Neither does the registration confer any permanent rights of residence on employees and it should not be seen as the start towards permanent residence in urban areas. "It just isn't that at all."

The moratorium does not include foreign blacks (Rhodesians, Zambians, Malawians) whose position, no matter how long they have worked in South Africa is now hopeless.

The concession, added the lawyer, "above all must not be seen as a liberalising of influx control laws which remain quite unaltered.

"All that is happening is that labour officers are being told to register certain people on one-year contracts under Section 10(1)(d). This they have always had the discretion to do. Now, at ministerial behest they are being told to do so."

He agreed with Ms Duncan that the move was designed to assist employers not labourers.

"This appears to be a one-timer. After the first year's contracts have expired, if an employer does not choose to re-engage the same labourers, he or she will be confined to recruiting from other, qualified people to avoid being prosecuted."

In that case, for the temporarily legal "illegal" it will be back to the bantustan. \Box

SOUTH AFRICAN LOVE SONG

by Vortex

My husband is a strong man. His sisters and brothers always admired his strength. But he is gentle, and he makes jokes, and he loves our children.

I love him.

He can be difficult: he has his moods, and he sometimes gets angry. He is a passionate man. He is a warm lover.

I appreciate him.

He is proud, and he is just. He dislikes cheating and unfairness. He hates oppression. He cannot tolerate it.

I support him.

But it was this that divided us, it was this that has left me lonely and poor: he is on Robben Island, for the rest of his life.