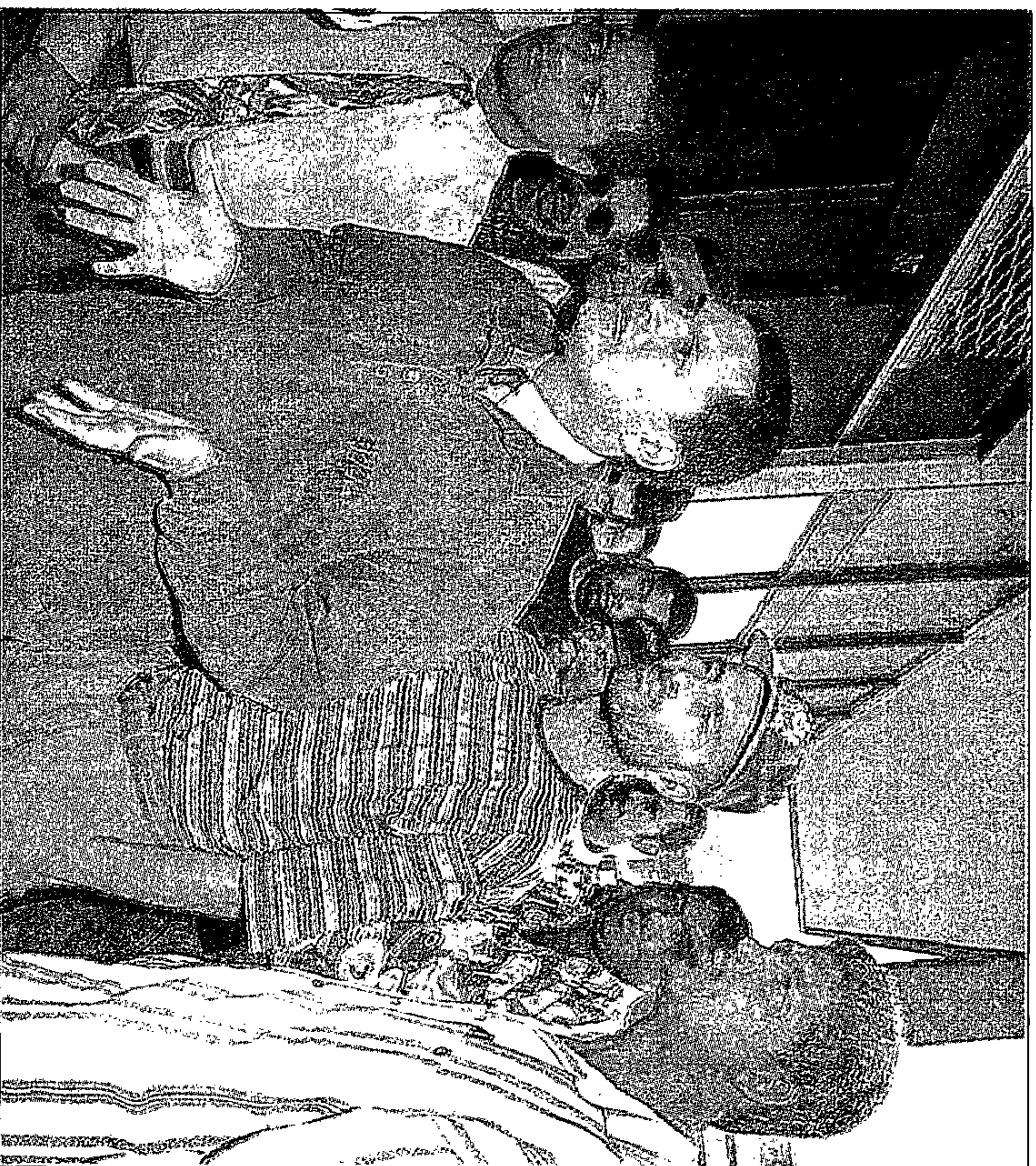
"If he wants to take the industry forward, he needs to consult with all the parties involved in reaching any decision," he said.

Responding to the allegations, Mr Ramatlakane's spokesman, Mr Dumisa Ntuli, said the taxi associations had to stop politicising the industry.

"There is no need for them to discuss the registration of taxis. It has been discussed for more than 18 months. Time is running out for them. They must join the hundreds of other taxi people who are in the queue to register," said Ntuli.

He said the Roeland Street offices were temporarily closed because the government was organising full-time staff to work in them. They had been used by taxi groups on an interim basis.

"They knew long ago that the office



WHERE NOW? Mr Achmat Dyason speaks out, after discovering that Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane had locked the taxi associations out of the government-owned Roeland Street offices.

PICTURES: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA

would be temporarily closed and letters had been forwarded to them, informing them," he said.

He denied there was a court order issued against the leaders of taxi associations. "We don't need the courts to solve our problems," he said.

Ntuli said the Western Cape did not

have a recognised and representative taxi task team — a statement made by Ramatlakane last week that angered taxi operators, drivers and owners during their march to the Western Cape provincial building.

Mr Ramatlakane, who had come out to meet the marchers, had to be shield-

ed from the angry protesters and retreated inside the provincial building.

Asked how the government would ensure that all the taxis would be registered, Ntuli said it would be a great challenge to the MEC's office and needed the co-operation of all players in the taxi industry.

Taxis blockade Daveyton entrance

By Dan Fuphe

MORE than 100 disgruntled taxi drivers affiliated to the Benoni Taxi Association yesterday blockaded the entrance to Daveyton on the East Rand in protest against the death of a colleague yesterday who was shot by car hijackers last Friday.

The angry drivers told *Sowetan* that their protest, which involved the off-loading of passengers at the entrance of the township, was a sign of frustration with taxi owners who apparently did not care about their safety.

Chairman of BTA Mr Bhekokwabo Radebe said Mr Patrick Maphiro was shot and left for dead by hijackers who later drove his minibus taxi to a chop shop in Vosloorus.

"What the hijackers did not know was that the vehicle was fitted with a tracer," Radebe said. "The beeping instrument led the security people to a backyard chop shop where the vehicle was found with falsified registration plates."

Maphiro was in a coma at Boksburg

Benoni Hospital and died yesterday morning without regaining consciousness.

"On hearing of his death and the release of the chop shop owner, we as drivers felt deceived as if we are merely being used as cannon fodder by our bosses," a driver said.

Radebe said the fact that the suspect was released after he had been apprehended by the BTA executive and handed over to the East Rand Murder and Robbery Unit was disturbing.

Sapa reports that the Lethabile Taxi Organisation yesterday condemned the granting of bail to three people charged with the murder on Friday of two LTO drivers at Jericho in North West.

In a statement in Pretoria, LTO spokesman Mr Jacob Ledwaba said the three were each granted bail of R2 000 at the GaRankuwa Magistrate's Court.

"This decision can only help fuel the perception that the lives of black people remain cheap in our country, despite the birth of a new government," he said.

Hopes for taxi peace as task team gets tough

Drive to get Cata, Codeta signed up

ARG 16/11/96

(332)

MXOLISI MGXASHE
STAFF REPORTER

The establishment two weeks ago of a high-powered Western Cape task team to end taxi violence in the region has brought about unprecedented peace and calm in the taxi ranks and townships.

The success comes despite complaints of a unilateral opening up of new and unregulated ranks by one of the associations.

The establishment of the task team was characterised by a heavy presence of army and police units at the taxi and bus ranks, reminiscent of the apartheid days when *kragdadigheid* was the order of the day.

But this time the show of force has been sanctioned by even those who would have been its victims in the past. And it seems seem to be working.

The task team, headed by Western Cape Minister of Police, Gerald Morkel, includes provincial Minister for Transport and Public Works Leonard Ramatlakane and two representatives from Codeta and Cata, the police, Golden Arrow Bus services, the National Intelligence Service and Metro-Rail.

The team was formed two weeks ago when taxi violence in the Peninsula had reached unprecedented proportions.

Almost 40 peace accords signed by the warring taxi associations had been violated. About 120 taxi-related crimes, including 24 murders and 59 attempted murders were committed between January and October this year.

In its effort to demonstrate that it meant business, the task team instructed Cata and Codeta to register all their members with the Provincial Taxi Office by 4pm on November 4, the day of the task team's first meeting, failing which the team "would take action".

"By 4.30pm they had not complied and we immediately got hold of our senior advocates and served papers with the Supreme Court to issue an interdict to Cata and Codeta restraining them from operating outside of the routes stipulated in the agreement of September 20," Mr Morkel said.

The Supreme Court interdict called on members of the two taxi associations who had area or radius permits to surrender them to the local Road Transportation Board (LRTB) for amendment to route permits by no later than Monday December 1 to give effect to the September 20 accord.

"We have also instructed our legal representatives to investigate legislation that will empower us to exercise gun control on taxis and other forms of transportation. We are also compiling a database of violent

incidents relating to public transport. And I'm happy to report that all representatives of the taxi associations have promised co-operation and to work for peace and stability in the minibus taxi industry," Mr Morkel said.

In an interview Cata president Steve Williams indicated a preparedness on the part of Cata, usually seen as the more aggressive of the two, to comply with the task team's wishes and register most of its 2 200 members by December 1.

Mr Williams said the calm that was now reigning in the taxi industry promised commuters a much more peaceful festive season than before.

But Cata's rivals are not impressed. A member of Codeta's executive, James Tafa, said Cata had in the past violated the peace accords.

"We are not convinced that this government means what it is telling us about ending this violence. We'll accept their orders but we will not be hoodwinked. We must see strong evidence of seriousness," he said.

However, the last violent taxi incident reported was said to be nine days ago when two shots were fired in Mowbray. No one was injured. Mr Morkel expressed confidence in a lasting solution, saying: "It seems the leaders of Cata and Codeta are now getting the message down to their people at the grassroots."

Taxi group threatens blockades on roads over the festive season

Pearl Sebolao

(332)

20 19/11/96

THE Lehlabile Taxi Organisation and its affiliates yesterday threatened to embark on "mass blockages" of roads next month, after four of its members were killed and 10 others injured in taxi violence at the weekend.

The organisation's media officer Jacob Ledwaba said the blockage would start on December 2 and continue throughout the festive season if government did not act within 14 days to curb taxi violence. The organisation was protesting against the courts' and the government's "reluctance" to deal with the violence, he said.

He criticised the granting of R2 000 unconditional bail to three alleged hit-squad operators last week, and the "arrogance displayed by Justice Minister Dullah Omar when he responded to the granting of that bail". Omar said "the function to decide whether bail should be granted is vested in the courts".

The organisation was demanding "Gestapo arrests" and the raiding of

homes and offices of those implicated in the violence. They should not be granted bail and should be remanded in custody and denied legal access until police investigations were complete, because if they were released witnesses were threatened and killed.

Meanwhile, Ecnareports that taxi hitmen murdered seven drivers in the Eastern Cape at the weekend, raising fears of a tourism downturn for Port Elizabeth during the festive period.

Most of the murders happened in the city, where feuding between the Uncedo Taxi Association and the Border Alliance Taxi Association has prompted an informal mass boycott of the industry. However, gunmen also killed drivers in King William's Town, East London and Fort Beaufort.

Port Elizabeth administrative director Carl Fisher said the city council was concerned at the effect of the war on commuters and tourism. He said the council would formulate a package of proposals aimed at providing safe transport for commuters.

Government told to stop taxi violence or face blockades

By Patrick Phosa

The Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) has threatened a mass blockade throughout the festive season if the Government does not stamp out the violence ravaging the taxi industry.

The blockades, scheduled to start on December 2, will be held in "viable economic spots" in Gauteng, Northern Province and North West province to protest against taxi violence.

At least seven people were killed and 14 injured at the weekend in a spate of taxi-related shootings, mainly regarding routes in North West, Western and Eastern Cape.

This brings to 20 the number of people killed in taxi-related violence since August in Pretoria and Brits.

At a press conference yesterday in Alexandra, LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said his organisation had resolved to hold

the blockades following the killings of their taxi owners, drivers and passengers.

Ledwaba said the police and soldiers should be deployed in trouble spots and bail denied to known assassins.

He said it was the responsibility of the Government to protect commuters and drivers because they, too, were taxpayers.

Ledwaba said his organisation would not fold their arms and look on while their members were

being murdered.

He said it would be "an eye for an eye" against their killers unless the Government took visible and concrete steps to stop the ongoing feud over routes between LTO and South African Long Distance Taxi Association (SALDTA).

"We will retaliate. But before you destroy someone you should first knock sense into him. We don't want to see SALDTA falling down because we are in the business together," Ledwaba said.

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At a press conference yesterday in Alexandra, LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said his organisation had resolved to hold

Court battles as minister tries to get rid of taxi task force

Ramatlakane ordered to reopen team's office

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

A storm is brewing between Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and the Western Cape Taxi Task Team (WCCTT).

Tension has been building between the Department of Transport and its own task force since July, when the team's new leadership was elected.

Matters came to a head last week when task team members were locked out of their offices by the department. The official explanation was that the offices were only available temporarily.

The task team then won an urgent application in the Supreme Court and Mr Ramatlakane had to reopen the team's offices in the Liberty Life building in Roeland Street.

Meanwhile, another Supreme Court case is pending in which Mr Ramatlakane wants to prove that the present leadership of the task team is illegitimate.

Although the task team was created by Mr Ramatlakane in 1994 to help bring about regulation and formalisation in the taxi industry, he says it is now threatening to cause even greater problems in the already crisis-torn arena.

Task team chairman Achmat Dyason said: "We support the minister's processes to regulate the industry completely. But he is now confusing the industry even more by trying to prove the illegitimacy of the WCCTT."

He said the minister was "autocratic" and made decisions without any consultation with the relevant bodies.

According to Mr Ramatlakane's secretary, Dubisane Ntuli, the present leadership of the task team is not recognised because of irregularities in the election process. The irregularities were highlighted in a report by the non-governmental organisation, Project Vote, which co-ordinated the election.

But Mr Dyason disputes this and says the report

states that the election went smoothly, although a number of parties walked out of the election process.

He said the elections had been democratic and that the task team had the support of the taxi industry and the majority of taxi associations.

"Why do you think the taxi industry is so calm and peaceful now? It's because of the WCCTT's efforts to help create a special committee on violence in the taxi industry," said Mr Dyason.

He said the minister wanted to throw out the task team because it did not accept his decisions without question.

"He wants to force his decisions on the taxi industry without consulting them but we know what it's like out there," said Mr Dyason.

He said the previous task team members got on well with Mr Ramatlakane because they did not resist him in any way. But because of a vote of no confidence, the old task team was outvoted and the new leadership elected.

AKU 21/11/96
(332)

'Give taxi pacts legal support'

Take action or conflict will continue - expert

MYOLISI MOKASHI
STAFF REPORTER

Taxi violence in the Western Cape is likely to continue if there is no legal support to agreements signed by warring taxi associations Cata and Codeta, according to conflict resolution expert Mark Jansen.

Mr Jansen is a field officer at the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Centre (U-MAC), a non-governmental conflict resolution organisation, which this week has been trying to solve the problems of the taxi industry by staging talks between taxi associations.

A preliminary meeting between Codeta and Cata on Monday did not achieve its objectives because, according to Mr Jansen, Codeta had brought only four of its members to the talks instead of 17 in accordance with a recent agreement - two from each of the seven "trouble spots" and three of

their executive members. Cata complied with the agreement, he said. Mr Jansen said Codeta's failure to bring the required number of their members has apparently angered Cata.

Another U-MAC field officer, who refused to be named, reported a fresh outbreak of taxi violence in Lansdowne Road, near Philippi.

"It would seem the taxi men are now waging their war from private cars and no longer from their minibuses.

This is what we saw today, both those taking the offensive as well as those on the defence were in private cars," said the field officer.

He said police had intervened and he had seen two injured victims of the Lansdowne attack at about 4.15pm.

'None of the taxi associations will keep agreements unless violators pay dearly'

AKG 23/11/96

The task team on taxi violence in the Western Cape was established by province premier Hernus Kriel three weeks ago.

Its chairman is regional Minister of Police Gerald Morkel while Transport and Public Works Minister Leonard Ramatlakane is also a member.

The team includes two representatives from Codeta and Cata, Golden Arrow Bus Services, the National Intelligence Service, the police and Metro-Rail.

Mr Jansen said the fact that both taxi associations had violated more than 30 agreements so far showed they would ignore any new ones unless non-observance of agreements was made an offence with harsh penalties. Seven areas were earmarked by the

(332) taxi violence task team as potential areas of the war between Codeta and Cata.

These included Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Bellville, Cape Town station, Claremont, Wynberg and Mowbray, according to the province's director for security and safety, Douw Steyn.

He said rank committees consisting of two representatives from each of the associations had been established to monitor and control taxi operations and to make suggestions on how best the situation could be contained.

A police spokesman later confirmed that a taxi skirmish had erupted at Lansdowne Road, as reported by the U-MAC field officer, and two taxi men had been injured.

He said the police communications unit was still waiting for a detailed report on the state of the two taxi operators.

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Taxi violence flares, agreement between warring groups ignored

MXOLISI MNGASHE
STAFF REPORTER

The efforts of the recently established

task team on taxi violence in the Western Cape will not bear fruit as long as there is no legal weight to agreements signed by the warring taxi associations, Cata and Codeta, says Urban Monitoring and Awareness Centre (U-Mac) field officer Mark Jansen.

U-Mac, a non-governmental organisation that has been involved in violence and conflicts in the taxi industry, at Crossroads and other places in the province, was asked this week by the task team to convene conflict resolution workshops for participants from the taxi associations.

A preliminary meeting between Codeta

and Cata was held on Monday but did not achieve its objectives because Codeta had brought only four of its members.

According to a recent agreement, Codeta was supposed to bring 17 members, two from each of the seven "trouble spots" and three executive members. Cata complied with the agreement, Mr Jansen said.

He said Codeta's failure to bring the required number of members angered Cata. Another U-Mac field officer, who asked not to be named, reported a fresh outbreak of taxi violence at Lansdowne Road, near Philippi.

"It would seem the taxi men are now waging their war from private cars and no longer from their minibuses. This is what we saw today.

"Those on the offensive, as well as those

on the defensive, were in private cars," said the field officer.

He said police intervened and he had seen two victims injured in the Lansdowne Road attack at about 4.15pm.

Police reports later confirmed this statement and police were awaiting a report on the health of the two victims.

The task team on taxi violence in the Western Cape was established three weeks ago by Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel.

It consists of the region's Minister of Police, Gerald Morkel, as chairman, and Transport and Public Works Minister Leonard Ramatlakane.

The team also includes two representatives each from Codeta and Cata, the Golden Arrow Bus Services, the National Intelligence Service, the police and Metro-Rail.

Mr Jansen said it was evident from the more than 30 agreements violated by taxi associations that none of the associations would honour agreements unless ignoring them was made an offence and violators were made to pay dearly.

Seven areas have been earmarked by the task team as potential areas of war between Codeta and Cata, according to the province's director for Security and Safety, Douw Steyn.

They include Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Bellville, Cape Town station, Claremont, Wynberg and Mowbray.

He said rank committees consisting of two representatives from each association have been established to monitor and control taxi operations and to make suggestions on how to contain the situation.

Star 23/11/96

Omar seeks tougher court action over taxi hit-squads

Suspected perpetrators of hit-squad activities in the taxi industry should be refused bail, Justice Minister Dullah Omar said yesterday.

"I am deeply concerned about the situation," he told reporters after meeting the Lehlabile Taxi Organisation (LTO) in Pretoria.

"I am informed that there are hit-squad elements shooting and killing innocent people, who appear in court and are often granted bail. My own policy is that people committing such serious crimes should be refused bail," Omar said.

Magistrates should use their powers over this.

Omar said taxi violence was often not properly investigated because of police corruption.

"There are elements in the police who are unfortunately not doing their duty. I will be speaking to the minister of

safety and security in that regard to indicate the concerns," he said.

The meeting was attended by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and the chief magistrates, Regional Court presidents, and attorneys-general of Pretoria and Johannesburg. A number of senior prosecutors were also present.

Omar said a team comprising two justice officials and LTO representatives had been set up to ensure continued co-operation in the fight against taxi violence.

Magistrates had undertaken to examine ways to deal more effectively with cases arising from taxi violence.

The attorneys-general and prosecutors would do the same, and create a core of trained prosecutors to handle cases related to taxi violence. — Sapa.

(332)

Bid to unite rival taxi bodies

By MIKE MASIPA

Gauteng MEC for public transport, roads and public works, Paul Mashatile, has launched a taxi registration initiative aimed at uniting rival taxi organisations, formalising and regulating the industry.

Speaking at the launch of the registration programme in Germiston yesterday, he commended the Eastern Gauteng Taxi Body, an amalgamation of taxi organisations on the East Rand, Cullinah and Bronkhorspruit, east of Pretoria, for taking the lead in taxi registration.

The goal was to get taxis registered in the rest of Gauteng and countrywide, he said.

He told a gathering of taxi drivers, traffic department officials

and local government representatives that a metro taxi office would be opened in the city soon. This would oversee the granting of permits, a controversial problem and a source of conflict within the industry. In the meantime, the department would facilitate the establishment of an interim registrar.

Mashatile said that taxi registration would make the industry a formal business, which would make it easy for the Government to assist taxi operators with finance. Information like how many taxis were on the road legally or illegally, would be welcome in formalising the industry.

Mashatile said R200 000 would be set aside for training taxi operators in business know-how and conflict resolution.

War of words as new team tries for taxi peace

332

ARLT 26/11/96

Setback before holidays

ASHLEY SMITH
STAFF REPORTER

Initiatives by the new leadership of the Western Cape Taxi Task Team to end the Peninsula taxi conflict before the festive season have had a setback with a war of words between the leadership of two rival taxi associations.

Outbursts by leaders of Cata and Codeta at a press conference in Western Cape Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane's office yesterday came as the task team was trying to restore peace before the holidays.

The meeting, aimed at presenting a united front after the recent row over the legitimacy of the task team, turned into a verbal battle with accusations and counter-accusations.

Cata head Steve Williams rejected the task team's announcement that if any shooting happened at a taxi rank it would be closed until the person responsible was arrested by other taxi operators.

Mr Williams, who arrived almost an hour after the meeting began, also said the present leadership of the task team was not legitimate as there had been irregularities in the election process.

Achmat Dyason, who was elected chairman of the team barely four weeks ago, came under heavy verbal attack from Mr

Williams, who rejected him as the head of the team.

Codeta secretary Reggie Malimba reacted by saying Mr Williams was not sincere in his attempts to end the conflict and said his own organisation was willing to do anything to stop bloodshed.

"If anyone dies tomorrow Mr Williams will be responsible," Mr Malimba said.

Mr Malimba also voiced his support for the task team's initiative in spite of the prospect of "considerable financial loss" if a Codeta driver was to be involved in a shooting at a taxi rank.

He added that Mr Williams was not in control of his drivers at grassroots level and therefore would be unable to point out perpetrators of violence to the police.

Earlier in the meeting, Mr Ramatlakane said that the task team had decided that both Cata and Codeta should take responsibility for their members.

"Both associations will instruct their members to cease fighting forthwith. Those who are identified as responsible will be handed to the police by their leaders," he said.

Mr Ramatlakane has asked the Urban Monitoring and Awareness Committee to facilitate a workshop in which the major groups in the taxi war could make suggestions on how to implement rank management committees.

Star 26/11/96
(332)

Money set aside to train taxi operators

More than R200 000 has been made available to empower Gauteng taxi operators and owners with business skills, Transport MEC Paul Mashatile said yesterday.

He announced this to journalists at a press conference in Germiston that was called in order to encourage taxi operators to register their taxis with the Transport Department and be issued with route permits.

About 2 000 taxi operators

had received training in business management, Mashatile said.

He added that the department aimed at training 5 000 people a year.

He appealed to taxi operators to register their vehicles, a move which could reduce the number of taxi-related murders in Gauteng.

He added that taxi registration would make the industry a formal business, which would make it easy for the

Government to assist the industry with finance. Mashatile said he would meet all taxi associations in two weeks to launch a provincial registration campaign.

The Eastern Gauteng Taxi Body said that it had committed itself to the registration process, and believed it would help operators to get legal permits, control the routes, and further empower them with conflict resolution skills. - Sapa.

New off-street ranks will help curb taxi violence

(332) Star 27/11/96

By FIKILE-MTSHIKELELO MOYA
City Desk

Development is expected to benefit drivers, passengers and operators

The spectre of gun battles at long-distance taxi ranks in the Johannesburg inner city could disappear if the establishment of the Park City rank, which aims to regulate the often violent taxi industry, is successful.

Safety and security were the major concerns in the creation of the rank, said the metro council's transport committee chairman, Peter Horwitz, who believes the

rank will be a positive step towards managing taxis better.

The rank, on the eastern boundary of the Johannesburg station, is set to start limited operation early next year and should be fully operational by the end of 1997.

"We believe that by taking taxis off the street, we would be

better able to monitor them," Horwitz said.

The taxi industry often makes headlines because of violent conflicts about routes. Taxi bosses are said to control routes, demanding exorbitant fees from new users. Failure to pay often leads to the death of the owner, and in many instances of innocent commuters.

Gauteng Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte said taking the taxis off the streets would increase peace prospects in an industry torn apart by rivalries. A satellite police station was likely, she said.

The National Taxi Task Team, a formation of local, provincial and national government representatives and taxi operators, was

involved in the planning of the Park City rank.

The initiative comes at a time of growing pressure on government to control taxi violence.

On completion, the rank will serve as a transit facility where buses, trains and long-distance taxis will converge. It is estimated that about 200 000 people current-

ly pass through Park Station each day, and the new facility, say developers, will ease the flow of vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Park City is the initiative of the national, provincial and local governments and the private sector. The national transport department recently allocated R25-million to build the taxi rank. The entire project is estimated to cost around R160-million.

▶ **Saving decaying CBD**
Page 19

Taxi associations hail call for peace

Mar 28/11/96
BY GORA NDHLOVU

The Lehlabile Taxi Organisation's call for taxi associations to unite against violence has been welcomed by the other organisations.

LTO spokesman Jacob Ledwaba said his organisation had already lost 22 members since August this year through the senseless violence.

Speaking at a rally in Hamanskraal north of Pretoria yesterday, he said the taxi industry should not rely on the Government alone to bring peace.

"Taxi associations should make sure that those who committed acts of violence were brought to book," he said.

He added that the LTO would

(332)
organise a meeting of community organisations, including youth groups, commuter unions and taxi associations, to confront the problem of violence.

"People using taxis have a right to travel comfortably and safely," he said.

South African Long Distance Taxi Association chairman Thulani Kubheka welcomed the call for peace.

South African Black Taxi Association spokesman Reggie Mutsi said any means of reducing the violence, which scared potential commuters, must be welcomed.

A South African Taxi Drivers' Union representative said all right-minded people should salute Ledwaba for making the call.

Gauteng govt boost for taxi operators

Bonille Ngqiyaza

MORE than R200 000 had been set aside by provincial government to help taxi operators and owners acquire business skills, Gauteng transport and public works MEC Paul Mashatile said yesterday.

Speaking in Germiston, where the eastern Gauteng taxi body announced the start of its registration process, Mashatile said about 2 000 taxi operators had received training in business management. The province's transport department intended to train 5 000 people each year.

Sapa reports that Mashatile appealed to taxi operators to register their taxis — a move which could re-

duce taxi-related murders in Gauteng since it was understood conflict developed over routes.

He said taxi registration would make the industry a formal business, making it easy for government to assist the industry with finance.

Mashatile said that he would hold a meeting with all taxi associations in two weeks' time to launch a provincial registration campaign.

The taxi body announced its commitment to the registration process, and expressed the hope that it would help operators obtain legal permits and lead to assistance with acquiring conflict resolution skills.

Meanwhile, Ecna reports from Grahamstown that a Healdtown police

sergeant has been detained in connection with taxi-related violence in the Fort Beaufort area.

Grahamstown police spokesman Capt George Green said the policeman had been taken in for questioning after a Border Alliance Taxi Association (Bata) taxi was attacked on the Fort Beaufort-Alice road last Thursday.

A woman was wounded in the attack.

No formal charges had been laid against the policeman yet, Green said.

In Port Elizabeth, peace talks between Bata and the rival Uncedo Service Taxi Association, which had been brokered by Land Claims Court president Fikile Bam, were postponed yesterday after representatives from Un-

cedo failed to show up.

The first round of peace talks to end the violence that claimed more than 20 lives in Port Elizabeth in the past two months alone started last Wednesday. About 90 people have died in the province in the conflict this year.

Uncedo spokesman Anele Bekwa said Uncedo would not attend the meeting and refused to comment further.

Archdeacon Mcebisi Xundu, one of the facilitators, said: "We are now negotiating with this association. The meeting is now likely to be held on Wednesday."

Only Uncedo taxis have been operating in Port Elizabeth since Bata suspended its operations.

Western Cape moots going its own way on elections

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — Western Cape constitutional negotiators yesterday considered introducing an electoral system in the province which differed substantially from the national system.

The Democratic Party has proposed that the provincial constitution enshrine a constituency-based electoral system with elements of proportionality, a submission which the National Party indicated it would support. However, the African National Congress

expressed opposition to such a system, as did the smaller parties, the African Christian Democratic Party and the Freedom Front.

The smaller parties would not benefit from constituency-based elections, as their support is scattered.

Technical advisers to the provincial standing committee on constitutional affairs undertook to provide a full legal opinion on whether such a constitutional provision was possible.

Final party positions were held over pending receipt of the opinion.

Stellenbosch University law professor Gerhard Erasmus said he and his colleagues had concluded after thorough discussion "that there is a reasonable prospect when all the relevant clauses of the national constitution are taken together, that a province may adopt its own constitution which has different structures and procedures and its own electoral system."

He said: "There is a reasonable prospect that this may meet with the approval of the Constitutional Court."

Erasmus referred to section 143 of

the constitution which states that the provincial constitution can differ from its national counterpart provided it conforms with stipulated values such as equality, human dignity, the rule of law, democracy and transparency.

The committee also debated including provisions on an electoral system in the provincial constitution or to incorporate it in legislation.

The advisers believed a broad outline of the system should be incorporated into the provincial constitution, with the detail in an electoral law.

Plans to merge taxi associations

By Themba Sepotokele

PLANS ARE at an advanced stage to bring the various feuding taxi associations in Soweto under one umbrella in an attempt to bring about peace to the trouble-torn industry.

Sowetan learnt yesterday that the move, which might lead to the merging of the associations, was initiated by the transportation committee of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Council following the killing of scores of people and injury to many more in the ongoing taxi violence in Soweto.

Councillor Peter Horwitz of the GJTMC transportation committee confirmed yesterday that a series of meetings were underway but declined to comment further, saying the meetings were being kept confidential.

"Most of the Soweto taxi associa-

(332) Sowetan 29/11/96
Bringing taxis under one umbrella could boost commuter confidence

tions are involved in the meetings and good progress has been made. Unfortunately the meetings are kept confidential," Horwitz said.

According to sources, progress has been made and the formation of one taxi association was imminent. They sources said the merger could see feuding organisations such as the Soweto Taxi Association, Soweto Transport Service, Diepmeadow Taxi Association and the Bara-City Taxi Association burying the hatchet.

The sources also believe that the formation of one major association would instil and restore confidence in commuters, most of whom have lost hope because many have been caught in the crossfire in the feuding.

Contacted for comment yesterday, STA spokesman Mr Absalom Dlamini said his association was in the dark about the impending meeting. He said they had not been consulted and were thus not participating.

Meanwhile, former chairman of the Gauteng Taxi Monitoring Team the Rev Jonathan Nyathi said yesterday a meeting with Gauteng MEC for transport and public roads Mr Paul Mashatile and his director Mr Lennox Magwaza to discuss his role in brokering peace in the industry was on the cards.

Nyathi revealed that a meeting was scheduled for today. He resigned from the monitoring team in October, citing racism as the reason.

'We hire taxi hit men'

ST 11/12/96 (332)

By ELIAS MALULEKE

TOP executives in the multimillion-rand taxi industry admitted this week that they hire hit squads to kill commuters and taxi bosses in their fight for supremacy.

Executive members of the South African Local and Long Distance Taxi Association claimed there were hit men working for all taxi bodies in the country.

"The existence of taxi hit squads can no longer be swept under the carpet because innocent people are dying," said Sallda's national marketing manager, Mfanufikile Kubheka.

The industry is under increasing pressure to clean up its act but it is in a quandary over what to do with the killers it helped create.

Sallda wants them to be offered amnesty. The marketing director of the Letlhabile Taxi Organisation, Jacob Ledwaba, agreed, but said it was important that every organisation first submit a list of hit-squad members.

Paul Setsetse, a spokesman for the Justice Minister, Dullah Omar, said taxi bodies had not raised the issue of amnesty in talks with the minister, but that Omar would continue to meet taxi bosses to find a way to stop the killings.

Taxi killings witness found dead, another missing

(332)

LINDSAY BARNES
CRIME DESK

A vital witness in the police investigation into Peninsula taxi hit squads has been found dead and another is missing.

Police Captain Tiekie Theart said a witness to murders and attempted murders in the wars between rival minibus taxi groups was found dead at the corner of

Spine and Zola Budd roads in Khayelitsha on November 21.

It was not known how he died and the results of an autopsy had not yet been made known, Captain Theart said.

Another valuable witness had not been seen by police for more than three weeks.

Neither of the two men had been placed on the state's witness protection programme, he said. He declined to name the dead man out of fear for the safety of the

man's family. He said other witnesses in the taxi war had been placed on the witness protection programme, but he declined to say how many.

Captain Theart said the programme was working well and had encouraged some witnesses to taxi violence to come forward.

Police are investigating the use of professional hitmen in the war between the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association

(Cata) and the Convention for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

■ Sapa reports that police say taxi driver Lord Zwelindawu of Khayelitsha was shot in the back yesterday by three men wearing Cata badges.

Mr Zwelindawu, who belongs to Codeta, was attacked in Wynberg. He is in a satisfactory condition in Victoria Hospital.

Five 9 mm cartridge shells were found at the scene. No arrests have been made.

ARC 2/12/96

Hit squad witnesses killed

(332) CT 2/12/96

Police's

inept

handling

of taxi

violence

blamed

ROGER FRIEDMAN

A POLICE investigation into taxi hit squads in the Western Cape has been dealt a major blow by the murder of at least one — possibly two — of three crucial witnesses who had been in a witness protection programme for several months.

The Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee (Umac), a non-governmental organisation that monitors taxi violence, condemned the police yesterday for "bungling a vital investigation".

The head of the police taxi unit, Captain Tiekke Thiat, conceded that the loss of the witness or witnesses was a "serious blow" to the investigation of hit squads.

He said that two of the three witnesses had taken it upon themselves to leave the witness protection programme. The first had left on October 31 and the second on November 5.

It is understood that the witnesses had agreed to testify about hit squad ring leaders and activities within their organisations. The police asked the Cape Times not to say if the potential witnesses were affiliated to Cata or Codeta.

"Since they left we have been searching for them at least three times a week," said Thiat.

Last Monday, Thiat's unit learnt that one of the witnesses — known by the alias "Dwerge" — had been killed. The unit has received unconfirmed reports that the second witness, "Jima", has also been shot. The taxi war — a long-simmering dis-

pute between rival taxi organisations Cata and Codeta — has claimed about 70 lives this year.

Umac field officer and taxi specialist Mr Mark Jansen called for the matter to be investigated independently. He said it appeared that the loss of at least one of the witnesses was "another example of the police's fundamental incompetence".

He suggested that the role of the taxi unit's investigative and intelligence arms in the matter be probed.

According to a variety of sources, including police, the same men said to have been involved in fomenting taxi violence in the early 1990s — and who were implicated by the Goldstone Commission — have been involved in this year's fray.

Jansen said the three self-confessed hit squad operatives' agreeing to testify against

fellow operatives and their masters had given the police a golden opportunity to make an impact on the violence — yet they had allowed it to slip through their hands.

● Speaking in Clanwilliam on Saturday, Minister of Justice Mr Dullah Omar said a revamped witness protection programme would be launched next year.

● The easy granting of bail to people linked to taxi violence should be reviewed and opposed at all costs, the South African Local and Long Distance Taxi Association has said in Johannesburg, Sapa reports.

Spokesman Mr Sonke Siweya said the association was strongly opposed to the violence.

There was an urgent need for the law to be changed to deal with hit squad operatives used by some taxi associations, he said.

THE SA

farmers settle in Niassa

The first South African farmers to settle in Mozambique's remote Niassa province arrived last week, organisers said yesterday.

The initial 14 farmers will settle on a government farm near the provincial capital Lchinga to produce seed for SA farmers due to move to Mozambique in May.

The organisers, the SA Chamber for Agricultural Development in Africa (Sacada), said the farmers had been promised the support of Mozambican authorities and the local inhabitants.

"Sacada plans to settle a few hundred farmers during the following three years. Through this, the socio-economic and economic potential of Mozambique can be uplifted," it said in a statement.

The farmers' move to Mozambique follows an agreement signed in May by Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano and President Nelson Mandela.

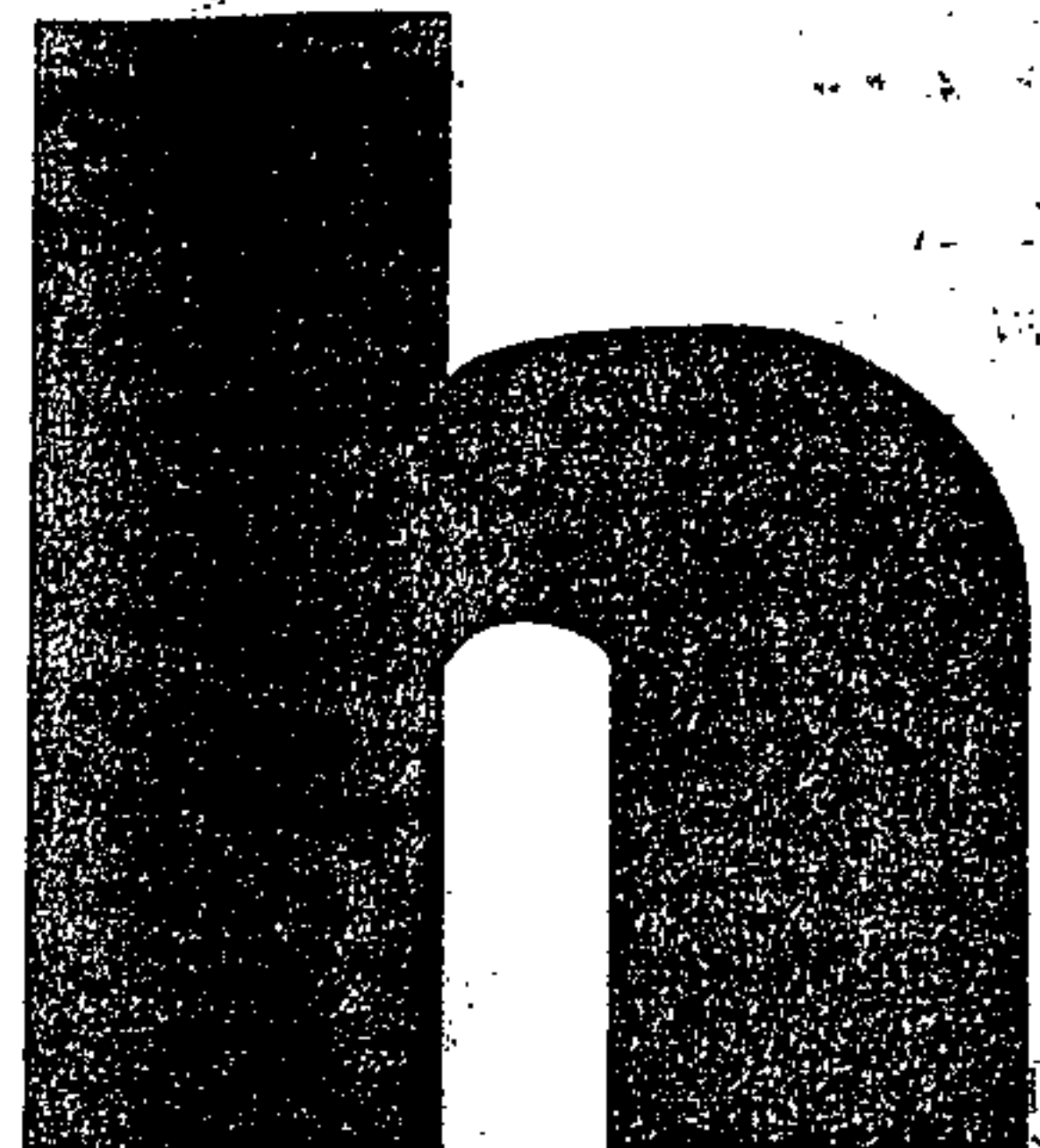
Under the agreement, land farmed by the South Africans will remain the property of the Mozambican government while control of it will be vested in a joint company, Mosagrius.

The 10-year renewable agreement gives the farmers the possibility of settling in areas with few land disputes - mainly in northern Mozambique.

Sacada said the farmers would initially settle on the government farm because they would not be able to clear permanent land of trees before the start of the rainy season.

"Following this, economic farming units will be measured out for permanent settling of these farmers," it said.

Many SA farmers, facing reduced government subsidies and higher interest rates, have expressed interest in the Mozambique resettlement scheme and similar ones in Angola, Zaire and Zambia. - Reuters.



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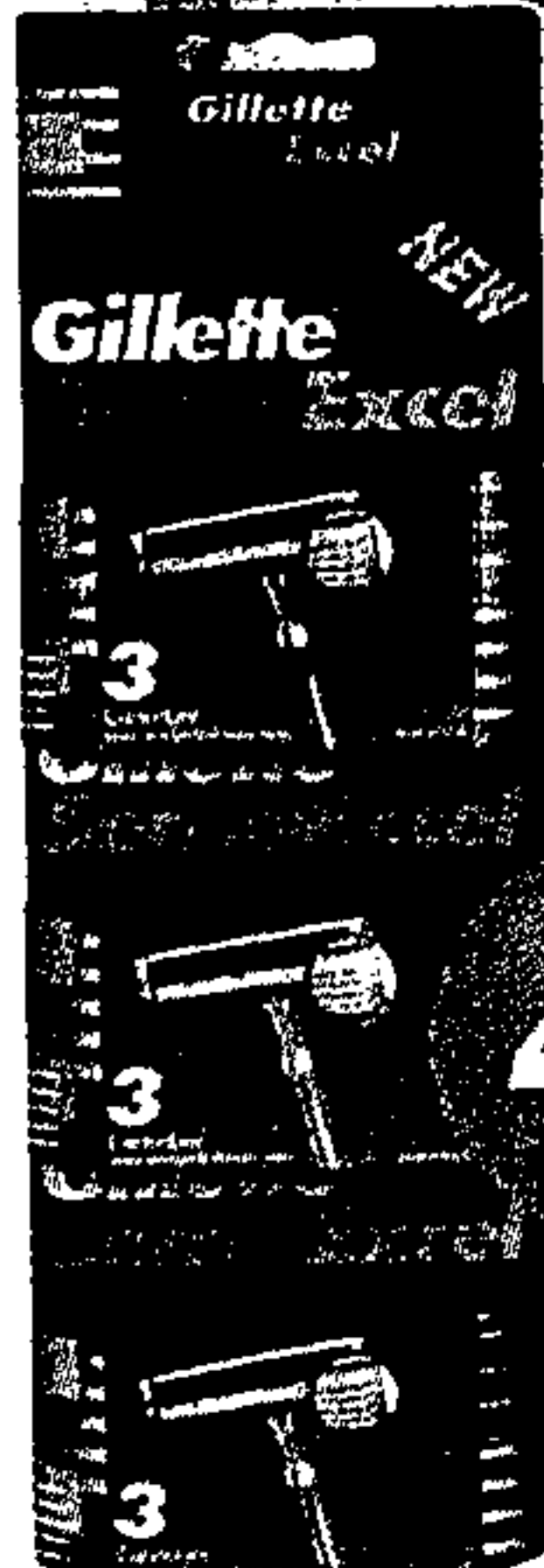
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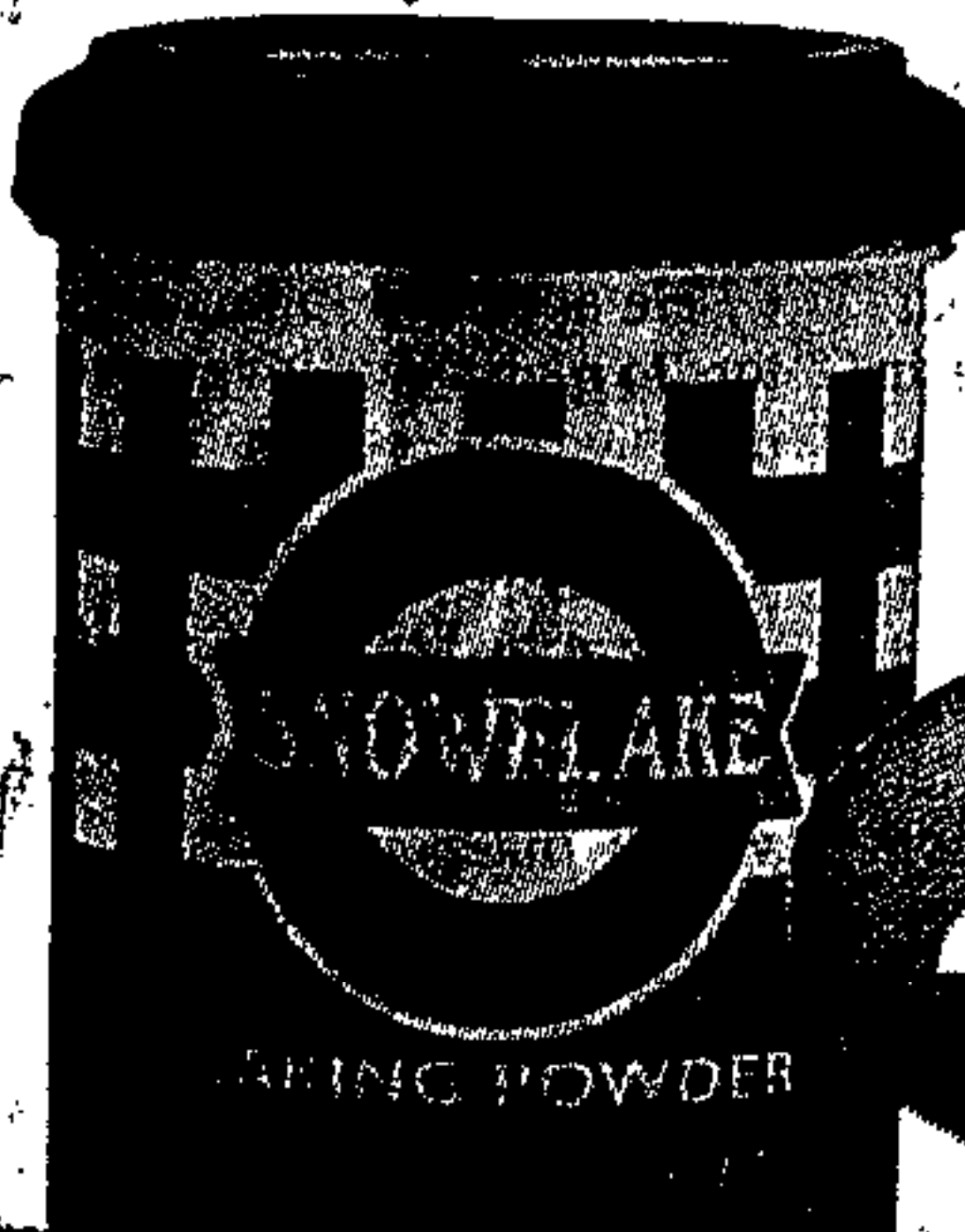
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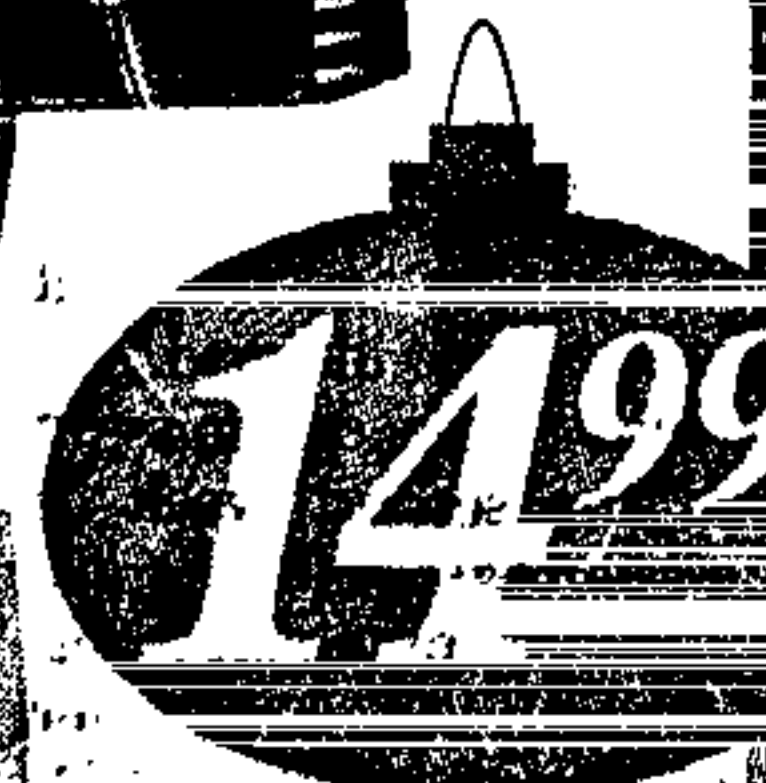
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Tough laws tabled to curb taxi violence

CT 3/12/96

CHRIS BATEMAN

LAWS aimed at regulating the strife-torn Western Cape taxi industry and making it safer were aired for the first time yesterday when the province's Road Transportation Amendment Bill was tabled in the provincial legislature.

The bill, approved for tabling as an "urgent measure" by Premier Hernus Kriel, assigns each taxi to a specific route with a specific rank and forces operators to register before they can legally pick up a single fare.

Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane said one of the main causes of the violence — which has claimed about 70 lives this year and has forced police to introduce witness protection programmes to charge taxi warlords — was a loose radius permit system.

This resulted in operators breaking agreements to keep to their routes and bitter feuds over who had rights to operate where. Among the compulsory measures contained in the bill are:

- The registration of all minibus taxi associations and their operators.
- The replacement of existing route and area-based permits.
- The prominent display of permits by identifying marks on the taxi.

Taxi operators will have to register before being re-issued with a permit to operate legally.

THURSDAY

DECEMBER 5, 1996

NEW LAW NOT CONSTITUTIONAL — DP

Stick-on solution to control of taxi routes

TAXIS ARE TO CARRY route stickers over their Codeta, Cata logos in a new bid by the provincial legislature to bring an end to taxi violence. **CHRIS BATEMAN** reports

TOMORROW sees the first chapter in a new bid to control *who* gets to take taxi fares *where* at the Peninsula's six most bloody and chaotic taxi ranks.

In a bid to stem years of terror and death for both commuters and drivers, the Western Cape legislature passed an emergency amendment to the local Road Transportation Act yesterday.

There was extended debate on whether the amendment was constitutional with the Democratic Party and Freedom Front voting against it and the NP and ANC voting for it.

Brightly coloured stickers displaying the start and end point of taxi routes are to be stuck over the logos of Cata and Codeta taxis at the strife-torn ranks of Bellville, Nyanga East, Khayelitsha, Wynberg, Claremont and Mowbray.

By the time the weekend begins the provincial authorities

intend to have "marked" every taxi at the six ranks with their route identification stickers.

Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane said the stickers were a temporary measure and would be followed by permanent markings on the sides of taxis (and possibly roofs for helicopter observation) as route permits were re-issued.

So far 1 500 of the Western Cape's estimated 7 000 taxis had voluntarily re-registered and the aim was to register the remainder by the end of January.

Thereafter yesterday's amended legislation will give police wide ranging powers to act against drivers operating illegally.

Traffic police have been instructed to warn taxis not carrying temporary stickers to register by the end of January.

Chief director of the Department of Transport and Public Works, Mr Mike Spence, said that

from January 24 next year and every Friday after that, 100 route permit applications would be heard by the local Road Transportation Board until all 7 000 taxis were "done".

"We'll begin with the problem areas because at present the cops can't tell whether a guy's allowed to operate a route or not — and that's a central problem."

Ramatlakane said the major thrust behind the hasty legislation was Cape Town's Olympic Bid and the inherent transport planning, plus the impending tourist season.

The bill gives Ramatlakane what the Democratic Party's Mr Hennie Bester described as "the power of economic life and death over taxi operators, making the registrar prosecutor, judge, jury and jailer".

Bester was howled down by the NP and ANC when he described the amendment as illegitimate or; "legal bungee jumping with an untested rope".

He warned of costly litigation and greater uncertainty, and less control over the taxi industry.

CT 5/12/96

332

Taxi industry players pledge co-operation to end violence

Bonile Ngqiyaza

TAXI industry players yesterday re-committed themselves to rooting out internecine violence and its perpetrators from their midst and pledged to work to establish peaceful competition with commuters' interests as a focus.

The meeting in Pretoria — called by President Nelson Mandela after a fact-finding mission into taxi ranks in Johannesburg last week — was attended by hundreds of representatives from Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern Province and North West.

While he noted high levels of corruption in the police services and the problems government was meeting in its efforts to regulate the industry, Mandela made it clear he intended to ensure the industry was rehabilitated.

Taxi representatives present criticised the destructive role of the previous government in tolerating high lev-

els of violence and said its adoption of a deregulation policy had amounted to abdication of all responsibility.

The meeting pledged to offer aid and full co-operation to provincial transport and safety and security MECs and the justice ministry in their efforts to remove violence by a "minority with a vested interest in conflict and chaos".

It resolved to extend full co-operation to the government/taxi industry partnership, expressed in the form of the National Taxi Task Team and its joint structures in the provinces.

Representatives also expressed an intention to work towards rebuilding the industry into a viable economic entity which would again become the "proud and shining star" of black economic empowerment.

The meeting came soon after recent media reports indicating the apartheid government had planned violence on trains and the transport industry.

80 5/12/96

(372)

Taxi industry players pledge co-operation to end violence

30 5/12/96

(232)

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While he noted high levels of corruption in the police services and the problems government was meeting in its efforts to regulate the industry, Mandela made it clear he intended to ensure the industry was rehabilitated.

Taxi representatives present criticised the destructive role of the previous government in tolerating high lev-

els of violence and said its adoption of a deregulation policy had amounted to abdication of all responsibility.

The meeting pledged to offer aid and full co-operation to provincial transport and safety and security MECs and the justice ministry in their efforts to remove violence by a "minority with a vested interest in conflict and chaos".

It resolved to extend full co-operation to the government/taxi industry partnership, expressed in the form of the National Taxi Task Team and its joint structures in the provinces.

Representatives also expressed an intention to work towards rebuilding the industry into a viable economic entity which would again become the "proud and shining star" of black economic empowerment.

The meeting came soon after recent media reports indicating the apartheid government had planned violence on trains and the transport industry.

Surviving the horror of taxi war

MAG 6-12/12/96

(332)



This week's guest writer **Mandla Langa** looks at one of the human tragedies behind taxi violence

AT 45, Charles Z Dlamini can cram myriad lifetimes into his own uncertain one. His bloodshot eyes have that long-distant, unsurprised look reminiscent of habitual survivors. Descended from a branch of the royal Swazi house and raised in Mpumalanga, he heeded his own father's advice that he leave Nelspruit and seek his fortune as a commoner in Johannesburg and Pretoria, for the simple reason that active membership of that exalted house was a poisoned chalice.

His two uncles who remained in Nelspruit but still had pretensions to chieftaincy came to ignominious ends. A band of marauders descended on his uncles' homestead in KaNyamazane and murdered almost all the occupants, including Dlamini's nephews and the night-watchmen.

"Even today," he says, "whenever I drive up to Nelspruit, I never break bread with my relatives." A cup of coffee, he reasons, could well be his last, so assured is his sense of self-preservation.

This heightened instinct has stood him in good stead in the taxi wars, where he has developed this homegrown early-warning system. Dlamini has been driving taxis for as long as he can remember, starting a route from Pretoria Station to Pietersburg with his close childhood friend, Samson Mashigo. The two men poached passengers from the station, made deals with ticket examiners whereby they returned unused tickets — which were later resold — and divided the spoils. It was a good arrangement.

Trouble started in the mid-Eighties when the "smart guys came in and started this talk about the association".

The Big Six taxi association was formed in response to pressure on taxi drivers to form a unitary body to help regulate the industry. Soon Dlamini found himself frittering away valuable driving time "sitting in kombis devising some strategy".

The people who were gung-ho about setting up the association were newcomers in the taxi business, but they were the most vocal. Dlamini and Mashigo had allowed them space in the rank, because they believed that the industry could grow and there were hundreds of customers who appreciated the service.

Most of the newcomers came up with restrictive measures, limiting the numbers of taxis which should be allowed in. "Then they came, sometimes with six kombis," Dlamini observes without a hint of irony, "and tried to edge us out, we who had opened our arms to them in the first instance."

Although he doesn't spell it out clearly, I detect his discomfort with and mistrust of these educated Africans. Instead of pulling people out of the mire on to steady ground, their selfishness plunged a whole industry into chaos.

The newcomers clawed their way into leadership positions where they could dictate policy and exact levies. "The joining fee," Dlamini asks, "what does it do for the driver? Where does it go? When drivers die,



Caught in the crossfire: A victim of the taxi violence surrounded by police (above). Commuters often risk their lives (left below) in taxis



PHOTOGRAPH: SIDDIQUE DAVIDS

we have to take up a collection for them — funeral expenses are not covered by the association." The money, he reasons, is used to buy guns and hire killers.

The muscle-bound Lethlabile Taxi Association (LTA), formed in Alexandra Township, started making inroads into the Big Six turf. And then the pirates came in. Where the Big Six drivers had enjoyed a reciprocal relationship with local Pietersburg drivers who were allowed to transport fares from Pietersburg to Pretoria and back, a law was laid down that Pietersburg taxis should merely unload and return to base empty.

"I knew, then, that trouble was

brewing," Dlamini says. "I mean, we could transport people to Pietersburg and return with a load, but the Pietersburg drivers couldn't do the same in our domain. Is that fair?"

This question answered itself on the Easter weekend of 1987 when the first taxi was peppered with AK-47 bullets: the driver and two passengers were killed at the Warmbaths tollgate. Dlamini told Mashigo that it was high time they left the taxis. But Mashigo, who thought he could still remain a Big Six while maintaining some tenuous friendship with the LTA, dismissed Dlamini's concern as paranoia. While Dlamini withdrew, Mashigo continued with his route.

By 1989, violence had increased, with some of the taxi owners hiring hit-men from the hostels. There were killings and reprisals and counter-reprisals. Drivers were fetched from their homes and executed. Mashigo was visited at his Mamelodi home by men who riddled his body with 16 bullets, the balancing act between the Big Six and LTA having stopped as surely as his heart had ceased to pump blood.

On another occasion, Dlamini was sitting conversing with a driver friend at the back of a taxi in Pretoria. Suddenly, the friend's eyes popped wide open and he dashed out of the vehicle. "He ran," Dlamini remembers, "and then stopped as if he had forgotten to engage his kombi into neutral and then he dropped, like a stone."

A malignant outgrowth of the taxi killings is the proliferation of hit-men who double up as security. In 1994, a man named Nokala, Dlamini's one-time colleague in a meter taxi company, rode shotgun in taxis going to Beit Bridge. He was always in a three-litre vehicle, a Cressida or Skyline. Such vehicles are known as "squad cars". Nokala was shot dead in Hillbrow near the BP filling station on Kotze Street.

Anyone venturing into Pietersburg in a three-litre vehicle is viewed with suspicion and hostility, and there is no guaranteeing that the vehicle won't be hijacked and the driver killed, mainly because people associate these vehicles with hit-squad activity.

Dlamini puts the blame of the violence squarely on the shoulders of taxi associations. "Transport Minister Mac Maharaj must ban all associations, field in more transportation inspectors and maintain a vigorous check on pirates."

As he speaks, I am reminded of the rats that are the first to escape

before a vessel sinks. What, I ask, is the future of the meter taxi industry? Is there trouble there, too?

"There'll be problems with meter taxis also." In fact, Dlamini says, it's better to open a spaza shop or get a hawker's licence. "Nigerians, Malawians and Mozambicans are now running taxis. You try and park in front of the Maristons, Statesman or Whitbeck Apartments and a Nigerian driver who can't even speak Zulu, says to you 'My friend, whatchoo doin', my friend? We pick up here.'"

Three Sundays ago, Dlamini's younger brother, Moses, was greeted by a man three times. Moses asked the man why so many greetings and the man pulled out a gun. Moses, because he knew the gunman, warned him about playing with guns, whereupon, in full view of other drivers, the man shot Moses dead at point-blank range.

The weight of the statement, the memory of what he has endured, cause him to shrug his shoulders. Somewhere, hidden in the depths of his loss, is an admission of failure, as if he blames himself for not pulling rank on his brother. "I'd always told him to get out of the taxi situation," Dlamini says, a series of emotions wrestling across his face, "but he wouldn't listen. Now he's dead."

Whatever happens, whether or not he opts for the informal sector, one thing is clear: Dlamini will neither return to Nelspruit nor wait for the incipient rumblings in the meter taxi industry to become an explosion. If he wasn't destined to rule, he was at least fated to survive.

Names in this article have been changed to protect those involved from the danger of retaliation. Mandla Langa's collection of short stories, *The Naked Song*, is published by David Philip.

NEWS

PE police out in force as taximan dies in clashes

Short-lived truce comes to an end

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Port Elizabeth - The worst taxi violence yet has erupted here with one person killed, four people shot, six taxis set on fire and petrol bombs thrown in several parts of the city.

Police said a new pattern seemed to be emerging with violence "popping up everywhere". Taxis have stopped operating.

The violence within a two-hour period yesterday which had police rushing to flashpoints comes after a shortlived truce.

Beverley Garson said 50 percent of the police service was yesterday deployed on taxi routes and at ranks to monitor the situation and prevent the increase of violence.

Visible policing head Dawid Flemmert said all available policemen were being used.

Last week, the Supreme Court granted an interim interdict preventing the Uncedo Service Taxi Association from interfering with Border Alliance Taxi Association (Bata). Bata taxis started operating again on Friday.

The shooting of a taxi driver in Cot-

trell Street, Korsten, has brought the death toll since September to 30.

A reporter on the scene at Njoli Square yesterday said that a man had been shot in the mouth and taken to hospital.

Six Bata taxis were burnt and two others damaged at the Bata rank at Njoli Square.

The Uncedo Service Taxi Association has blamed the shootings on a red Toyota Cressida which the association claims belongs to Bata.

Public Order Policing Service (Pops) unit spokesman Andre Betgee confirmed the shootings saying a man died in Cot-trell Street.

He said in the incident at Njoli Square shots were fired into the taxi rank from the side of the Kentucky Fried Chicken store in Njoli Road.

Inspector Betgee said Pops members were on the scene investigating the shootings. He said two people were injured in Motherwell and one person on the M17.

He said there was also some shooting at the Strand Street taxi rank where a Bata driver was shot six times in the chest and taken to hospital in a critical condition.

Pops spokesman Johan Snyman said

one person was wounded in a taxi-related shooting at the Strand Street taxi rank.

A petrol bomb was also thrown at a taxi near Walmer Park.

Uncedo chairman Anele Adonis said two of their drivers were shot at Njoli Square taxi rank yesterday.

Bata public relations officer Zolile Bambeni said he had heard some of their members in a red Toyota Cressida were shot at Njoli Square.

He said it appeared Uncedo was violating the court order because the association continued using Bata ranks.

Conflict between the two taxi associations started on September 12, and was followed by a suspension of taxis operating from the townships to the city and northern areas.

People had to rely on buses and bakkies. On November 6, Uncedo resumed operations while Bata still suspended its own.

After obtaining an order from the court, Bata invaded Njoli Square taxi rank demanding the other association should move away from it.

But when police pointed out the order did not contain a takeover instructions, Bata withdrew.

332
ARG 6/12/96

Taximen threaten siege at IOC team's hotel

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

(332)

ARC 6/12/96

Drivers of a Cape Town sedan taxi company are threatening to disrupt the visit of the International Olympic Committee's evaluation team because of a row with the Mount Nelson, which has dumped them for a rival company.

Yesterday, 15 drivers of Marine Taxis used their cars to block both entrances to the luxury hotel, where the IOC visitors were to check in today.

They are upset about what they term

"unfair" treatment by the hotel management, which has terminated their services and employed a rival company to transport guests to and from the hotel.

Traffic authorities and the police flying squad were called and the drivers were dispersed within minutes.

But the drivers said they were not satisfied with the response of the Mount Nelson management and threatened to blockade the hotel again at the weekend.

"We want the people staying at the Mount Nelson to know that the hotel supports pirate taxis ... those taxis are not

properly licensed or insured nor do they have the required permits," claimed an anonymous spokesman for the drivers.

Mount Nelson manager Luis Pinheiro called the accusations "absolute hogwash".

He said it was not a dispute between the hotel and the taxi company but a problem between taxi firms. The hotel had decided to switch to the rival company because it offered a better service and the hotel had to consider the best interests of its guests.

George Todd, co-owner of Marine Taxis, said the drivers were acting in their personal capacity.

Tension high following E Cape taxi-rank killing

Port Elizabeth – The situation at the Motherwell taxi rank here was “quiet, but tense” after a man was shot dead.

Police said the shooting was apparently related to a feud between the Uncedo (a Xhosa word meaning help) taxi association and the Border Alliance Taxi Association.

The dead man's name was not available and it was not clear if he had been a member of one of the associations.

The body was found at about 2:30am yesterday at a bus stop in front of a doctor's surgery by policemen patrolling the area.

Shots were fired throughout the night as association members gathered around a rank in Njoli square and the Bata taxi rank.

Taxi violence in the area has claimed 31 lives in three months. – Sapa

332
ARG 7/10/96

Askaris, cops linked to taxi killers

By ELIAS MALULEKE

THE police unit investigating taxi violence is probing allegations that police and former Askaris are involved in taxi hit-squad operations.

Some of the suspected Askaris, former ANC cadres who worked for the police and were deployed by the security police at the Vlakplaas base, are thought to be staying in Letlhabile township near Brits.

Police believe the Askaris may also have been involved in the murder of taxi bosses in the Northern Province.

Inspector Koos Matthysen, the head of

the investigation team, said yesterday evidence was emerging that some policemen were deeply involved in the taxi industry.

He said a special team of detectives was working around the clock in a bid to bring the culprits to book.

The Sunday Times has the names of two Askaris who have been implicated in killings.

The policemen, who are said to own taxis themselves, are also believed to have been involved in the murder of fellow policemen in Soshanguve north of Pretoria two months ago.

The two policemen were ambushed and shot dead in September, two days before they were due to appear for the state to give evidence on hit squads.

The Letlhabile Taxi Organisation blamed policemen for the killings.

Jacob Ledwaba, marketing director of LTO, has since handed to police documents and names of the policemen he claims are behind the killings.

He also gave police the name of a witness but claimed that shortly afterwards the witness was threatened.

"This indicates that the killers have a strong hold on the police and can easily

trace a witness," he said.

Matthysen confirmed that his probe was being hampered by the fact that witnesses feared being killed if they came forward. But he said the witness protection programme was available for them.

President Nelson Mandela, who met taxi bosses on Wednesday, warned that corrupt policemen would be rooted out of the force.

He said many policemen were suspected of being corrupt. He also indicated that a major breakthrough had been made in identifying them.

MOVE TO CURB VIOLENCE

Taxis must display route stickers from Tuesday

ET 13/12/96
(332)

DECISIONS taken by the task team on taxi violence are not filtering down to the drivers or are being misinterpreted by them, a meeting attended by taxi operators was told yesterday. **ERIC NTABAZALLA** reports.

FROM Tuesday all Western Cape taxis will bear stickers indicating their routes and destinations.

This was announced yesterday at a meeting between Western Cape Transport MEC Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, Safety and Security MEC Mr Gerald Morkel and the two rival taxi associations: the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Congress for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta).

The meeting, organised by the Western Cape task team on taxi violence, was addressed by the two MECs on resolutions taken by the task team and amendments to the Road Traffic Ordinance.

Last week the Western Cape legislature passed a temporary amendment to the ordinance to provide for taxis to bear stickers denoting their operating routes and destinations.

The amendment is a bid to curb the taxi violence that has claimed more than 70 lives this year and has forced the government to introduce a witness protection programme that it hopes will enable it to charge taxi waitlords successfully.

Task team spokesman Mr Douw Steyn said it was necessary to talk directly to members of Codeta and Cata.

"Apparently resolutions taken by the task team do not filter down to the drivers or are being misinterpreted by the drivers," Steyn said.

Morkel said among the resolutions taken was that taxi associations had to supply Ramatlakane with the names of their members and their routes.

Members of the different associations would have to form rank managements to solve their problems.

It was also resolved that whenever there was violence at any rank the provincial police commissioner would step in until

those responsible were brought to book.

"The police and the army are ready. Come forward and point out the culprits. You know what is going on at grassroots. Please work with your leaders to end the violence," Morkel urged the associations.

Ramatlakane told the meeting the ordinance had been amended to fit the needs of the province.

From Tuesday all taxis would carry the stickers, which are temporary permits. Those not complying with the law, would be prosecuted.

Ramatlakane said operators would later be able to exchange their stickers for new permits. Each operator would have to belong to an association and be registered with the Provincial Taxi Registrar before being supplied with a new permit.

He appealed to the public to assist. "Make sure the taxi you are in is registered," he said.

The meeting was attended mainly by Cata members. Codeta was represented only by its lawyer, Mr Frans Coetzee.

Morkel and Ramatlakane voiced their disappointment with Codeta's failure to attend.

Coetzee said most of the executive members of Codeta were in the Transkei. He did not elaborate.

The task team is a government body formed in November to fight the taxi violence in the province and comprises members of the police, the army, the two taxi associations, Golden Arrow Bus Service, the secretariat for safety and security and the two MECs.

Steyn said that since the formation of the task team taxi violence had dropped because the task team had representatives from both taxi associations.

"I hope with this task team we will be able to get rid of this violence in our

province," Steyn said.

Last week leaders of the two associations voiced their concern at the lack of consultation by the government when taking decisions involving the taxi industry.

Cata spokesman, Mr Steven Williams, said his association did not have a problem with the idea but there were still points to be discussed concerning the stickers.

"We had a meeting to discuss some of the points that need to be cleared up. We are worried that if our cars have these stickers our taxis will end up looking like Ndizani (the SAA Boeing painted in Olympic colours)."

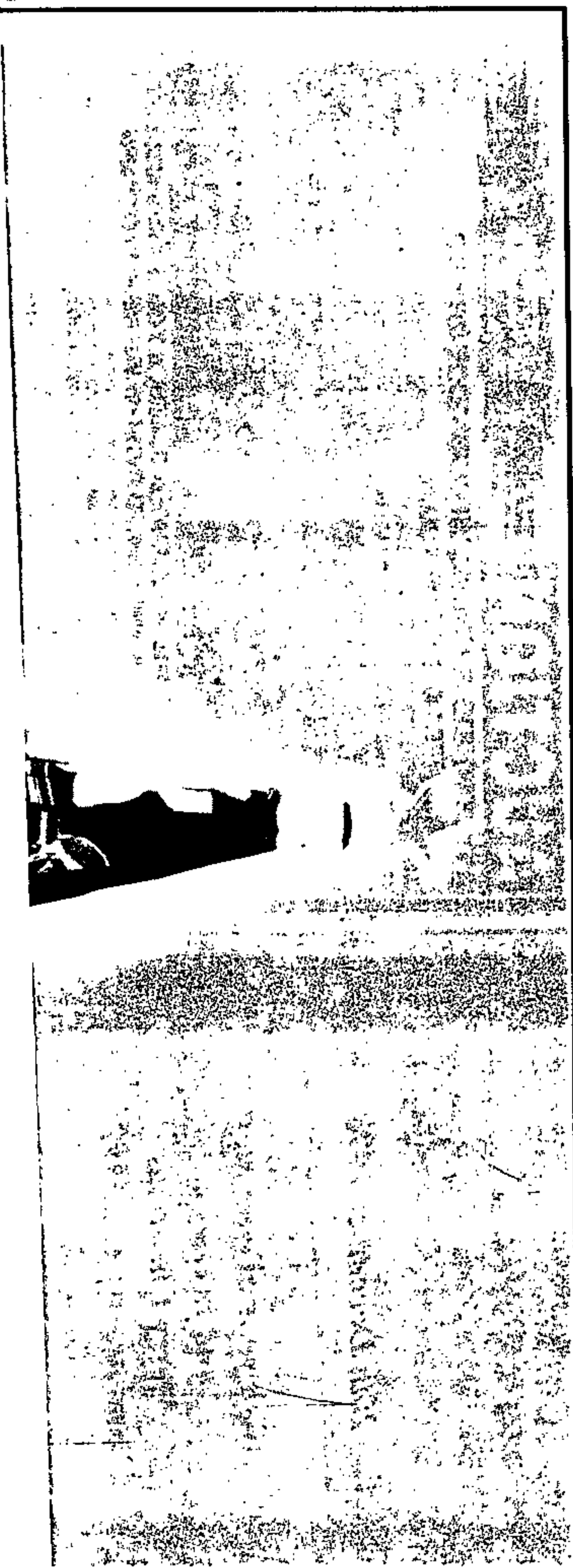
"I think it would be better if the taxis had numbers on the front of each car to identify it and also to indicate which of them have caused problems."

Codeta spokesman Mr Reggie Malimba also welcomed the idea of a code to identify taxis and their routes.



PROVINCIAL INITIATIVE: Western Cape Transport and Safety MECs, Mr Gerald Morkel (left) and Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, addressed members of the two rival taxi associations, Cata and Codeta, at a meeting yesterday in a bid to end taxi violence.

PICTURE: THEBENKOS DWA



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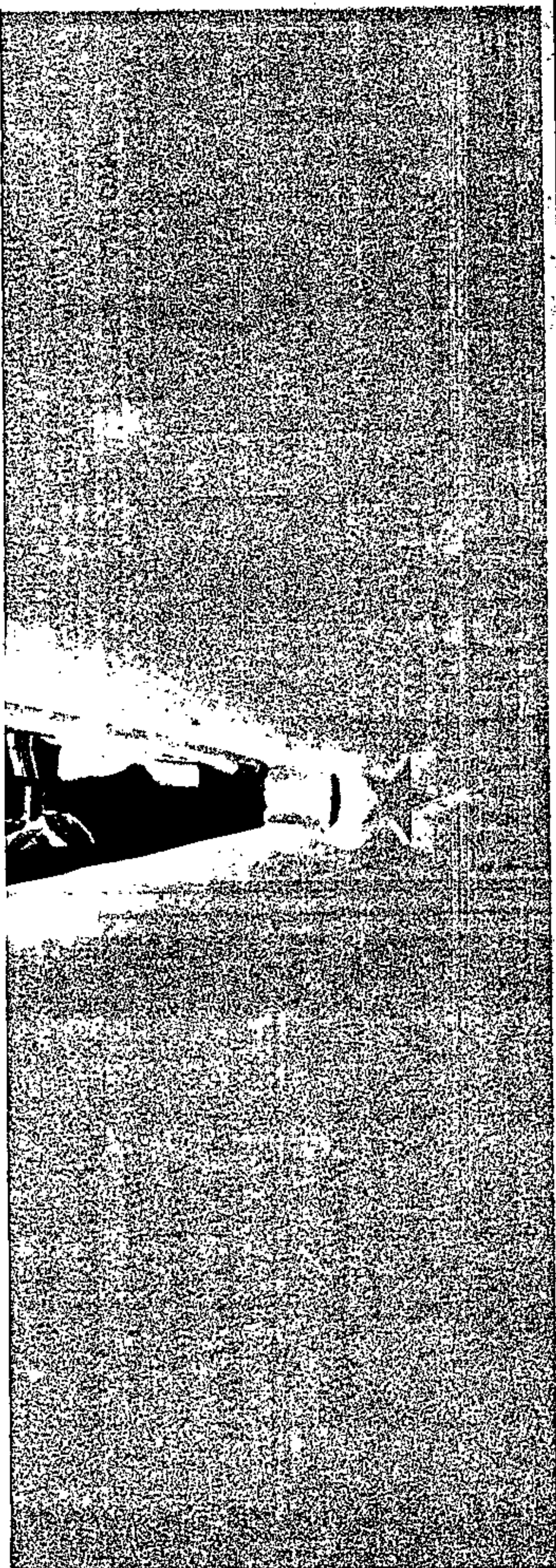
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Codeta spokesman Mr Reggie Malimba also welcomed the idea of a code to identify taxis and their routes.



PROVINCIAL INITIATIVE: Western Cape Transport and Safety MECs, Mr Gerald Morkel (left) and Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, addressed members of the two rival taxi associations, Cata and Codeta, at a meeting yesterday in a bid to end taxi violence. **PHOTOS: THEKURIER/DWA/ISA**



W Cape crackdown on taxis begins

Route stickers first stage in drive to clean up industry

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDDE
POLITICAL STAFF

Brightly coloured identification stickers displaying the starting point and destinations of routes were stuck on a line of taxis as the first step in the Western Cape provincial government's ambitious campaign to clean up the volatile industry.

Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane, at a ceremony at Cape Town station's upper deck taxi rank, symbolically pasted identification stickers on the first taxis.

The provincial administration intends to mark every taxi at the city's ranks with route identification stickers. The stickers, which are temporary, will be followed by permanent markings on the sides of taxis, and possibly their roofs for helicopter observation, until route permits are reissued.

Mr Ramatlakane said the stickers were the start of a process to reorganise and stabilise the industry.

"We are here today to start the implementation of the first phase of regulating and controlling the minibus tax industry. This phase will focus on marking taxis belonging to the Cape

Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata) and the Cape Organisation for a Democratic Taxi Association (Codeta)," he said.

Other strife-torn taxi ranks in Bellville, Nyanga East, Khayelitsha, Wynberg, Mitchell's Plain, Claremont and Mowbray will follow as phase two of the clean-up campaign.

Mr Ramatlakane said taxi operators would later be able to exchange stickers for permits.

The stickers would be enforceable from this month until February. From yesterday, all taxis must carry the stickers. Those not complying with the law would be prosecuted.

After February each operator would have to belong to an association and be registered with the Provincial Taxi Registrar before being supplied with a new permit. So far 1 500 of the province's estimated 7 000 taxis had voluntarily registered and the aim was to register the remainder by the end of January.

Last week, the Western Cape legislature passed an emergency amendment to the Road Traffic Ordinance requiring taxis to have stickers indicating their routes and destinations.

The amendment is an attempt to curb the taxi violence that has claimed more than 70 lives this year.



Way to go: MEC for transport Leonard Ramatlakane pastes a route identification sticker on a taxi

HANNES THART



ROY WIGLEY

True colours: Members of the Wynberg Main Road Taxi Association show off their new livery

Drivers go for green to gear up for Games bid

SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

Minibus taxis operating on the route between Cape Town and Wynberg are being painted green to colour-co-ordinate them with Cape Town's 2004 Olympic bid.

The Wynberg Main Road Taxi Association has introduced commuters to the first five taxis in its new livery – similar to the green in the multi-coloured logo of Cape Town's 2004 Olympic bid.

The step has been hailed by community leaders as one of the most innovative to dampen friction in the taxi industry, which has often led to clashes and township taxi wars.

The guest speaker in the Southfield Civic Centre at the introduction of the new colour, Gadijah Heuwel, chairwoman of Wynberg's Community Police Forum, praised the step.

She described it as a clear indication of economic empowerment and development in efforts by operators to bring peace and prosperity to the city's taxi industry. She said the green could also be interpreted as a new development in the taxi industry.

Another speaker, Phila Sheptone Manhungu, general secretary of the Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association (Cata), said the green look was a step in the right direction for the taxi industry, which began as a backyard business and mushroomed into a vibrant enterprise.

He said: "Commuters will naturally identify the colour with the route of the Wynberg Main Road Taxi Association."

"I hope other taxis will eventually also take steps to introduce their own colours on other routes."

"It is high time we pulled our act together and put the taxi industry's past history behind us."

The councillor for Wynberg in the South Peninsula council, John Math-ee, hailed the colour concept as a step in the right direction for the taxi industry.

WMTA chairman Ebrahim Hassan-Parker said pegging drivers to parameters of specific routes was designed to bring about equity in the taxi industry.

The association had propagated the concept of equity within the taxi industry.

City tackles traffic mess

ARG 18/12/96

(332)

ANDREA WEISS
METRO CORRESPONDENT

Major new developments, including cameras to trap motorists using the N2 lane set aside for buses and minibus taxis illegally, and extending the lane as far as Main Road in Mowbray, are in the pipeline to boost Cape Town's public transport initiative.

In another development, brightly coloured route identification stickers, which will later become permanent markings, have been affixed to taxis to begin the process of permanently reorganising and

stabilising the taxi industry.

Cape Town's transport facelift is vital to the city's bid to host the Olympics in 2004, and minibus taxi operators servicing the route from the city to Wynberg are showing their support for the bid by painting their vehicles green.

The step has been hailed by community leaders as one of the most innovative to dampen friction in the taxi industry.

Yesterday, provincial Transport Minister Leonard Ramatlakane announced that planning for the extension of the N2

To page 2

New moves to police N2 traffic

from page 1

(332)

ARG 18/12/96

lanes reserved for taxis to a more logical termination point in Main Road, Mowbray, was scheduled to begin next year.

Mr Ramatlakane said negotiations were in progress with the office of the Attorney-General to explore more effective ways of policing the year-old lanes, including the use of cameras.

Answering criticism about why the median lane, rather than the shoulder or outside lane, had been used for the pilot project, Mr Ramatlakane said this was because general traffic needed to enter and exit the N2 freeway at

interchanges.

If the bus lane were to be located on the shoulder, it would need to be interrupted at all on and off-ramps to allow general traffic to enter and leave the freeway. When the lane was eventually extended to Main Road, this would result in 10 interruptions in the 6,8km stretch from Vanguard Drive.

Mr Ramatlakane said the existing 5,7km stretch had been operating in the morning peak period for a year and had been evaluated twice during that period. Findings were that general traffic volumes had increased by about 10 percent and taxi volumes by up to 65 percent.

Police close in on taxi war hitmen

By YVETTE VAN BRED

(332) ST(CM) 22/12/96

POLICE are close to catching the culprits who hire hit squads in the Cape's brutal taxi wars.

This was said this week by Captain Tikkie Theart, co-commander of the Taxi Unit.

"We have targeted key players and are closing in on them," he told Cape Metro.

The hitmen, he said, "are paid, ruthless killers, who want to see the taxi war go on because it keeps them in business and it's easy money. They make about R3 000 a hit."

Police hoped to see their investigation culminate in a trial next year, he said.

A crucial factor in the investigation was the witness protection programme, which guaranteed safety for witnesses. One important witness who had elected not to join the programme had been murdered, said Theart.

The Taxi Unit's information officer, Superintendent Mark Splinters, said the hitmen were former policemen, former Umkhonto we Sizwe members and former Apla members.

Hitmen were shared in the industry and often operated all over the Western and Eastern Cape, and sometimes nationally.

Splinters said the hitmen were paid by leaders of Cata and Codeta, who collected money from members, saying it was for bail or legal fees.

Commenting on the crisis in the taxi industry, Theart said: "There are too many pirates on the road and too many unroadworthy vehicles."

He said in one morning in Bellville police had stopped 78 illegal or unroadworthy taxis at a road block.

The industry was "over-saturated" and for almost a decade the Peninsula's black townships had been ravaged by taxi-related violence. It had caused 92 deaths this year alone.

Although there were 152 taxi associations in the province, the conflict over routes and ranks has been mostly confined to the black townships.

For the past two weeks there had been no taxi-related violence, and investigators expected "no heavy battles" until after mid-January when holiday mania had died down.

Taxi-related statistics for the Western Cape showed that this year there had been 92 murders, 171 attempted murders, 134 arrests and 121 arms had been seized.

Last year there were two murders and five attempted murders. In 1994 there were 29 deaths and 88 people had been injured.

This week taxi operators welcomed the first regulatory step to ease the conflict — the display of coloured stickers so taxis on different routes can be identified more easily.