

Housing & Hostels

- W. CAPE -

1999

Bargain bid to turn tenants into owners

But housing chief sees snags

CHANTEL ERFORT
STAFF REPORTER

A proposed amendment to a provincial law may mean thousands of people will be able to buy their council homes.

The change will apply to people living in homes subsidised by the provincial Housing Board

But Hans Smit, president of the Institute for Housing of South Africa, warned that many of these homes were not suitable for sale

Local Government Minister Patrick McKenzie has proposed all tenants be able to buy their homes at a discounted price, without having to get a clearance certificate proving they owe no arrears

He said the Western Cape cabinet had approved the change to the legislation in principle. The proposed amendment to Section 93 of the Municipal Ordinance of 1974 would allow a transfer of property to take place regardless of any other money owed to the municipality

"Before, many people couldn't buy their properties because they were in debt and couldn't get a clearance certificate. Now, for the first time, tenants can buy their rented houses at a discounted price - whether or not they owe the municipality money," Mr McKenzie said "Every single dwelling will then be owned by the people"

Tenants wanting to buy their homes would have to sign an agreement with the municipality stating they would remain liable for any outstanding debts

Mr McKenzie said at least 30 000 people would benefit should the amendment be approved.

But the number may be far lower, as people in double- and triple-storey blocks would be at a disadvantage.

Mr Smit, who is also executive director of housing for the South Peninsula Municipality, said that many homes currently subsidised by the Housing Board were "not built for sale"

He said costs involved in making double- and triple-storey homes saleable would be too high.

In the event of the sale of a multi-storey house, costly adjustments would have to be made to the water and electricity supply, in addition to the units having to be sold under sectional title

"In the South Peninsula, we have a housing stock of about 7 500 rental units and of this, the large majority are double- and triple-storey units. The costs involved in making them saleable would be tremendous," Mr Smit said.

If Mr McKenzie's proposal goes ahead, anyone renting a government-subsidised home will be able to buy it at the original building cost, with a further discount of R7 500 - before March 31, when the discount scheme expires

ARG 22/1/99

(123)

(124)

C

Council gets tough on R554m arrears

TOM HOOD

(124)
ST(CM) 24/1/99

THE Cape Town City Council — burdened by arrears of R554-million — is to issue thousands of summonses in the next two weeks warning homeowners, tenants and businesses that their properties will be seized and sold if they do not pay up.

In the 12 months to November unpaid rates soared by R60-million to R185-million.

Arrears for water charges jumped R42-million (21 percent) to R70-million.

The council has also threatened to take the drastic step of disconnecting defaulters' water — not merely reducing it to a trickle as it has been — if they do not pay their bills. So far 270 warning letters have been sent out.

Tenants of council houses are to be sent letters saying they will be evicted if they do not pay their rents. On average, tenants owe R3 700. Unpaid rents stretching back to the rent-boycott years have piled up to R56-million.

The council is also owed R45-million in repayments on 16 000 homes bought by tenants. On average, these home-owners owe R2 800.

The tough plan of action was announced by the city's executive director of corporate finance, Philip van Ryneveld, after a finance committee report said the R554-million owed was R117-million more than a year ago.

"People must realise the council is no longer a soft target to be left at the end of the queue when they pay their bills," he said.

"We are going to enforce this policy and the politicians are firmly behind it."

A number of houses have already been seized and water disconnections have begun.

Second UDM killing 'over housing plans'

Squatter camp residents say politics not an issue

BEAUREGARD TROMP and
MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTERS

People in the Samora Machel squatter camp say the death of a Cape Flats United Democratic Movement leader at the weekend was the result of bitter rivalry in the settlement over sites for housing, and had nothing to do with politics.

UDM branch chairman Vulindlela Matiyase was gunned down on Sunday

Politicians feared that his death was the result of the violence that has rocked KwaZulu-Natal spilling over into the Western Cape

African National Congress provincial secretary Mcebisi Skwatsha yesterday condemned the attack, and added his hopes that no further violence would follow.

"We hope the incident is not related to what is happening in KwaZulu-Natal. If so, it has to be nipped in the bud immediately," he said

Mr Skwatsha called on police to apprehend the murderers

"The province already suffers under a wave of intimidation by urban terrorists and we cannot allow any more battlefields," he said

Mr Matiyase's attackers asked for him by name when he answered their knock on his door, suggesting they did not know they were speaking to



Loss: Melanie Ngemntu and her mother, Lindiwe, at their home in Samora Machel, Philippi

the person they were to kill, said police spokesman Jacques Wiese

Mr Matiyase was shot twice in the chest and three times in the back

"What immediately comes to mind is that it was politically motivated," said UDM Western Cape chairman Johan Slabbert

He said that rumours had surfaced that Mr Matiyase had been murdered for his involvement in a debacle over a housing development

His death took place after a meeting between South African National

Civics Organisation executive committee members and squatters from the informal settlement about plans for development

Mr Matiyase survived two earlier attacks. He was shot at while walking around the area, allegedly by a break-away group from Sanco

This group was removed from a local Sanco executive committee a few years ago, and was now opposed to any development in the area

Other Sanco members fear that they might also be targets

ARCT 26/11/99 (124)

Ratepayers owe R2-bn

TOM HOOD

(124)

ST(om) 31/1/99

RESIDENTS in the Western Cape owe local councils R2-billion in unpaid rents, rates and other services

This estimate is based on figures obtained from local authorities by Patrick McKenzie, MEC for local government

Sixty-one percent of the 96 municipalities reported a total of R1,253-billion owed by residents as at June 1998. This was up 34 percent from the previous year

Only 14 municipalities had adopted the Masakhane campaign, said McKenzie. He supplied the figures at the request of Daniel Silke, a member of the provincial parliament

Silke said McKenzie had failed to give people any incentives to pay the outstanding amounts.

Local services debt now at R2bn

(104)
MONEY owed to municipalities for services provided in the Western Cape doubled between October 1996 and this year, and now totals around R2 billion

This is a total of 12% of the national debt figure owed to local governments, said Local Government MEC Patrick McKenzie

"We cannot afford not to collect this money," he said during his budget speech in the legislature yesterday

He said municipalities had to implement better credit control, while also taking cognisance of unemployment and poverty which rendered some people incapable of paying for their services

CT 4/3/99
These figures underline a point made by the Democratic Party's Daniel Silke some months ago, that the Masakhane campaign was failing in the Western Cape.

Silke yesterday said that arrears in the City of Cape Town amounted to R116 million

In George, arrears had almost doubled from R49m in September 1997 to R73m in September 1998

Money owing to the Ceres local authority increased from R5m in 1997 to R9m a year later, and in Worcester arrears increased from R36m in 1997 to R55m last year — Political Writer

Marconi squatters discover there is life after Chukutown

MOSES MITHHELEU MACKAY

Marconi Beam, the once notorious squatter camp in Milnerton, used to reflect the sad face of urban poverty in the Western Cape. It is now one of the success stories of the new South Africa.

Locals called it Chukutown, the place of troubles. Living conditions were unsanitary, crime was rife and fires tore through the shacks regularly, leaving death, destruction and destruction.

But now solid houses are replacing the ramshackle shanties and residents are moving to their new homes in nearby De Noon and Joe Slovo Park.

The old informal settlement next to Milnerton's industrial area, which inherited its name from a factory, sprang up several years ago. It had no services, electricity or water and was prone to devastating fires.

But that has changed. The new Marconi Beam is proof that partnerships involving the national Government, the local government, the private sector and the people can work.

The Western Cape Provincial Administration, the Blaauwberg municipality, the national Government, the private sector and the residents got together a few years ago and decided a new future had to be found for the people of Marconi Beam.

The resulting R1,8-billion project includes the development of an industrial area around the old Marconi Beam site and the construction of low-cost housing.

The development is now well past the halfway mark, two years ahead of schedule.

Empowering people to take responsibility for their own upliftment was seen as key to the development.

Under the Marconi Beam Joint Venture, led by the Rabie Cavoor development consortium (Rabacav), amenities such as schools, creches, a

temporary clinic and a church are now part of the social upliftment programme funded by the private sector.

Leslie Viljoen, the chairman of property developer Cavoor, which provided the funding, said the development framework included housing the community on 25 hectares of land and rezoning the balance of the area for light industrial, commercial and residential use.

Mr Viljoen said the upliftment programmes had been introduced to address the social issues that came with moving the community to formal housing.

He said the creation of an industrial park next to the new homes would help create an environment in which small businesses could be viable.

A total of 2 150 squatter families were being moved into formal houses, 1 250 more than originally anticipated.

Mr Viljoen said 800 old shacks had been demolished, with 616 more to go. He said a list of residents in the settlement had been compiled.

People earning less than R1 500 a month qualified for a government subsidy. Formal low-cost houses would be built for them in the new Joe Slovo Park.

Mr Viljoen said the residents wanted to move because of the danger of fires and storms and poor sanitation in the informal settlement.

Shack dwellers were notified in writing to destroy their shacks and to move to their new houses in Joe Slovo Park or De Noon a few kilometres down the road.

Residents said they were eager to move to the new development.

Nontombi Batsina, 23, who moved to her new house in De Noon recently, said, "I am very happy now that I have my own house. It was very difficult to live in a shack in those terrible conditions."

Elda Mahlentle, the principal of Elda Mahlentle Secondary School, said the new premises had improved life for teachers and children.



(1211) (1211) ARS 6/3/99

HAPPY DAYS: Leslie Viljoen, left, chairman of developer Cavoor, visits Elda Mahlentle Secondary School in Marconi Beam. With him are school principal Elda Mahlentle and pupils.

STARTING AFRESH: Nontombi Batsina, 23, and her 16-month-old son Vuyani, below, watch workers remove their belongings from her shack to her new house in De Noon.

Pictures: WAYNE CONRADIE



Bond defaults costs company millions

(124) Sowetan 8/3/99

By Joshua Raboroko

KHAYALETHU Home Loans has lost R3,5 million a month as a result of low-cost housing bond defaulters in the six months ended December 1998, the company has revealed

The financial institution is to take action, including evicting defaulters from their homes, in an attempt to recover the money before it winds down its operation next year

KHL's managing director Mr Siza Khampepe said bond defaulting was for various reasons, which included unemployment, job losses, increases in the cost of living, political boycotts and dissatisfaction with houses

The institution built 30 000 low-cost houses countrywide and 24 000 were paid up or were being paid for by homeowners since its inception

KHL was started by the South African Housing Trust to finance homeseekers in the low income market

However, homeowners started a bond boycott for political reasons and dissatisfaction over structural defects in the homes

A team was appointed to investigate

these defects

It was found that developers failed to meet their obligations or could not be traced to account for the defects. Some developers had gone bankrupt while others changed names and addresses. After protracted discussions with stakeholders – particularly the South African National Civic Organisation – KHL set aside R35 million to pay for the repairs of the houses

Satisfy client

Khampepe said "We took this decision to satisfy our clients as well as to end the boycott that was wreaking havoc with our finances. We will evict people who refuse to meet their obligations"

Bond repayments had shown an encouraging increase in the past months, Khampepe added

The average collection index recorded an increase of 13 percent

Khampepe said a net profit of R8,8 million was realised in the first months of the 1998-1999 financial year

However, the profit was eroded by provision made for boycott-related issues

'THE ARK' ORDERED TO CAST OFF

R1,5bn trade-off unshackles housing

AN EXCITING new venture involving shack-dwellers, industrialists and developers could result in substantial social upliftment. **CHRIS BATEMAN** reports.

A UNIQUE, R1,5 billion public/private sector partnership in Westlake is set to provide housing for 684 shack-dwellers within 10 months and create 450 upmarket homes, a light industrial and business park and an office park within five years.

However, the development means possible short-term hardship for the Ark, which houses 950 indigent people, ranging from abused mothers, abandoned children to reforming alcoholics and drug addicts and foreign "economic refugees" on the site.

The Ark has until the end of April to relocate from Westlake to the vacated Faure School for Boys.

Ark director, Pastor Greg Grobler, said yesterday that about eight former support staff at the Faure school were "unwilling" to move, meaning that some 100 children with their house "parents" would have to stay in containers until the impasse is resolved.

Westlake developers Rabcav had donated the containers as a temporary measure as well as two rented bakkies for relocating the Ark's inhabitants, 370 of whom had been moved in the past two weeks.

"We were supposed to be out by the end of February but the date has now been extended because of

the delay with the Faure staff," said Grobler.

Kobus Stander, a provincial property management official in Wale Street, said court interdicts had been served on the occupants of three of 11 Faure homes, while the remainder had been given until "June or July this year" to find alternative accommodation.

Grobler estimated that all Ark residents would be moved to Faure by mid-April.

He said the Ark had previously enjoyed subsidised lights and water bills and would now have to foot a bill which he estimated would come to R20 000 a month.

He appealed to the authorities to provide pre-paid meters so that "at least we can monitor usage — otherwise I don't know what we'll do." The Ark is staffed by volunteers.

Meanwhile, at an upmarket Waterfront launch attended by Rabcav executives, Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe, Western Cape Premier Gerald Morkel and South Peninsula Municipality planning chairman Neville Reilly, the R1,5 billion development was outlined yesterday.

The 100-hectare Westlake Estate, bounded on the west by the prestigious Steenberg Golf Estate, on the east by Silvermine and the

Westlake golf course, will provide for current shack dwellers.

● A R10 000 "developer contribution" to the R17 250 provincial housing subsidy

● A community centre, creche facilities, schools and a skills training programme

● Hundreds of on-site jobs

The new one-bedroomed homes, with capacity for extension, will sit cheek-by-jowl with an upmarket 450 home suburb in a lush, wooded location which will be in five safely "secured" precincts with "outstanding views" of the Constantiaberg and the adjoining Steenberg Golf Estate.

Plots will be between 600 and 700 square metres.

The DP Marais (tuberculosis) Hospital staff and residents have been relocated and incorporated with the Princess Alice Hospital, while the Westlake Convalescent Hospital is to be incorporated into the Conradie Hospital.

Some 15 hectares will be transformed into a landscaped mixed business and light industrial park, while a 12-hectare upmarket office park, called Steenberg Office Park, will adjoin the Steenberg Golf Estate.

A small "retail facility" for tourist attractions will also be built.

The project is being spearheaded by Rabie/Cavcor with JSE listed Wescape and empowerment group African Renaissance each sharing a 25% stake.

ET 19/3/99

(124)

Furore over cement works' homes-from-hostels plan

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124)

A plan to turn mid-century hostels into family units in Brackenfell is attracting anger from neighbours and the New National Party.

The New NP in the Oostenberg municipal area is opposing the development in Kruisfontein Road, near the Old Paarl Road, fearing that neighbouring homeowners may see property values plummet.

But African National Congress members in the local authority have criticised the New NP's stance, saying the party was returning to its "old-style ideology"

Everite, a company which makes cement products, wants to convert old, single hostels into family units to house its workers.

But people living near the site said there were far more housing stands in the plans than there were workers needing accommodation. They said they feared the settlement

would cause property values in the established residential area of Brackenfell to fall

Oostenberg's New NP leader and chairman of the Cape Metropolitan Council executive committee, Pierre Uys, said his party was not opposed to residential development.

"But under no circumstances can we allow this informal settlement to proceed, especially when there is land set aside for this purpose in nearby Wallacedene and Bloekombos"

But Oostenberg's ANC chief whip Ebrahim Sawant said the New NP were going backwards "to the dark days of forced removals"

"With proper consultation, the creation of a second residential area by Everite could see a great deal of goodwill in the neighbourhood"

The provincial housing board was awaiting Oostenberg's decision before deciding whether to advance the necessary housing subsidies for the scheme.

Everite spokesman Charles Jules said the factory wanted to improve the quality of life of its employees.

APR 13/1999

Nyanga police to probe Brown's Farm 'land scam'

(77)
(124)

ARLT 25/3/99

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTER

Nyanga police have asked all Brown's Farm residents who had allegedly been forced to pay fees to local area committee members for unserviced sites to come forward and lay charges.

This comes after a protest march by hundreds of Brown's Farm informal settlement residents to Nyanga police station on Monday.

They wanted the police to arrest local area committee members whom they allege had been demanding fees from residents seeking sites in the settlement.

Mthetho Ntlangamiso, a councillor for Ward C21, said about 600 sites at section 1 in Brown's Farm were allegedly "sold" to residents by local area committee members, who charged between R100 and R200 a site.

On Monday, a huge crowd of residents with placards called on police to act against the area committee members.

"What we need is development in our area," said a mother of two who did not want to be named. She claimed she paid R100 to an area committee member three years ago when she arrived at the settlement.

She believed the "corrupt" committee members should "all be locked up, because what they did was wrong".

A man who claimed to be from

Angola said he had paid R100 to another area committee member when he arrived in the settlement looking for a place to erect his shack a year ago.

A woman, who said she had left Guguletu four years ago, said she was promised a plot by a local area committee member if she paid him R100.

When she could not afford to pay the amount she was refused access to the plot and the man visited her home every week to demand the money.

"Although I was unemployed at the time I paid it bit by bit until I finished the amount," she said.

Another woman said she and her mother were told to pay R200 for a site.

Councillor Ntlangamiso said the men told a community meeting that they had demanded the money from residents to pay for a front-end loader used to level the sites.

He said he was concerned the controversy might cause conflict among residents because some of the victims of the alleged scam were unemployed and now bore grudges against the area committee members.

Vuyisile Jantjies, a communication officer for Nyanga Police, said that after a meeting with a delegation of Brown's Farm residents, a special police unit would be set up to investigate the matter.

Police have asked all affected residents to come forward and lay charges so that a proper investigation can take place.

Housing project grinds to a halt after R1,7-m theft

MANDLA MUYAKWANA
STAFF REPORTER

The theft of R1,7-million from a Macassar RDP housing project in Khayelitsha has brought the 751-unit scheme to a standstill. The provincial housing board is investigating, according to spokeswoman Surita Botes.

The services of Gauteng-based Town Con building construction company - which could not be reached for comment - have been suspended by the housing board pending the investigation.

Ms Botes said the company involved was doing an internal forensic investigation and that her department would not contract the company to do any new work until the department had had a report from the company.

The news has depressed recipients of Government housing subsidies who had hoped to see houses built to enable them to move out of their shacks. Only a few houses have been built since March last year, when the housing project was launched.

Lorraine Jack, who said she had

Neighbours



Send your neighbourhood news and notices to Jenny Veal at 488 4218, fax 488 4075 or e-mail nhood@cm.independent.co.za

been hoping to move out of her leaking shack, said they had been repeatedly promised that the building of their houses would start soon.

"They kept promising 'next month, next month' Now January and February have gone and still nothing happens," she said.

Zwelitsha Khatsiwa said loads of bricks, sand and stones had been delivered to his shack in Macassar last year.

This was a good sign to Mr Khatsiwa, who said he had always hoped that one day he would own a brick house so that he and his wife and seven children could leave the two-roomed shack that they had occupied for seven years.

But the arrival of building materials did not mean much, and residents said they were forced to sit and watch as the materials were stolen or deteriorated.

Nosakhwe Mathiba said she did not know where to store the building materials to protect them.

Community leaders were worried that the problem could affect the image of their township.

Mandla Maxongo, the director of the City of Tygerberg's community service department, which deals with housing, said that after they had heard about the misuse of money their concern was how it would delay housing delivery in Khayelitsha.

He said he was sorry residents would not get what they expected from the RDP project and that now they would have to wait.

Mr Maxongo said Tygerberg officials would meet members of the

provincial housing board to see how to resolve the matter.

Wiburforce Kutta, the Khayelitsha Development Forum secretary, said they were very angry about what had happened because the Macassar RDP Housing committee members had never revealed what was going on.

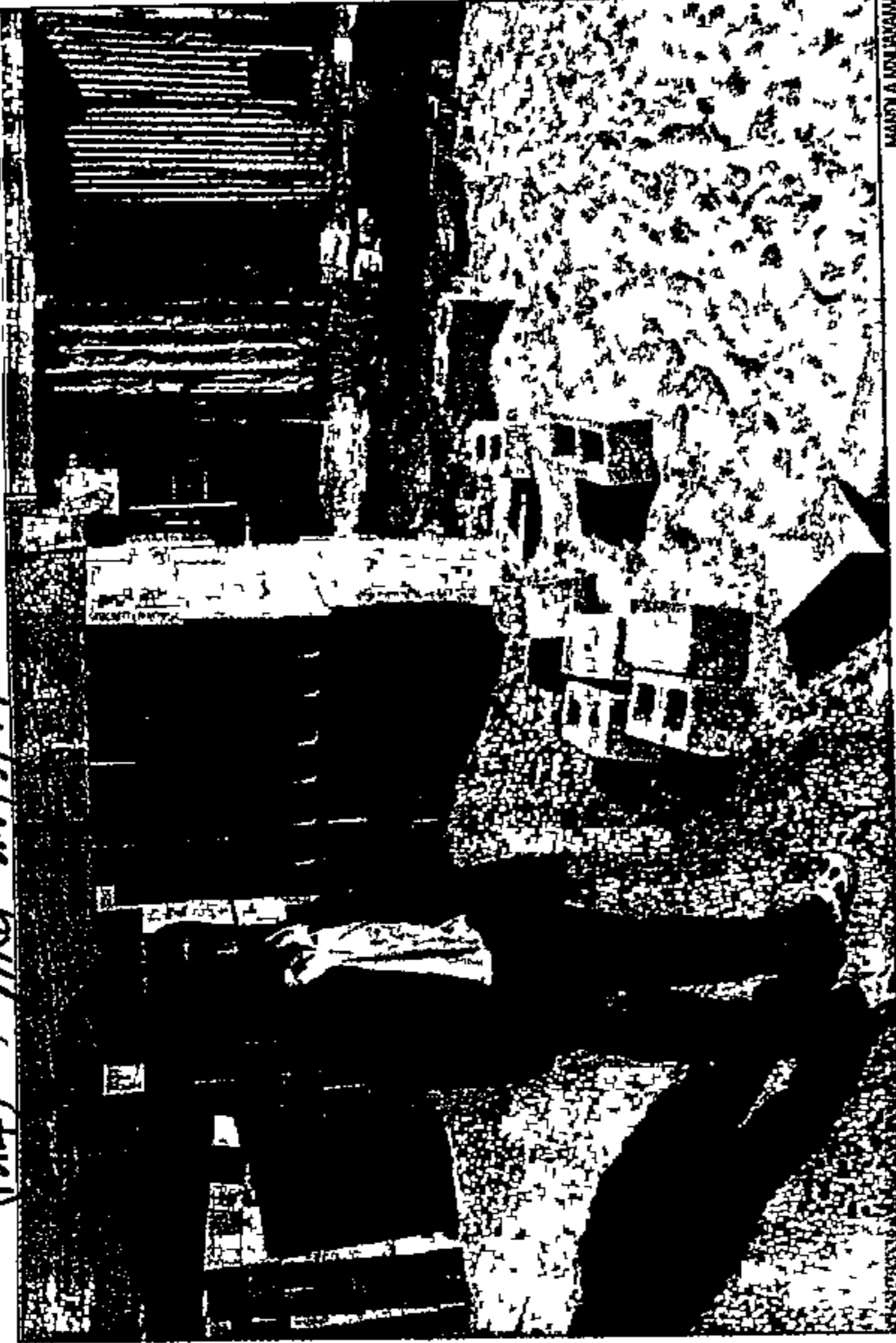
He said the committee had failed to attend a meeting with the forum to discuss progress, and the first they had heard of the problem had been on television.

Mr Kutta said the forum wanted to investigate the matter and possibly to hold disciplinary hearings if there was any evidence of wrongdoing.

"We are a responsible forum and we will see to it that Khayelitsha becomes a city within a city that is not ruled by corruption," he said.

Mbongeni Ngombane, a Macassar councillor, said the Makaza community had heard about the theft only last month.

The posts of a local community liaison officer and a secretary for the RDP housing project had been suspended, pending the outcome of an investigation, he said.



MANDLA MUYAKWANA

Waiting patiently Zwelitsha Khatsiwa with bricks, sand and stones for a house that will not be built in the near future



City poised for new rates deal

Council approves system aimed at equity for property owners

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

A new system of municipal rates, which introduces increases for some areas and bonus decreases for others, has been given the go-ahead by the majority of political parties in the City of Cape Town.

At a joint meeting of the executive and the finance committees in the Civic Centre, African National Congress and New National Party

councillors endorsed the new rates and tariffs system which is to be implemented in the 1999-2000 financial year. Only the Democratic Party opposed the grouping together of neighbourhoods under the new system.

On top of an inflation-related 9% across the board, residents in better-off areas of the city will pay more than people in poorer areas.

Residents in Clifton will have to pay 9% more, in Camps Bay and Bantry Bay 7% and in Sea Point,

Tamboerskloof and Oranjezicht 5% more.

However, residents in Hanover Park, Beacon Valley, Eastringe and Tafelsig will see their rates cut by 7%, while rates in Manenberg, Nyanga, Guguletu and Langa will be cut by 5%.

Non-residential properties such as corner shops, will face rates and tariffs increases according to prescribed levels for each residential area.

Property owners in Cape Town's

central business district will face hikes close to the inflation rate.

DP councillor Behinda Walker told the meeting yesterday that her party was concerned about legal challenges the council might face if an area-based differentiated increase in rates was introduced.

The banding together of residential areas, which formed many pockets in the city council area, was done on the basis of property price increases and property sales in an area.

City executive director of corporate finance Philip van Ryneveld said the proposed grouping of areas would not be done on land or site valuation ratings.

City executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer, of the ANC, said residents would not pay more than a 20% rates increase in the next financial year.

Mr Mowzer said the proposals might not lead to "total equity", but they were "a step towards a more fair" rates and tariff structure.

(124) ARB 26/3/99

Race storm mars housing plan for 'Cardboard City' squatters

ART 31/3/99 (124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

Racism has marred a debate by City of Cape Town councillors over the allocation of houses on a site earmarked for "Cardboard City" and Mitchell's Plain squatters.

Fifty-two of the 81 applications by squatters to the provincial housing board for subsidies to buy houses at Montrose Park in Mitchell's Plain were successful

The remaining 29 did not qualify for a subsidy and there were, therefore, still sites available.

It emerged during yesterday's council meeting that the housing committee had recommended that the 29 spare sites be granted to homeless people from formerly black local authorities

The council is spending about

R400 000 from its social development fund on the land at the corner of Highlands and Samantha roads in Montrose near Lentegeur

An agreement last year between the council and "Cardboard City" squatters (near Gallow's Hill in Green Point) was that Montrose Park houses would be allocated to them and to homeless people in Mitchell's Plain

New National Party councillors claimed the move to house people from formerly black local authority areas at Montrose Park was racist

The African National Congress caucus denied this, saying the recommendation was based purely on integration

ANC councillor Saleem Mowzer said the council was striving to integrate the municipal area, and

that this was one of the council's priorities with the provision of housing for the homeless

New NP councillor Yusuf Wagie told the meeting that if the 29 sites were allocated to people from formerly black local authority areas, the council would be labelled racist by the Mitchell's Plain public

He said there were many homeless people living in backyards and on plots in Mitchell's Plain who needed houses

New NP councillor Elizabeth Bantom said that "people on the list" for housing at Montrose were from Mitchell's Plain only, and that the housing committee's decision was "not fair"

Housing committee chairman Whitey Jacobs said he would consult the Mitchell's Plain homeless people about the available sites

(124)

Some rates go up, others dip in shakedown

PRISCILLA SINGH ET 26/3/99

THE city of Cape Town yesterday passed recommendations for a proposed differentiated rates hike that will see some homeowners paying higher percentage increases than others — and some areas even enjoying decreased rates

In a joint Executive Committee and Finance Committee meeting, 32 areas were presented to city councillors demarcating the percentage rates increases

The increases come on top of the inflation-related nine percent.

Residents in Camps Bay will fork out an extra seven percent, Clifton nine percent, Bantry Bay seven percent and Sea Point, Tamboerskloof and Oranjezicht five percent

At the other end of the scale, residents in Hanover Park, Beacon Valley, Eastridge and Tafelsig will see a seven percent decrease in their rates, while those living in Manenberg, Nyanga, Guguletu and Langa will enjoy a five percent reduction

The new differentiated system is the first of its kind in South Africa and was formulated after months of research. It is designed to correct inequities of the past, especially the unfairness of the rates system inherited from 1979.

If accepted by the council, the new rates structure will be introduced by July 1 when the city's budget for the 1999/2000 financial year comes into effect. Income generated by rates payments could total between R750 and R770 million this year, up from R680 million last year

Philip van Ryneveld, executive director of Corporate Finance, and Mike Parker, the co-ordinator of Rating and Valuation, pioneered the new system with the help of an American valuations expert, Dick Ward.

The proposed system has been based on sales data drawn from the Deeds Office and a sophisticated computer-modelling system that enabled officials to demarcate geographical areas in which property values have increased by similar percentages relative to other areas

Pinelands and other areas such as Mandalay will now also be incorporated into the new rates system, bringing them in line with the rest of the municipality.

Both Van Ryneveld and Parker were pleased with the outcome of yesterday's meeting and said the acceptance of



UPS, DOWNS: Mowzer and Van Ryneveld discuss Bishopscourt's increase and Hanover Park's decrease.

PICTURE. DENZIL MAREGELE

the recommendations was a just reward for months of hard work

The Democratic Party (DP) caucus opposed the increases. At one stage during the meeting, it is believed that councillor Brian Watkins left the room to consult with Western Cape DP leader Hennie Bester on how the DP councillors should vote on the proposal

The New National Party accepted the proposal without grumblings.

City manager Andrew Boraine said the new system was morally correct and it was legally necessary to go this route

"The new differentiated system is based on objective, scientific data that was generated with the help of an international expert. We know it's going to work," Boraine said

The city's exco chairperson Saleem Mowzer said that the DP's arguments were "spurious" and that they did not give sound reasons for opposing the proposal.

"We have agreed in principle to move forward with it and offer the proposal for public comment. We are legally obliged to implement a differentiated rates increase system"

□ Turn to Page 3

P. T. O.

Housing money row over council defector

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124)

ARG 31/3/99

The New National Party has been investigating claims that one of its defectors in the City of Cape Town council allegedly received money from people as deposits for housing allocations.

The NNP caucus in the city council has lost councillors Louise Jansen and James George to the African National Congress

The councillors, who hold two of the eight seats in Mitchell's Plain, crossed the floor during yesterday's council meeting and joined the ranks of the ANC, the city's ruling party

NNP caucus leader Clive Justus said his party was probing claims that Ms Jansen had received deposit payments for houses. In December, the council failed to prove she had breached the councillors' code of conduct in connection with these allegations

Mr Justus claimed that the reason Ms Jansen had defected to the ANC was to avoid facing the outcome of the party's investigations

But Ms Jansen said the NNP's claims that she had taken money for deposits for housing allocations were "a lot of nonsense" She knew that "a lot of bad things" about her would

emerge when she defected to the ANC Ms Jansen said she was very unhappy at the NNP because of a lack of comradeship among party councillors who "gossiped most of the time"

"I've got nothing against the party, but my colleagues did not support my projects and work in my community," Ms Jansen said She represents ward C24 in Woodlands

Referring to Mr George's defection, the NNP claimed he had been functioning as an individual and not as a party member in the council

Mr Justus alleged Mr George would never join a "black" party such as the ANC But Mr George denied this, saying he had been a member of the council's interim phase in 1995 and had worked with black people.

He said he was fed-up with the New NP's in-fighting and lack of discipline Mr George said Mr Justus's claims were a lot of nonsense "They have to say something about my defection he does not even know me well"

He said he had been a worker in Ward C28 in Rocklands and he had proof to back this claim

The NNP challenged its two former councillors to resign from their council seats and to fight a by-election, but both dismissed the call as "a lot of nonsense"

Water cut-offs start as council coffers dry up

DAN SIMON

CT 3/2/99

(12/4)

THE City of Cape Town this week adopted tough new measures to deal with non-payment for its services — and has already started disconnecting the water supply to dozens of defaulters' homes and businesses

Over the next few weeks the council will send out thousands of summonses, eviction notices and cut-off notices to ratepayers, home-owners and tenants. It is hoped many defaulters will pay up before any action is taken.

"We want people to wake up and pay up," said Kendall Kaveney, the city council's director of water and waste.

"People who don't pay must realise we'll cut them off."

The water cut-offs, which follow seven-day warning notices which must be issued in terms of the Water Act, were introduced last week in terms of a new credit control policy adopted by council in June last year.

Consumers who don't pay or make alternative arrangements to pay will have their water and electricity services disconnected until their debts are settled.

The policy also extends to council tenants and home-owners who are in arrears with their rent or housing repayments. Here the council will evict defaulters or repossess and sell their homes in sales of execution to recover debts.

Kaveney said that over the past week, water cut-offs had been carried out daily.

"We're doing roughly 20 a day in all areas and we're issuing about 60 cut-off (warning) notices a day so far we have had an 80% reaction to the notices. This, of course, varies from houses to businesses to schools."

Previously the city council — which is saddled with arrears in water charges totalling R70 million — simply reduced the flow of water to the homes and businesses of defaulters in a bid to exact payment.

But drastic measures were called for last year after arrears in water charges alone jumped from R49 million to R70 million by November. Unpaid rates over the past year have also soared by R60 million to R185 million.

The council is also owed unpaid rentals of R56 million, much dating back to the rent boycott years, and R45 million in repayments on 16 000 homes bought by tenants.

In all, services arrears rose by R116 million, prompting the city council crackdown. But Kaveney said that in terms of the Water Act, the city council could not arbitrarily cut off someone's water supply.

"For example, if a household has a new-born baby then we can't cut the water due to health reasons."

The city's executive director of corporate finance Philip van Ryneveld said it is hoped that with the new approach, the city would collect about R100 million in service arrears over the next four months.

"Durban, which has a strict cut-off policy, has a 98% payment rate. It's not impossible to collect over R100 million over the next four months. That is a realistic target and that is what I am aiming for."

Housing on track again

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124)
The Grabouw municipality plans to provide low-cost housing to all its shack-dwellers by the end of 2002. ARG 8/2/99

There have been violent clashes between residents and police over the development of low-cost housing at a site known as Melrose Place. Allegations of fraud and corruption involving several tenders stalled the project, but now it is back on track

Town clerk David Petrus said the provincial housing board had approved housing subsidies of about R9-million last week for Melrose Place. The board gave the green light for 823 erven in a first phase of development, and beneficiaries were awarded a subsidy of R15 000 each

Those in a second phase of 350 erven had a subsidy of R12 500 each. A third phase of 100 erven, with a R9 500 subsidy each, will complete the Melrose Place project, with a total of 1 273 units

Mr Petrus said that 370 foundations had been laid on the site in the past 10 days

R4-m housing

funds 'missing'

ARG 9/12/99 (124)

From page 1

ed the housing board's urgent application for Mr Khan's estate to be placed under provisional sequestration

Mr Khan told Argus Action he was opposing the application for final sequestration, expected to be heard next month

Mr Austin said the subsidy applications his department handled included individual applications as well as those for projects or groups of houses

Successful applications for projects were paid as the project progressed, but subsidies for individuals were a one-off payment to attorneys representing the applicant

A day after the department paid a cheque for R13.3-million to the attorneys nominated by Mr Khan, a senior official became suspicious and the department subsequently asked the attorneys for the money back, said Mr Austin

"We just do not pay such large sums for individual applications, and this payout immediately raised eyebrows," he said

But it was too late. The attorneys had already disbursed the money. The Office for Serious Economic Offences is investigating

Housing millions missing

800 lose out in deal

ARG 9/12/99

MAUREEN MARUD
ARGUS ACTION

The Provincial Housing Board is trying to trace about R4-million still missing from a total of R13.3-million paid as housing subsidies to a firm of attorneys in 1997.

This means more than 800 people have plots, but no roofs over their heads. They are waiting for houses that should have been built by now.

Although the money was earmarked to be used as subsidies for them, the department says they will not get the money unless it is recovered by the department. The money represents 823 subsidies ear-

marked for plots of land in Mandela Park, Khayelitsha, and the houses that should have been built on them. Although about R9.25-million has been recovered - most of which was used to pay for the plots - the balance still is unaccounted for.

John Austin, deputy director of the provincial administration's department of housing, said his department had paid the money to attorneys Parker & Mohammed.

This was done after developer Sadrick Khan of Cape Town, who trades as BDS Developers, applied for it on behalf of 823 individuals.

The Cape High Court has since grant-

'WE ARE BEING DRIVEN INTO FIGHTING'

Clashes over homes feared

THREE YEARS AGO shack dwellers in Nyanga were promised homes. The homes have not materialised. Now their shacks have been demolished **ERIC NTABAZALLA** reports.

FIGHTING over housing is looming in Nyanga after a group of shack dwellers whose shacks were demolished by police on Monday started rebuilding them yesterday.

Residents of the newly formed Eyethu squatter camp, who come from the backyards of Mau-Mau township in Nyanga East, first marched to the police station yesterday to warn the police not to involve themselves in any future demolition of the squatter camp.

On Monday, after their shacks were demolished, they went to dump rubbish in front of councilor Nomfusi Mqikela's house, which is being guarded by police.

"We don't want what happened in Crossroads to happen here, but we are being driven into fighting as the police started destroying our materials without

even explaining to us why our shacks were demolished. We are not moving anywhere even if they come back to destroy these shacks again. We will sleep here," a resident said.

He did not want to be identified as he feared being victimised.

"We are not being difficult or trying to cause any trouble. We are just asking for what we were promised in 1996 by our councilors who can't even come to now," he said.

Mqikela said she was afraid that fighting might break out as the group of about 100 squatters had started provoking people.

"It is true that we promised them houses but this is a process. We have to secure funds first. Their problem is they don't want to wait."

"We called them to a meeting on Sunday and they refused to lis-

ET 12/12/99 (1a4)

ten to us as we tried to explain the process to them. We tried to explain to them that it was council land earmarked for houses. So we sent city council officials to demolish those shacks. After that they came to dump their rubbish in front of my house," she said.

Last year, after continuous fighting between groups over housing development in Crossroads, the Cape Town City Council released a report alleging weapons were being stockpiled in Crossroads and wardlords were planning a comeback in time for this year's election.

The report said the primary cause of the violence in Crossroads and Philippi was "political intolerance between parties, organisations and individuals", and "these differences were exploited by criminal elements which exacerbated the situation".

Len Khulane of the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee told the Cape Times yesterday that his organisation was "deeply con-

cerned" about the developing situation in Nyanga, and had invited disgruntled residents to meet his committee today.

"We want to meet the squatters and try to open a dialogue between the two groups. We believe dialogue offers the only solution to this problem. Without it, we could see a bloodbath similar to the one in Crossroads," he said.

His committee would try to meet all the parties involved before Friday to speed up the dialogue.

Mqikela said when she started campaigning to be a councillor her concern had been the housing problem in Nyanga. She said that at a meeting with the residents it had been decided that the field along Lansdowne Road would be required to build houses for Nyanga backyard residents.

Mqikela said she would organise a meeting with councillors from the Cape Town City Council at which they would discuss what they could do to defuse the potential fighting in the area.



WE WON'T MOVE: Former Mau-Mau backyard residents, whose shacks were demolished on Monday after they built on a field earmarked for houses, started rebuilding yesterday and have vowed not to move. **PICTURE: DENZIL MARENGE**

'WE ARE BEING DRIVEN INTO FIGHTING'

Clashes over homes feared

ET 17/2/99 (124)

THREE YEARS AGO shack dwellers in Nyanga were promised homes. The homes have not materialised. Now their shacks have been demolished. **ERIC NTABAZALILA** reports.

FIGHTING over housing is looming in Nyanga after a group of shack dwellers whose shacks were demolished by police on Monday started rebuilding them yesterday

Residents of the newly formed Eyethu squatter camp, who come from the backyards of Mau-Mau township in Nyanga East, first marched to the police station yesterday to warn the police not to involve themselves in any future demolition of the squatter camp

On Monday, after their shacks were demolished, they went to dump rubbish in front of councillor Nomfusi Mqikela's house, which is being guarded by police

"We don't want what happened in Crossroads to happen here, but we are being driven into fighting as the police started destroying our materials without

even explaining to us why our shacks were demolished. We are not moving anywhere even if they come back to destroy these shacks again. We will sleep here," a resident said

He did not want to be identified as he feared being victimised

"We are not being difficult or trying to cause any trouble. We are just asking for what we were promised in 1996 by our councillors who can't even come to us now," he said

Mqikela said she was afraid that fighting might break out as the group of about 100 squatters had started provoking people

"It is true that we promised them houses but this is a process. We have to secure funds first. Their problem is they don't want to wait

"We called them to a meeting on Sunday and they refused to lis-

ten to us as we tried to explain the process to them. We tried to explain to them that it was council land earmarked for houses. So we sent city council officials to demolish those shacks. After that they came to dump their rubbish in front of my house," she said

Last year, after continuous fighting between groups over housing development in Crossroads, the Cape Town City Council released a report alleging weapons were being stockpiled in Crossroads and warlords were planning a comeback in time for this year's election

The report said the primary cause of the violence in Crossroads and Philippi was "political intolerance between parties, organisations and individuals", and "these differences were exploited by criminals elements which exacerbated the situation"

Len Khalane of the Urban Monitoring Awareness Committee told the *Cape Times* yesterday that his organisation was "deeply con-

cerned" about the developing situation in Nyanga, and had invited disgruntled residents to meet his committee today

"We want to meet the squatters and try to open a dialogue between the two groups. We believe dialogue offers the only solution to this problem. Without it, we could see a bloodbath similar to the one in Crossroads," he said

His committee would try to meet all the parties involved before Friday to speed up the dialogue

Mqikela said when she started campaigning to be a councillor her concern had been the housing problem in Nyanga. She said that at a meeting with the residents it had been decided that the field along Lansdowne Road would be required to build houses for Nyanga backyard residents

Mqikela said she would organise a meeting with councillors from the Cape Town City Council at which they would discuss what they could do to defuse the potential fighting in the area

City hides names of its debtor councillors

15 may have unpaid bills

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

Eight Cape Town city councillors are in arrears with municipal accounts, says the council. But insiders believe at least 15 have not paid bills for electricity, water and refuse removal.

After repeated questioning, the city council yesterday refused to reveal the names of the non-payers and their political affiliations, keeping this information a closely guarded secret even from party chief whips within the council.

In October, 31 councillors were in arrears, some of them for as long as 18 months, but 23 had since paid up, said a council spokesman yesterday.

A councillor, whose post is not considered a full-time one, gets an allowance of R3 632 a month.

This goes up if he or she becomes a member of the executive committee.

Approached for comment, corporate finance director Philip van Rhyneveld said the eight councillors' arrears did not exceed three months.

"We completed a thorough investigation at the end of December and found no councillors in arrears by more than three months."

He said there might be councillors in arrears by one or two months. "We have to take action if they are in arrears, but at the moment there is no cause for concern."

Mr Van Rhyneveld said that "questions have been asked" and that the council had been monitoring the issue.

All 74 City of Cape Town councillors recently received a circular letter warning them not to get into arrears with municipal accounts.

Democratic Party councillor Brian Watkyns said he had forwarded questions to the council to clarify the position.

Mr Watkyns said councillors should be above reproach and set an example to communities, especially in the light of the Masakhane campaign.

The law was clear. When a councillor was in arrears, a process had to be followed by the council, and the individual should then leave the council.

"That is why I asked the council several questions regarding the issue and I am still awaiting answers from them," said Mr Watkyns.

New National Party chief whip Clive Justus said: "We raised the issue last month and were assured that no councillor was in arrears."

"We have no details of who are in arrears."

But he agreed that the law should take its course in respect of any councillors who were in arrears.

African National Congress chief whip Saleem Mowzer said he was not aware of any councillor in arrears with municipal accounts.

ARG 23/2/99

(124)

Blow to squatters as housing cut R5,9-bn

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

The Western Cape housing budget is to drop by 12% or R5,9-million to R43,7-million.

This is according to budget estimates of revenue and spending tabled in the provincial legislature to coincide with Finance Minister Leon Markovitz's maiden budget speech.

The housing budget cut includes a 10,85% reduction in the budget for the office of the provincial minister, a

38,75% cut in the allocation for development promotion and a 25% reduction in settlement assistance, a programme funded by central government conditional grants for settlement of squatters by local authorities. The housing management budget is to go down by 6,1% to R13,8-million.

But within the overall 12% budget cut for housing is an increase of 48% or R688 000 for project execution and 3,2% or R453 000 for professional and technical services.

Council acts against Nyanga squatters

(24)
CT 26/2/99

FATIMA SCHROEDER

THE City of Cape Town yesterday broke down scores of shacks on municipal property in Nyanga in preparation for a development project — a move that ended in violent clashes between the resident squatters and police.

Police opened fire with rubber bullets and teargas on the squatters after they stoned several vehicles and toyed in protest at their shacks being demolished.

Council workers were sent to the area for about three hours to break down about 70 shacks occupying land meant for the Lansdowne-Wetton corridor project. The project, to build a link road from Wetton to Philippi, as well as business parks and housing, is due to start in July or August.

One woman suffered a leg injury and several cars were damaged in the violent clash, said police spokesperson Nina Kirsten. Later, a policeman

suffered an epileptic fit, she said. Both were hospitalised.

Council spokesperson Leonora de Souza said it was "unfortunate" that a "small grouping" was trying its best to run a project from which all could benefit.

"We know that we have a corrupt housing system. We understand the frustrations and we know the pains we are trying our best as a city.

"But many people will benefit from this project in terms of job creation," she said.

De Souza added that the council had decided to be strict concerning land invasions — and not to make exceptions for anyone.

"We've been very hard on land invasion. If we're going to do this, we're going to be doing it equally everywhere. We are not going to make an exception for such a small grouping," she said.

Meanwhile, Nyanga councillor Swelinzima Hlazo of the ANC is under guard after being threatened by



IN CONFLICT: An angry squatter clashes with police as council workers break down his shack in Nyanga. A council spokesperson said the city takes a hard line against land invasions.

PICTURE: JACK LESTRADE

the squatters yesterday — a development that he said was a "political game" that went far beyond the issue of housing.

"I can assure you, this is political

It has nothing to do with housing," Hlazo said, adding that he believed that a small group wanted to undermine the ANC and cripple its election campaign later this year.

Hlazo said another Nyanga councillor, Nomfuhi Mgqikela, feared for her family's safety after she was also threatened during the clashes yesterday.

Muizenberg

Houses for

Vrygrond -

AR 6/4/99

at long last

R30-m project approved

PETER GOUSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Vrygrond in Muizenberg, the oldest known informal housing settlement in the country - dating back to 1941 - is to be developed into a formal suburb with formal housing by developers Ubuntu Home Builders.

The more than R30-million project has taken more than seven years to come off the drawing board - it has been designed and redesigned three times to satisfy both the community and the Provincial Housing Development Board.

Wynberg

Sex shop back on the agenda

PETER GOUSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

It's back to the drawing board for the South Peninsula and its battle to deal with the contentious issue of the Wynberg sex shop.

At the centre of the battle is the adult shop in X-Cess, in Main Road, Wynberg, which is owned by Brian Du Plessis. It's the first sex shop application to come before the South Peninsula Council and is being vehemently opposed by the Concerned Citizens Against Pornography and Standing Together Against Pornography groups, schools and religious organisations.



Houses for all residents of Vrygrond - the oldest known informal settlement in the country - will soon receive proper houses.

he moved from Cape Town to the south. He has nine thick volumes of documents on Vrygrond stored in his office. Ubuntu, a black empowerment company, was given the job after a lengthy tender and selection process. The company was the lowest tender for the earthworks and civil engineering services at just more than R13-million, and was also the only tender to meet the requirements for a 24m² top structure on an average plot size of 198m².

Neighbourhood

noticeboard

Muizenberg/Pelican Park: The South Peninsula Municipality has appointed consultants to prepare a growth management strategy to guide future development and allocation of resources in the area. People wanting to be involved in this study should contact Francis Currie at the South Peninsula Municipality, Private Bag X5, Plumstead 7801 or e-mail fc@fcurrie@CTCC.gov.za.

Grassy Park: The repair of 5th Avenue between Atkins Road and Strandfontein Road and Buck Avenue between 5th Avenue and Klip Road will be completed by the

Muizenberg

Two men who know where it's happening

BEAUFIELD TRUMP
Staff Reporter

Muizenberg has often been touted as a gangland where no-one is safe to walk the streets and everyone lives in complexity with gangsters. But few people realise that the suburb houses a predominantly working class where gangsterism is just one of the problems the society faces.

For many, a more pressing problem is the 60% unemployment rate. Two men who know all too well about the ravages that the community of Muizenberg has suffered are Faghi Johnson and Owen Munro.

Since their high school days, the pair have been part of the struggle for the social upliftment of the community who they refer to as "our people".

In the past few years the lack of cohesion in the community has been evident. When a peace rally was held less than 10 years back about 10 000 people took part. For a similar event last year, less than 500 people turned up.

The two started out as politically motivated students fighting an oppressive regime, and then became founder members of an anti crime forum, which has now mushroomed into the Western Cape Anti Crime Forum.

They have abandoned the idea of trying to negotiate with gangsters and are devoting themselves to the grassroots movement. "We decided to devote our time to trying to save our young people rather than to negotiating with gangsters," said Mr Munro.



Neighbours

Send your neighbourhood news and notices to Jenny Veil at 488 4218 fax 488 4075 or e-mail mhoo@xanunetpendant.co.za

The centre runs a daily kitchen where people can buy a plate of food for 25c. Activities such as karate, music and DJing are offered. The main focus now is on job creation, which the executive feels addresses the most pressing needs of the people. Two weeks ago about 30 pupils graduated from a computer course run from the centre.

The MPC plans to open a panel beating and spraypainting workshop, a printing workshop, cooking, tourism and a hairdressing school. The workshops will be run in collaboration with recognised organisations in their respective fields.

"We are very excited about the projects," said Mr Johnson. "In the past we had tourists coming here with other people showing them around. Tourists want to see the reality of the Cape Flats and we want our own people to show them around so that the money stays in the community," he said.

The MPC intends revitalising the tradition of court and street committees. "What we want to do is to have people start talking to each other again. One of our members, Paulah de Vries, organised a kids party in her block of flats the other day. That was the first time anyone had thrown a party there as far as I can remember," said Mr Munro. The hope is that through social events, people will reclaim their suburb.

Dassenberg housing given the green light

ANC vows to back court action to stop plan

Provincial planning minister Michael Louis's controversial approval of the Dassenberg farm development at Sun Valley has been unanimously supported by the province's Planning Advisory Board.

This was disclosed by Mr Louis in his response to strong criticism by the environmental lobby and the African National Congress of his decision to overrule the South Peninsula Municipality and allow 170 housing units on the farm - which borders the new Cape Peninsula National Park

ANC MP Jannie Momberg, whose constituency includes Noordhoek and Sun Valley, said "That area is much too beautiful to pack with houses. We totally support the conservationists and others who are opposed to this

"I will be in touch with Neville Riley (chairman of the South Peninsula Municipality's planning committee) and we will do everything we can to support them, even if it means giving financial support for a court case."

Mr Louis said he had twice visited the site and had been advised and informed by "a wide range of competent, professional people"



These had included staff of the provincial directorates of transport, planning services, and land use management, as well as the Planning Advisory Board

"They all supported the development subject to various conditions," he said

During a meeting with environmentalists after making his decision, Mr Louis was challenged to name those who had supported his decision

They were environmental scientist Neal Carter, land surveyor Ken Baard, engineer and chairman of the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company Louis de Waal, town and regional planner Derek Chittenden, architect Trudi Groenewald, and lawyer Michael Radomsky

The chairman of the board is Christo Kannenberg, who heads the Cape Town company The Planning Partnership. Mr Kannenberg recused himself from the

decision about Dassenberg because his company was responsible for submitting the failed rezoning application to the South Peninsula Municipality, and the subsequent appeal to Mr Louis, on behalf of the owner

Mr Louis also said that all the comments relating to the development were documented and could be seen by all affected parties.

"The final number of units will have to be determined by the South Peninsula Municipality, based on the outcome of the environmental management plan/programme

"It is important to note that a detailed site development plan, a revised layout plan, with a sensitively designed development as well as building platforms for each of these units, must be submitted to council for approval

"The final say in regard to the proposed development - including the number of units - therefore rests with the South Peninsula Municipality"

But this is disputed by the environmental lobby, which has legal advice that Mr Louis's decision is now *functus officio* - in other words, it stands and can only be overturned by a court of law

New rates a step in right direction, says exco head

(124)

FATIMA SCHROEDER
and JUDY DAMON

THE City of Cape Town presented its new rates system to residents' associations, civic organisations and members of the public at a meeting last night.

The new system, announced on March 26, was designed with the aim of correcting the inequities of the previous rates system, established in 1979.

"We are aware that the system does not bring about equity and fairness, but it is an interim process and it is a start in bringing about equity and fairness," said council exco chairperson Salcém Mowzer.

Until now, most rates have been set against a valuation roll done in 1979. Property in Pinelands was set against a 1988 valuation roll, areas that fell under the old Regional Services Council had a roll based on 1974 values, and areas that fell under the Black Local Authorities Act have never been valued for property tax.

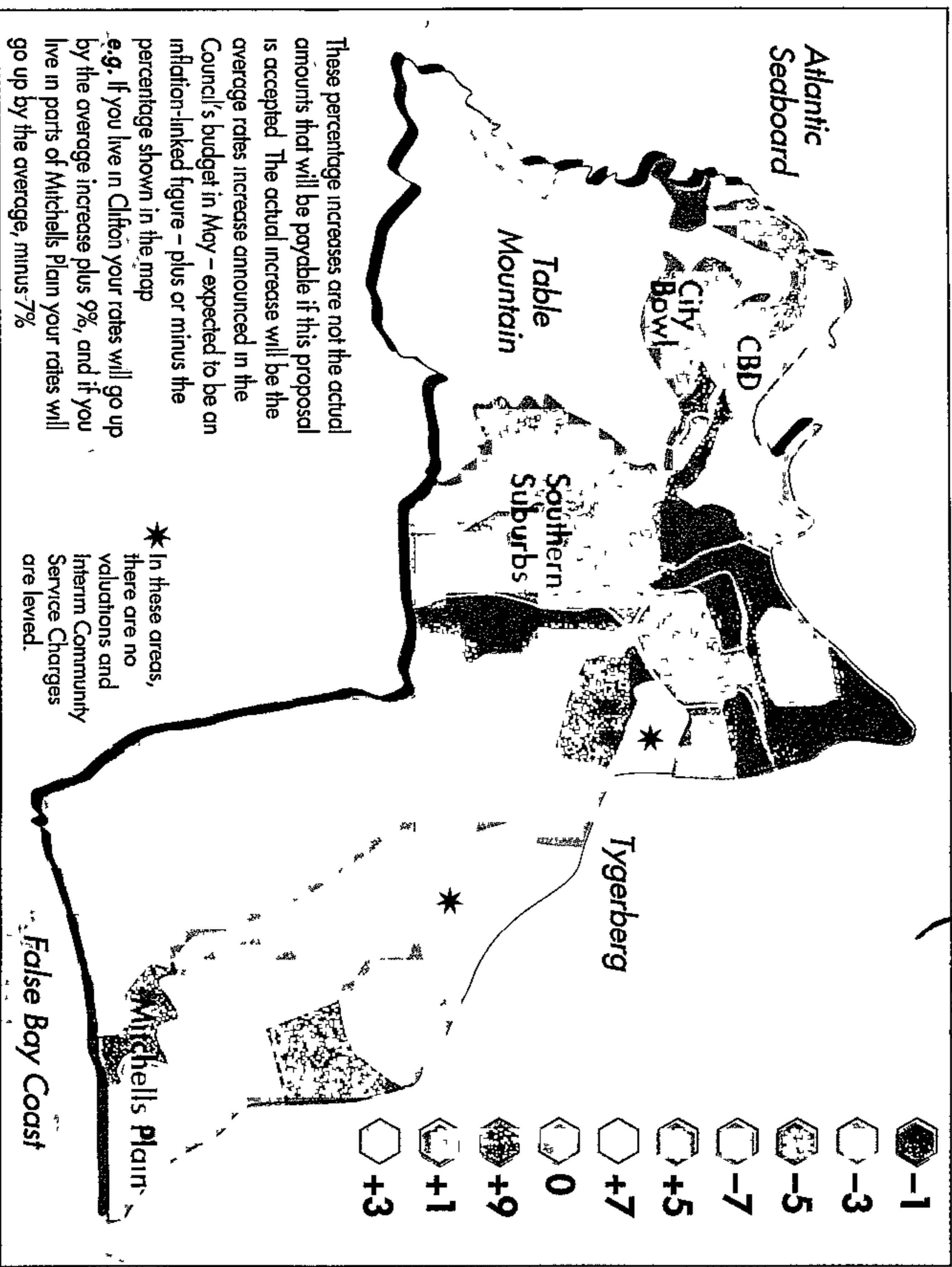
In 1997 the council resolved to prepare a new valuation roll based on the market value of land. Since then, the council has reconsidered a land-only evaluation.

The new system will see some home-owners in the municipality's 32 areas paying higher increases than others, and residents of other areas getting extra money in their pockets with decreased rates.

Residents of Camps Bay will have to fork out seven percent more, Clifton residents nine percent, Bantley Bay residents seven percent, and Sea Point, Tamboerskloof and Oranjezicht residents an extra five percent.

However, those in Hanover Park, Eastridge, Beacon Valley and Tafelsig will pay seven percent less, and those in Manenberg, Nyanga, Guguletu and Langa can look forward to a five percent reduction.

If accepted by the council, the new system will be introduced on July 1.



Delft gets new housing project

MANDLA MNYAKAMA

THE launch of the Wesbank Housing Development Project in Delft yesterday was not motivated by the national election, Western Cape Housing MEC Cecil Herandien said

"It's not because of the coming elections. We had this initiative for a long time," he said, handing over the keys to Delft residents who moved into the first 60 houses of the 5 500 two-bedroom homes to be provided for people in the Oostenberg municipal area

There are two houses — each equipped with a bath and a toilet — per plot to save land

In the near future, 20 houses will be built each day. Schalk Vorster, of project managers BKS, said the project was valued at R120 million. He said R92m came from the government's housing subsidies

The initiative was aimed at making houses available to poor people, most of whom were on the waiting list of the Oostenberg municipality area, he said

They would try to house all people who were on this list, he added

In spite of the problems of cracks and damp which other Delft residents experienced in the past, Herandien said he was pleased with the quality of the houses

"This is a very good example and people here are satisfied with it," he said

He also urged residents from the area to stop criticising initiatives by the housing board

"People out there should stop criticising the change

"They must come and see how grateful the beneficiaries of these houses are," he said

David Reed, one of the Delft residents who received the keys to his house, said he was overwhelmed to have his own brick house after living in a one-roomed shack for many years

"I really feel good and satisfied to get my own house. I praise and thank our government for helping us. I hope to live a happy life with my family in the



FUTURE UNLOCKED: David Reed (right) gets the keys to his new house from Western Cape Housing MEC Cecil Herandien. **PICTURE MANDLA MNYAKAMA**

coming years," he said

Other residents in the area also expressed their gratitude for the project

Oostenberg municipality housing director Cecil Africa said the project set the pace for other municipalities in the province

He urged those who had not yet registered their applications for the Oostenberg integrated housing waiting-list, to do so

Africa also asked those who moved out of the area after registration to contact his department

In the past few years, Western Cape residents who claimed to have had their names on the Provincial Housing Board's waiting lists for many years illegally occupied houses from other projects in the area

Other residents were conned by people who demanded hundreds of rands in return for guaranteed housing

ET 14/11/99



HANNES THART

Thirsty work: Frances Salie, left, leads residents during a sit-in at the Bonteheuwel rent office to protest against water cuts

Water supply cuts spark sit-in

(124) ARG 15/4/99

CHANTEL ERFORT
STAFF REPORTER

"Put our taps on now!" This is the demand of more than 50 Bonteheuwel families who have had the water supply to their homes cut off.

Men, women and children yesterday staged a sit-in at the Bonteheuwel rent office in response to the council's decision to cut off the water supply to homes where residents were in arrears with their water bills.

Although the cost of the first 10kl of water consumed is equivalent to that of the cost of three tins of cool drink, some residents are already in arrears by up to R5 000.

When residents expressed outrage at water cuts in other areas, council officials said they had been warned to pay up or make an arrangement with local officials.

But South African Civics Organisation representative Yusuf Cassiem said the main problem was the manner in which the water was cut. He said neither residents nor local ward councillors were informed of the decision to cut the water supply, nor did officials implement what is referred to as the trickle system.

Bonteheuwel resident Frances Salie said her water supply had been cut, despite her having made an arrangement to pay arrears.

She said she was late in paying

her most recent instalment.

The residents are also concerned that being without water is unhealthy.

Mr Cassiem said "The council thinks they're solving problems, but they're just creating a bigger one - a health problem."

Tygerberg municipal spokesman Hugo Steenberg said the council would not back down on its decision as residents had been given fair warning.

"People are given months to pay and they only wake up on the day their water is cut. We appreciate some people don't have the money, but that is why we tell them they must come to us and make arrangements to pay off their debts."

City's 'rough and ready' rates plan

JENNY VIALL
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

ARG 16/4/99

The new differentiated rates system proposed for the Cape Town municipality is not perfect, but it does begin to address inequities of the old system, says a council finance chief.

Philip van Ryneveld, the city's executive director of corporate finance, was addressing a meeting last night of representatives of residents' and civic associations.

The civic centre briefing was part of the council's process of consultation on the new rates system.

Under the new system, a general rates increase will be announced. In each area rate-payers will then either get a discount or pay a premium on this amount, depending on the value of property in the area.

Mr Van Ryneveld said the old system of a fixed increase for all areas was unfair,

because it did not take into account that property values increased much more in some areas than others. In some areas, property values had tripled in value, in others, they had gone up 30 times.

The new system has pegged increases in such areas as Clifton at the average increase (to be decided in May) plus 9%.

Other areas - parts of Mitchell's Plain, for example - will rise by the average minus 7%.

These figures will apply both for this financial year and the 2000/2001 financial year.

It is an interim measure until a metropolitan-wide rates system is implemented in 2001, based on a new valuation roll.

"It's not a perfect solution, it's a rough-and-ready solution," Mr Van Ryneveld told the meeting, "but there is general consistency."

In drawing up the figures for property rates increases, house sales over a period of 20 years in all areas were looked at.

Rates shock for southern suburbs wealthy

Constantia and Tokai hit hard but most get good news

JENNY WALL
Staff Reporter

Property owners in Constantia and Tokai face hefty rates increases when the South Peninsula Municipality announces its annual budget next month.

And on top of the general rates increase, they will pay an additional 13.5%.

So, if this year's general increase is similar to the 19% of last year, people in Constantia and Tokai will face a 32.5% rates increase.

But there is good news for virtually everybody else in the South Peninsula.

Property owners in Retreat will pay the general increase, minus 3.76%, those in Plumstead the general increase, minus 2.86%, and those in Muizenberg the general increase, minus 1.69%.

Most in the area will pay the general increase, minus a small percent

age, but those in up-market areas face paying more. Those in Hout Bay will be charged the general increase, plus 3.19%, and in Llandudno the general increase, plus 2.53%.

The proposed differentiated increases are aimed at addressing discrepancies in the basis on which rates have been levied.

The municipality inherited 18 different area valuation rolls when it was established in 1996, resulting in discrepancies in rates levied in all its areas.

This means that property owners in areas like Grassy Park paid higher rates than those in Constantia.

And this apparent unfairness was compounded every time the rates were increased by the same percentages across the whole South Peninsula.

The proposed new system, similar to one being introduced in the Cape Town Municipal area, has been calculated by using existing general valuation rolls for all the

areas, says Fiona Ogle, Valuations and Rating Co-ordinator for the South Peninsula Municipality.

The old Cape Town areas were then further broken down into sub-areas, and rates levied for the 1999/2000 financial year based on existing valuation rolls.

"We combined the rates and services for each individual general valuation area to achieve a uniform base," she said. "We have adjusted the rates and services paid in 15-18/89 by using an index that has been created out of a number of factors, including the 1997 land-only valuation exercise."

"This creates a differentiation in the rates and services base for 1998/99."

The general percentage increase would be determined by whatever inflation increase was required to balance the 1999/2000 budget.

The South Peninsula Municipality will also introduce uniformity in service charges for sewers, and for

refuse collection in all areas.

The long-term solution to resolving the discrepancies in rates between different areas will be a metropole-wide valuation, which will be done once a uni-city is formed in two years.

Property owners in the South Peninsula have been asked to comment on these proposals before May 30.

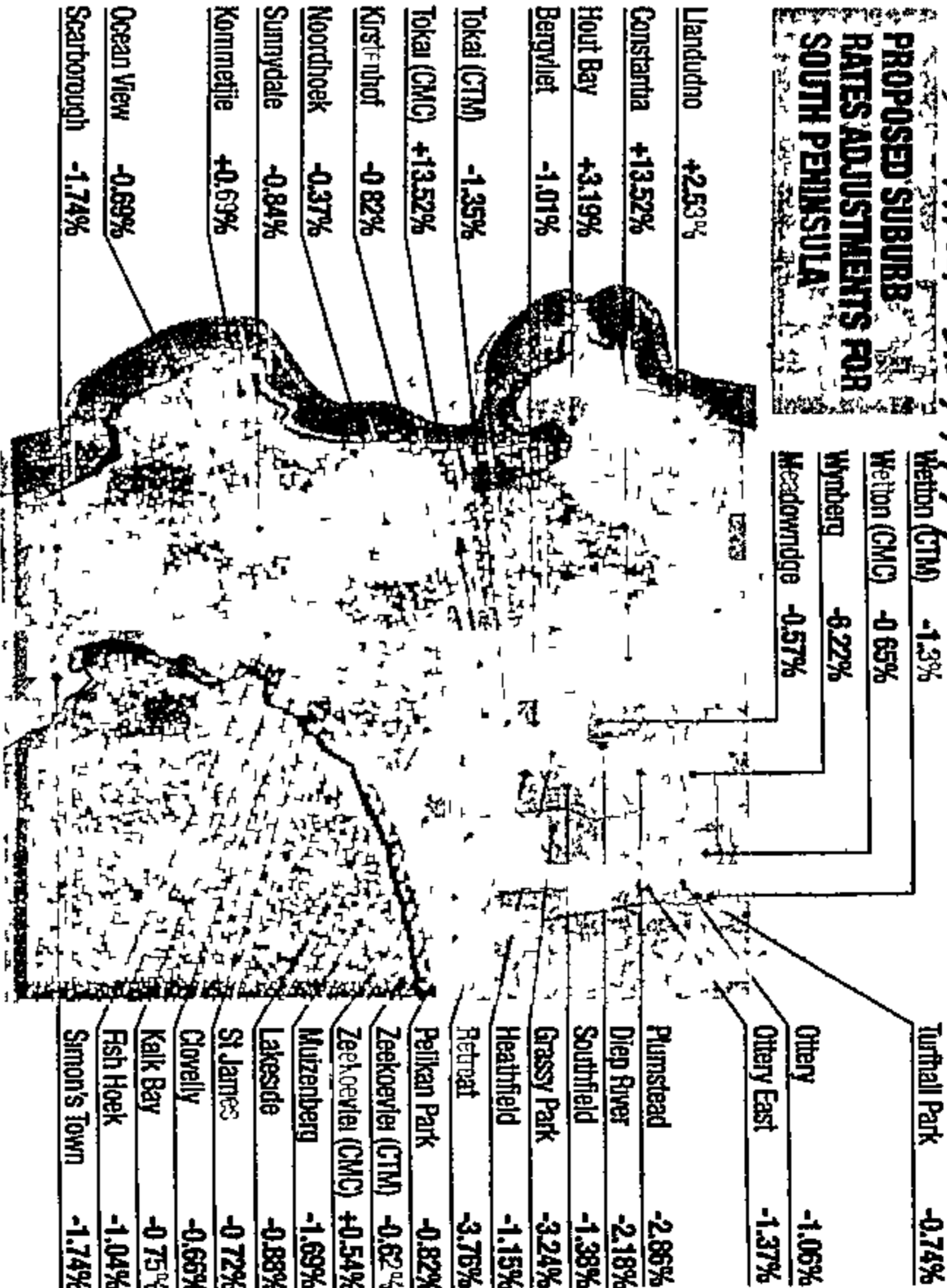
Meanwhile Tygerberg and Blaauwburg municipalities have not yet decided how their annual rates increases will be levied.

George Van Schalkwyk, head of Finance for Blaauwburg, said his council was investigating a differential system, but he didn't expect there to be major shifts in rates increases.

The council would make a final decision at its meeting on May 24.

A Tygerberg spokesman also confirmed that the municipality had not decided on a system of increases for the next financial year.

(124) ARR 22/4/99
PROPOSED SUBURB RATES ADJUSTMENTS FOR SOUTH PENINSULA



I am not misleading the public - Louis

Municipality will determine how many houses built at Dassenberg, says minister

DKL 29/4/99

(124)

Western Cape Planning Minister Michael Louis has given an assurance that the South Peninsula Municipality (SPM) will determine how many houses can be developed on Dassenberg farm at Noorhoek.

Mr Louis also said he had not disregarded the advice of his Planning Advisory Board (PAB) but had put more restrictions on his approval than had been recommended by the board.

He stressed he had not approved the developer's proposed layout for 176 houses as the application had been approved subject to numerous amendments - including SPM approval of a detailed site development plan of up to 170 units.

Nor had he attempted to mislead anyone in his comments about the issue in a letter to the media.

"It was a sensitive application. I do respect the PAB's recommendations and in this instance I knew I went even more stringent than they advised me to be," Mr Louis said. "I didn't reject anything that the PAB said (and) I haven't been misleading the public."

His comments came in a comprehensive interview with the Cape Argus about his controversial decision to uphold an appeal for rezoning of the Dassenberg property for single residential development.

The interview was attended by senior provincial planning officials. The rezoning application for Dassenberg was rejected by the SPM - a decision supported by the Cape Metropolitan Council, conservation groups and SA National Parks (formerly the National Parks Board).

Asked to explain why he had upheld the developer's appeal in the face of decisions taken by democratically elected local institutions Mr Louis said he had been under a legal obligation to consider the matter



JOHN YELD ENVIRONMENT WRITER

"I can't tell you how many times I've gone through this Dassenberg document. I looked at it seriously. I don't take any application lightly. At the end of the day I need to look at the owner's legal rights as well."

"I think in this country we need leaders that make decisions that are sometimes not popular decisions because of the legalities."

"So with respect, looking at this application, the one thing I can say is that I didn't make a political decision. And I think that needs some form of credibility."

"I took a decision because I looked at the rights of the individual. I take my job seriously. I've got certain information in front of me and I have to make a juristic decision."

"I know the nobility of the way I looked at this application - the way I considered the facts."

Mr Louis said he had been unhappy about approving a maximum number of 170 units.

"I wanted to put 70 or 80 on that site, but I couldn't justify it legally. I can't sit here and thumbuck a figure of how many houses because I'm not an entrepreneur."

"Because I'm legal custodian of the land of the country, I had to be able to legally motivate it (his decision)."

"And my department couldn't give me some form of substance to get it to justify a lower mark other wise I would have done it honestly." His department had recommended 170 units and had assured him

that the SPM would determine the actual number of houses to be built and would have to approve a detailed site development plan.

"And I was satisfied with that," said Mr Louis. "There are certain rights on that land - I need to look at the legalities because I don't want to fight another court battle with them (the developers)."

"The council (South Peninsula Municipality) will determine, at the end of the day, what has been approved."

According to legal advice obtained by some environmental organisations, Mr Louis's approval of a maximum number of 170 units means the developer is now entitled to build that number, and that only the size and specific locality of each need to be negotiated with the local authority.

But Mr Louis said this did not accord with advice from his department.

"And I want to say this categorically: if the advice that I've got from my department is wrong, I'm prepared to revise that decision, because I believe that 170 units is a lot of units for that site."

So why then set a maximum number of units at all?

"Because there is a complication - because the Planning Advisory Board recommended a higher density," said Mr Louis.

The Dassenberg property is 78,7ha, of which 31ha lies within the Cape Peninsula Protected Natural Environment and which, in terms of Mr Louis's approval, must be ceded to the Cape Peninsula National Park.

Mr Louis said the Planning Advisory Board had recommended that an area of about 10ha be developed, including low, medium- and high-density housing. His department had confirmed to



Controversial decision, Western Cape Planning Minister Michael Louis

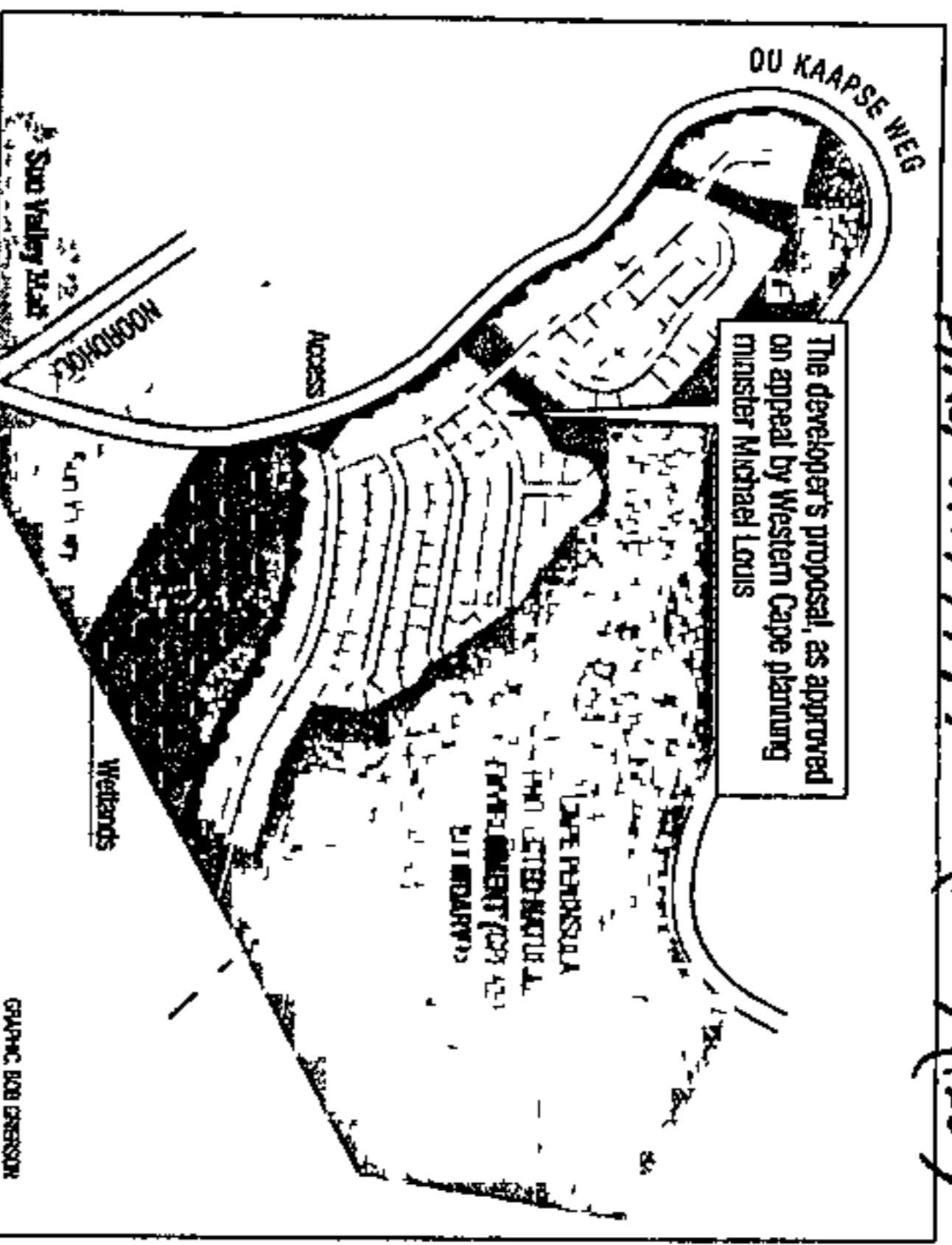
him that, in terms of the board's recommendations relating to high-density development, this could result in up to 280 housing units on the site.

"I said I wouldn't like there to be so many units on that site. I can't keep it open-ended, let's restrict it."

Because of the requirements to be approved by South Peninsula Municipality - such as drainage - the developers would not be able to get near the 170 unit maximum mark, Mr Louis predicted.

Asked if the SPM's decision would stand if decided that only five or 10 houses could be built, Mr Louis said "That's right. The developer has the right of appeal (to the minister) but I can say that decision will stand."

Regarding Dassenberg, if there's any way it's been misinterpreted or that there's definitely a right to 170 units, I can give you the assurance I



Not approved: planning Minister Michael Louis says this is the developer's proposal for Dassenberg and is not what he had approved

will definitely ask for an amendment of my conditions, because it's not my intention."

Mr Louis's officials pointed out that the minister could not have approved the Planning Advisory Board's recommendation for some high-density development, as this was not what the developer had applied for.

In a "discussion document" tabled during the meeting, Mr Louis said most of the restrictions imposed, and further processes prescribed, for Dassenberg related to the environment.

"A neglected wetlands area, areas subject to illegal occupation, infertile (sic) with alien vegetation (floodplains and blue gum), dumping of rubble, etc, will be rehabilitated and in future managed according to a sound environmental plan as a result of the approval."

"A scarce leopard toad in the wetlands area will be protected (where it is currently unprotected)."

"The upper slopes of the hillside have now been secured against the erection of any further structures and an area of 31ha will be transferred free of charge to the National Parks Board."

"The environment and the broader area can only gain by the approval of the application."

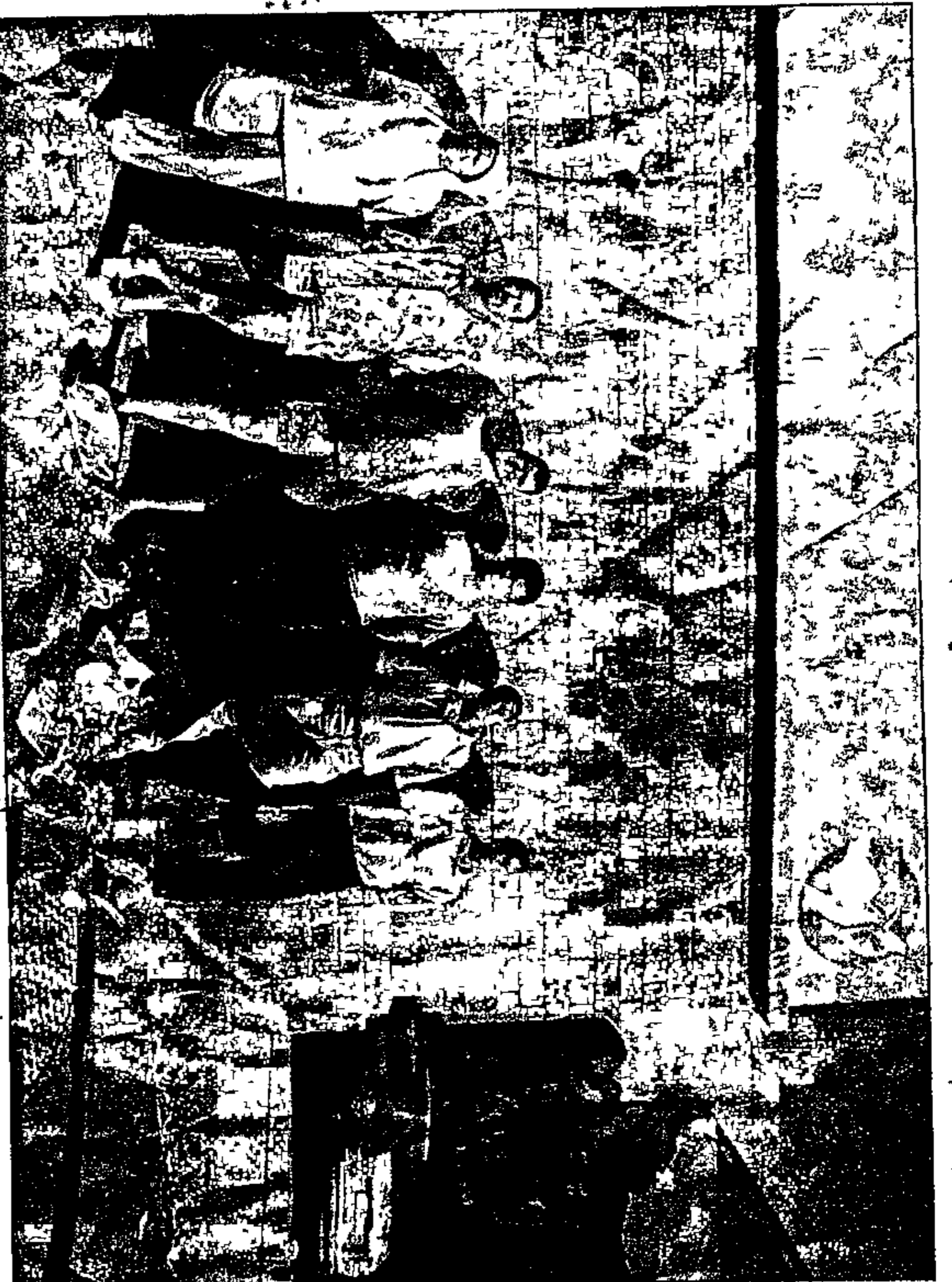
Mr Louis also said he and his department dealt with urbanisation, developmental and environmental matters on a daily basis, "where in most cases development and conservation are opposite poles and most likely to be controversial."

"I am proud of the way we have performed in taking due cognisance of environmental matters in our considerations - as is also evident in this instance."

IN the 1960s the government began hounding black people from their houses and herding them into 'group areas'. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the construction of one such area, for coloured people only: Manenberg. Special Assignments Team ROGER FRIEDMAN and BENNY GOOL investigate if there's cause to celebrate, in a two-part feature, the second leg of which appears tomorrow.



WELL TRAVELLED: Blockman Abraham Lucas moved into Manenberg 30 years ago. "I was born in the Mother City, District Six, a real place of happiness," he says



CLAN: Members of the Kinnes family outside Bellinda Court where they were raised. Ten brothers and sisters occupied a single bedroom. None of them succumbed to gangsterism. They say their father was very strict. In the picture are Wendy, Dennis, Ivin, Marwaan, Angus and Wayne

'I can't say I hate the place, I have nowhere else to go'

CT 29/4/99

(244)

"WHEN I came in, this place had nothing like a vlei, with bushes its name was Druwelei and it resembled a farm. After we had been here for about a year, they said the place's name was Mollenberg, then they changed it to Manenberg. Edna Hendricks, 74, was one of the first to move into the area, forcibly removed with her family in 1966 from Diep River into a flat in Beatrix Walk. It was three years before the township was christened Manenberg.

She still lives there today.
"My flat was three days old when we arrived. I was working for Dr Cohen in Diep River and he got the place for me.
"I felt terrible. I had to walk all the way to the bus stop on the other side of the vlei. My tears flowed when I travelled through that wet place in the mornings.

"Now, after all these years, I have forgotten the pain. I can't say I hate the place, I have nowhere else to go."
Dennis Kinnes, 42, is a long-distance trucker. He moved out of Manenberg five years ago with his family, into a more "respectable" neighbourhood on the outskirts of Mitchells Plain.
"Before we came here we lived in an old farm house in a

coloured racial classification and their membership of this newly created "community". Residents battled to put together the pieces of their lives, in a strange place, far from where they worked, which quickly developed a name for itself as a gangsters' paradise.

In the early 1970s, the most successful community-building exercise in Manenberg's history mushroomed in response to gangs and crime.

Almost everybody — bar the gangsters — pitched in to help the Peacemakers, branches of which were formed by residents in each block of sub-economic Manenberg flats (commonly referred to as courts).

"One of my sons was a peacemaker," Hendricks tells. "I always used to bring Detroit and dressings from the doctor's rooms to the Peacemakers club here in the lane. Most of the people who were around then are already dead."

"The Peacemakers wanted to keep the place quiet, and it worked for a while. We could sit outside when it was hot — which is not to say that the people around here now are doing the shooting."



41

out of Manenberg five years ago with his family, into a more "respectable" neighbourhood on the outskirts of Mitchells Plain.

"Before we came here we lived in an old farm house in a place now called Primrose Park in Surey Estate. We were living in one room in that farmhouse, all nine children and our parents.

"It was 1969. I was in Std 4. We walked the two or three kilometres to our new house with all our belongings.

"I suppose, if you think of one room, we didn't have all that much to carry.

"We were the second family to move into Belinda Court. If I'm not mistaken My first impression was 'Wow, a house'.

"We kids had our own bedroom, and there was a lounge and an outside toilet.

"Night and day, people were moving in. Within a week the court was full.

Members of the Kinnes family still occupy their original flat.

Walter and Hazel Harding were among the first families to move into Dorothy Court, after being kicked out of their rented accommodation in Steenberg.

"We came here and saw the place, and we asked them if they couldn't give us a place somewhere else. But they told us the forms had already been signed and we had to move.

"So we tried to make the best of it. I told my wife 'Seeing as they've forced us to live here we will just have to make the best of our lives'.

"On that first night she cried. And it was not the first night. But I'm quite happy now," Mrs Harding says. "It will serve no purpose for us to move from here now, I would rather stay here than in Mitchells Plain."

"Yes," he agrees. "We know each and everybody here in Manenberg. She doesn't want to walk in the streets with me, hello Mr Harding, how are you?"

Hendricks, Kinnes and the Hardings were Manenberg pioneers. Others came from District Six, Rondebosch, Claremont, Wynberg. They had two things in common. Their

doing the shooting." Hendricks does not want to be photographed in case someone doesn't like what she says, recognises and shoots her. There are bullet holes in her ceiling and walls, stray bullets which travelled through her open front door during gang fights in the past, she says.

Kinnes recalls the Peacemakers with affection. "I had my orange jacket, my brother Peter had his, and so did my father. It was two or three years after we moved in that it started. Gangsters would come running through the court with hammers, smashing windows.

"Every court had its own crew and siren (which doubled as a call to battle and an alarm). We would patrol around our own court. Looking back, it really seemed to work. I remember a report in the newspapers once under a headline 'Manenberg safer than Sea Point'.

An incident I remember clearly was getting a call from Kay Street one Friday night from a couple who were both bashed them around and walked out with their fridge.

"We looked for these guys and found two carrying a fridge through the bush. We caught one of them. He went to the police station later that night with a fridge full of food, after we had given him a good hiding."

Mr Harding was picked as the Peacemakers first president in Dorothy Court. After a house, which doubled as a shop, was robbed, the men of the court were called together.

"What we decided to do was form a protection group for the court. We went to the police station in Phillipi and explained what we were doing. We told them that we would buy a siren and install panic buttons in each flat. If anybody came looking for trouble the siren would go off and the men would go out and attack them.

"The whole of Manenberg saw that this thing was working, so they approached us. In the end, all the courts followed a similar formula."

A series of events forced the suspension of the Peacemakers.

There were complaints that they were too tough, that



INNOCENCE. A child plays in Manenberg, where, these days, colourful graffiti acts as a constant reminder of the depth of the gang problem in the area.

their orange bibs were being used by muggers, and there was a racial scare involving the Peacemakers and African residents of neighbouring Gugulethu.

A police station was built in Manenberg and the police told the Peacemakers to sign up as reservists.

But the police force was tainted, and the community spirit quickly dissipated.

In 1976 the apartheid war touched down in Manenberg. The anti-apartheid student insurrection which began in Soweto in June spread rapidly across the country.

Kinnes' younger brother, Irvn, was a child then. But in places such as Manenberg children were required to grow up fast. The younger Kinnes was there when the first stone was cast.

"That was when I became aware of politics for the first time. I was in Std 3 at Primrose Park Primary School, and a march was held to close the school.

"We marched to Mustapha's General Store and found the shop burning. The crowd stopped everyone in the street, and if they didn't say 'Black Power' they would be stoned. We were still children, but the police became our enemy.

"Later that day, we were standing on Manenberg Avenue, milling around, knowing we had to do something, but not

knowing what.

"Walter Rhoads (now a senior member of the police protection service in Cape Town) was the first person to throw a stone. He shouted 'Black Power' and threw a stone through the windscreen of a City Tramways bus. Then we all threw stones."

Political activity intensified in the 1980s with the establishment of new organisations, some of them affiliated to the ANC-leaning United Democratic Front. Student and youth movements were started, and civic organisations.

It was a time of political upheaval, of boycotts, burning barricades and defiance. Of repression, detention, beating.

And it was a time of criminal renaissance, of intensifying gangster activity — much of it aided, abetted, or, at least, condoned — by the state.

All the while, Manenberg degenerated. The population increased, but extra houses were not built to accommodate them. Gang affiliation increased, but no steps were taken to address the underlying causes. Unemployment increased, poverty increased, apathy increased.

These are the things which shaped the Manenberg of today, which we examine tomorrow, in the second instalment of this feature.

Manenberg the anthem captured nation's mood

THOUGH his biggest hit is named after the township, renowned Cape Town pianist Abdullah Ibrahim (formerly known as Dollar Brand) never stayed in Manenberg.

"I was born in Kensington, then moved to District Six. So I never physically lived there, though many of my friends and family were moved to Manenberg," Ibrahim said in a telephone interview from the United States.

"My close connection was of course Basil Coetzee, whose family was forcibly removed."

Coetzee, a saxophonist known as Basil "Manenberg" Coetzee, died last year.

"When we recorded *Manenberg* in 1976, the Soweto uprising was just beginning. Basil, Robbie Jansen, Monty Weber and I went into the studio in Cape Town to record five, six or seven songs for an album.

"During a tea break I found this old piano in the corner. They used to put drawing pins in the hammers, to give it a harpsichord effect. I wrote the song in about five minutes, and we recorded it in one take.

"We then went on recording the other songs. It was only afterwards, when we listened to the playback, that we realised we had captured the mood of the whole country. It almost became an unofficial national anthem.

"If you look at what they were put through, you have to commend the people of Manenberg. The deep traumatising effects of forced removals are felt by generations. The pain and hurts still there, you can't just wish it away.

"The title of the song was a stamp of approval of the validity of that type of existence. Other people were singing about Chicago and leaving their heart in San Francisco."

These days, when he is not touring, Ibrahim is involved in setting up a music academy at the Cape Town City Hall, with the backing of the city and the Department of Arts and Culture.

The academy will develop talent in a range of fields, from music through martial arts to meditation.

"The idea is to do outreach programmes to



PEACEMAKER: Walter Harding, 66 — photographed with his grand-daughter, Cayn — was one of the founder members of the Peacemakers and is well known in Manenberg.

Fight over funds for poor

THE Cape Town City Council declared a formal dispute with the Cape Metropolitan Council yesterday over the allocation of money to upgrade poverty-stricken areas. **JUDITH SOAL** reports.

A R50 MILLION fund meant for poverty relief has been allocated to cushy projects rather than the most urgent ones in an attempt to win favour with certain voters before the election, the city council said yesterday.

The ANC-dominated council voted to declare the dispute with the NNP-led metropolitan council — the first such dispute under the new local government laws. The city said the metro's about-turn on the criteria for the allocation of the money was "illegal, inequitable and unconstitutional".

In terms of the law, the city council is not able to take another government body to court but can refer the dispute for mediation and arbitration. In the meantime the proposed community projects will be put on hold.

"The metro council said the R50m would be allocated to low-income areas for projects that are considered absolute priorities," said Tony Gocini, deputy chairperson of the city's executive committee.

"It was supposed to provide new or upgraded infrastructure such as roads, stormwater drains, sewers, water and electricity.

"We put forward a series of projects we considered urgent but then the metropolitan council changed the criteria midstream and made their own proposals."

The projects which the metropolitan council approved include:

- R1,8m towards a beachfront erosion protection project in Camps Bay
- R1,44m towards the Hugo Lamprecht Music Centre in Parow in the Tygerberg region
- R530 000 towards the upgrading of Boshoff Gates in Newlands
- R315 000 towards the upgrading of Zeekoevlei Tennis Court in the South Peninsula Municipality

The city council had submitted proposals including R9m for upgrading streets and stormwater drainage in Langa, R5m for sewers in Philippi Industria and R500 000 for street lighting in Brown's Farm.

The Brown's Farm proposal was accepted but the metro's evaluation committee cut the Langa project's allocation to just R500 000. They also rejected the Philippi proposal.

Other projects not submitted by the city but

within the city's borders — such as those in Camps Bay and Newlands — were approved.

The city council believes the metro council is stepping outside of its area of jurisdiction.

"We had sat down and decided on the priorities and areas of most urgent need," said Gocini. "Now the metropolitan council comes with other proposals that aren't based on an overall assessment of the region."

He said the NNP, with the co-operation of the DP, is using the money to buy votes by prioritising projects in areas that have traditionally supported the parties.

Pierre Uys, chairperson of the metro executive committee, in turn accused the ANC of trying to whip up support ahead of the election.

"This dispute is just about party politics. That money belongs to the Cape Metropolitan Council and we are free to allocate it as it as we see fit. We didn't say it must only be for poor areas."

In terms of the Local Government Transitional Act, the two parties now have seven days to reach a compromise. If they fail, the dispute will be referred for mediation.

If no agreement has been reached within two weeks, it will be referred to arbitration for a decision.

This may be the first formal dispute between the region's two tiers of government, but it is not the first time they have clashed.

Though they have distinct areas of responsibility — with the local municipal councils in charge of infrastructure such as road maintenance, sewers and refuse removal and the metro in charge of broader functions such as bulk water services, air pollution and metropolitan planning — they frequently lock horns over finances.

Sources in the city council say more disputes are expected soon. The city has objected to metro's proposed six percent increase in water tariffs, it disagrees with the way poverty grants have been allocated, and it disputes metro's stipulation that it have the final say over all consultants appointed by the city council.

"These disputes reinforce the argument for a megacity with one tier of government," said ANC councillor Les Recontre. "That way we could just get on with the delivery of services."

CT 30/4/99

(124)

*"Full many a gem of purest ray
serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of
ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to
blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the
desert air."
—Elegy written in a country
churchyard, Thomas Gray, 1751*

A place that can be hard to call home

WHEN Manenberg residents apply for jobs they don't like to say where they live because of the stigma attached to the place. This is the second and final part of a special feature commemorating the 30th anniversary of the construction of Manenberg. Special Assignments Team **ROGER FRIEDMAN** and **BENNY GOOL** report

ABOUT two-thirds of Manenberg's population is unemployed. Residents owe the Cape Town City Council nearly R16 million in outstanding rent, and nearly R6 million more for water, electricity and rates. There is a housing crisis, a teenage pregnancy crisis, a major gang problem, rampant tuberculosis, apathy and social depression.

It's no wonder that a former top housing official recently suggested that the best solution could be to raze the place and rebuild it from scratch.

Manenberg is the perfect example of why apartheid social engineering was wrong, a



ROOM TO MANOEUVRE: Christene and Daniel Barends occupy a two-bedroomed flat in Manenberg, with 17 relatives. They don't often have this much space to themselves. Of the 19 people in the house, one earns R390 a week and another about R50 a week. That is the household's total income. They owe the city council R6 646 for rent (about six years' worth) and R2 063 for water.

Johnson noted in a recent funding proposal that the majority of households have an income of less than R1 070 a month, while 46% of households were totally dependent on much smaller state pensions and grants.

He said 45 gangs were active in the area, the largest being the Hard Livings, Clever Kids, Americans and Jesters.

Manenberg's problems could only be solved with the full participation of the government and members of the community.

Owen Munro, another community activist, says that organisations have been trying to encourage residents to form court and street

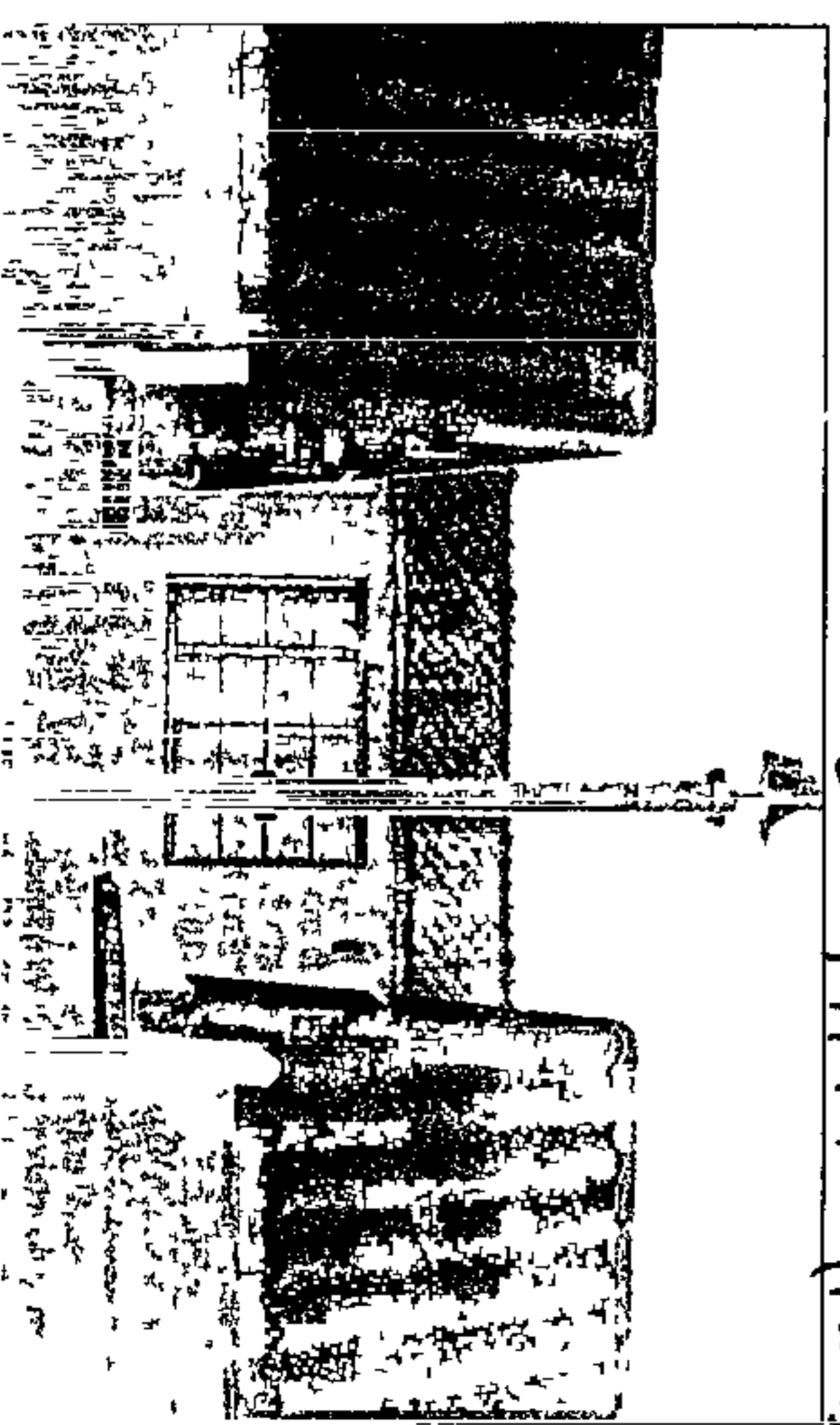
committees, and then, by being more positive, change the perceptions of people outside Manenberg.

"Outside Manenberg, everybody thinks anyone who comes from Manenberg is bad. Because of that perception, when people go and look for work and employers hear they are from Manenberg, they are immediately placed in a certain category.

"That adds to the unemployment. We need to change it."

De Vries is convinced that the people of Manenberg hold its destiny in their hands. She would like to see residents own the flats and duplexes they now rent, but believes they need to be taught how to manage them first — and the culture of non-payment for services needs to be addressed in the process.

"If people take control, there is hope. They have been indoctrinated that only white people are capable of picking them up



CT 30/4/99 (124)

apartheid social engineering was wrong, a coloured ghetto with a proud history of resistance which finally seems to have been battered into submission.

While the living conditions are not the worst in Cape Town by far, the people's spirit seems to be more broken than in most squatter camps. The few community organisations active in the area are short of funds. And it hasn't helped that politicians have for most of this decade been reinforcing the perception in the minds of Manenberg residents that they are coloured and that their interests will not be served by an African-dominated government.

About 80 000 people live in Manenberg. There are only 5 065 housing units in the area (about 16 people per unit), so nearly half of the people live in shacks in backyards. Many residents occupy sub-economic flats in blocks built in pairs separated by narrow concrete slabs.

According to Faghrudeen Johnson, chairman of the executive committee of the Manenberg People's Centre, the area's greatest problems are housing, crime — including child abuse and rape, "the problems nobody wants to talk about" — and teenage pregnancies.

The people's centre offers a legal advice service, counselling, sport and cultural development, and a venue for community meetings. Its main focus, presently, is on the teaching of skills and job creation.

encourage residents to form court and street committees for about 10 years.

"Until people take control of their youth and their areas, we will see our problems continuing to grow," he says.

Around the corner at the Silvertree Community Development Centre, which opened its doors 30 years ago in July, honorary director Frank Gutuza believes there is light at the end of the tunnel for Manenberg.

"The Peacemakers were successful because the people in the courts came together and took control.

"The gangs today are different, but I think there are still ways of dealing with them.

"The leaders of different organisations are starting to get together and people are starting to organise again. I think we can go places.

"This new getting-together is strongly geared towards the learning of skills and job creation," Gutuza says.

ANC city councillor Faldela de Vries, who lives in the area, says she could have moved out long ago, but did not because she has a vision of a Manenberg transformed.

"I think such a vision can only come from within the community.

"We have to become more positive as indi-

white people are capable of picking them up. They want to be recipients of handouts instead of improving the community fibre.

"About 65% of the people are unemployed, but about 70% of them are not paying for services," she points out.

Marlene Russo, of the New National Party and the Western Cape Community Organisation, agrees that those who can afford to pay should be forced to do so. But it is "unconstitutional" to cut services such as the provision of water where residents cannot afford food to eat, she says.

People should be allowed to own the accommodation many of them had rented for 30 years, and what they could afford to pay for services should be individually assessed.

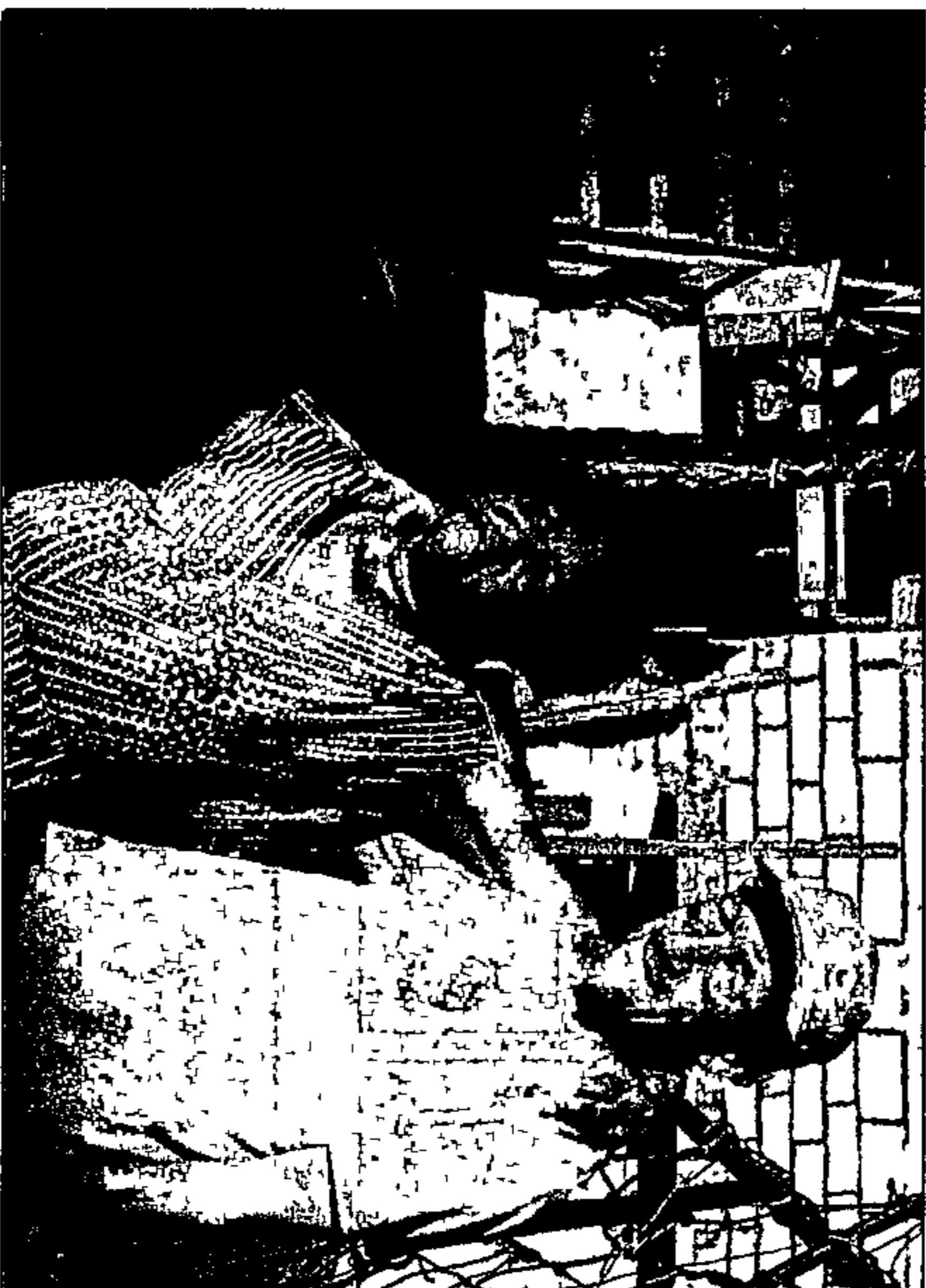
"In some areas, council has given people the chance of free transfer.

"But in coloured areas they are saying people must clear their service charge arrears before being offered transfer."

Resident Sally Zealand accompanies Russo to picket outside the housing office in the township. "If we coloured people all stand together, things will improve," she says.

It's a working day. Half of Manenberg lounges in the streets.

'Until people take control of their youth and their areas, we will see our problems continue to grow.'



DESPERATE: Abraham and Elizabeth Valentine have been living in a shack in the backyard of a council flat in Manenberg for three years. They pay the woman who rents the flat R100 rent a month. They are at her mercy. If they don't pay, she'll kick them out. He has a garden job once a week, she chairs in Newlands three days a week. They pay R50 a month for electricity, supplied through an extension cord from the main house. They do not have a tap or a toilet. They have been trying to secure a place to live from the council for 23 years. She was born in a council house in Claremont. Her father worked in the council's electricity department for 42 years, but when the Group Areas Act was promulgated they had to move. "What lies ahead is for us to wait for four years until I am 65 and can go to an old-age home," he says.

Tackling poverty for a better city

THE sooner Cape Town eradicates the zones of poverty that form part of its fabric, the sooner it can become a viable, globally-competitive city.

"Think global, but act local." This is the thought on Amodie Vawder's mind when he gets down to discussing Manenberg. He is the city's executive director of community development, and Manenberg has been identified as one of six zones of poverty in the city.

"Unless we manage poverty, we are not managing the city. That's our job, that's what it is," he says.

One of the first requirements, he believes, is decolonising the city's managerial style, which will require a shift in the community's mindset from "passive recipients" of services to "active participants" in decision-making.

The city employs 123 people in Manenberg, in the clinic, crèche, library, community centre and housing estate office. There are an average of 2 500 transactions a day between the employees and members of the community.

Vawder's challenge is to organise these services so as to provide the maximum benefit to the community and so promote plans to uplift the area.

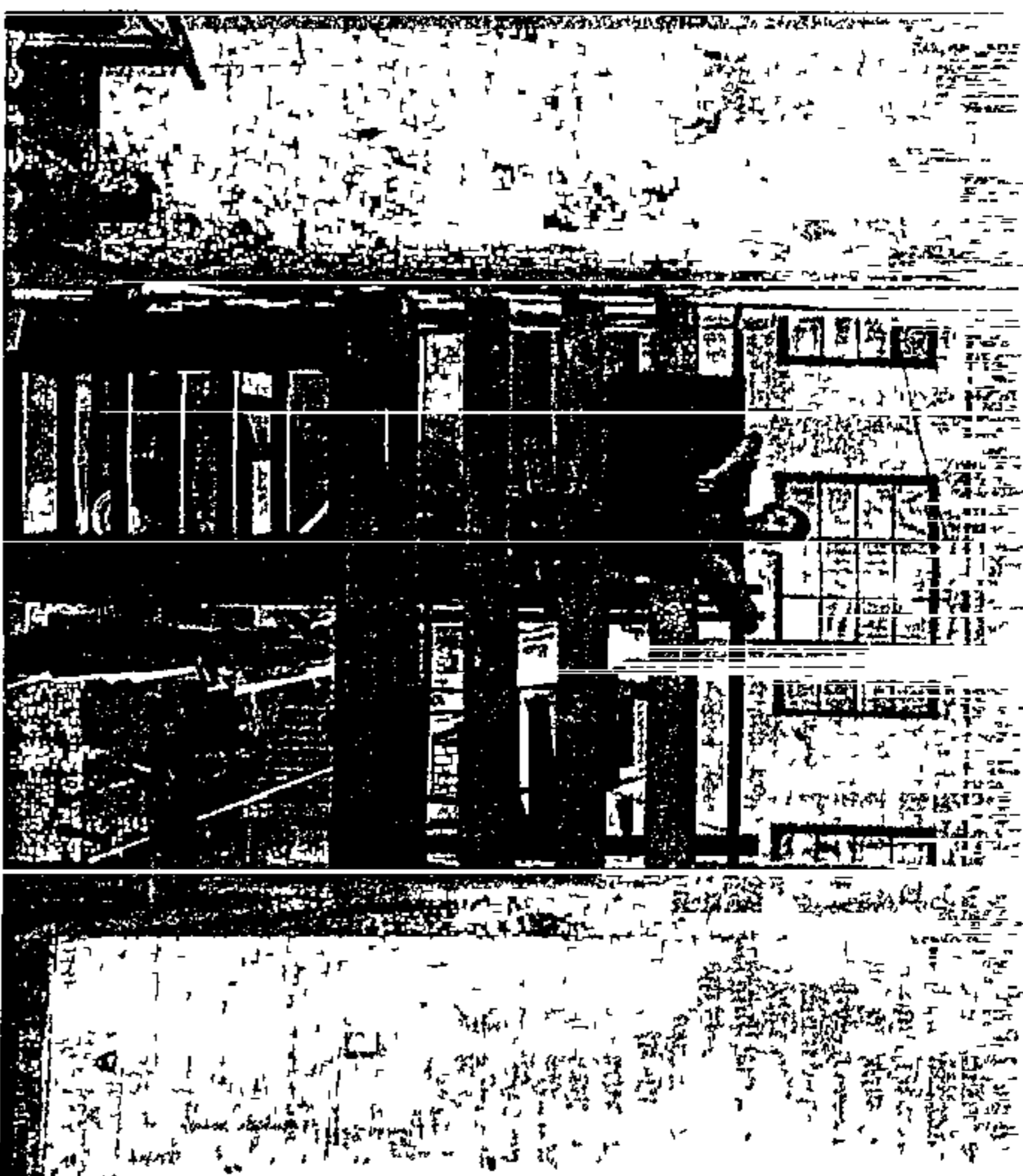
Manenberg is not the easiest place to work in as a council employee. "They are dealing with a very traumatised community, so the relationships are different to those in other areas," explains Nicky Newton of the council's development facilitation unit.

"Because local authorities are seen as representatives of government, they are very often on the receiving end of the trauma playing itself out," she says.

Manenberg librarians, for instance, are sometimes called upon to act as gang mediators, or to type letters — or to make them. Services scarce so as not to witness a murder.

Council planner Moegsen Hendricks is working on the Wetton-Lansdowne-Philippi Corridor Project, which, it is envisaged, will have a major impact on Manenberg.

"The project is one of the spatial development initiatives fund-



ed by the national Department of Transport," he explains.

"The rationale is to decrease national subsidies. The country is spending too much on transport subsidies, because the poorest people often have to travel the furthest to work. If they can reduce the time that people spend travelling, then they can reduce the subsidies. So, money is being put into urban corridors.

"What we are trying to do is create the conditions for the corridor to happen, we obviously need strategic funding from the public and private sectors. What you'll have all along Lansdowne Road will be focused areas of business activity, nodes, like beads on a string. Private sector participation will be the key factor."

Daphne King is the manager of the "existing housing" in the city. She says the culture of non-payment in places such as Manenberg affects the city's ability to deliver new houses.

"We are going to take action against people who can pay, but don't," she promised. "Those who pay their M-Net subscriptions but not their water accounts will be cut off. We are not talking about the people who are unemployed, or pensioners. We can reduce their payments where possible. But people need to come in and make some sort of arrangement. Eviction is always the very last resort."

The city is looking at building new houses, and has set aside R25 million for that over the next five years.

To facilitate this project, the Cape Town Housing Company, a not-for-profit company working for the city, is to be launched next month, she says.

"The people of Manenberg can benefit from this, although the availability of land is a problem. We are short of housing for about 150 000 families, but we don't have the land.

"The Bloubaerg and Heideberg municipalities have vast tracts of land which we cannot access because of metropolitan boundaries. Yet we have a daily influx of people."

This is why some people believe a megacity municipal structure, articulating the needs of the entire community, could be a better option.

11/5/99 Star (24)

Matchbox houses could be the ANC's election undoing (124)

By **ADRIAN HADLAND**
PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT

The Government has spent close to R10-billion on housing programmes since 1994 but, ironically, the provision of low-cost housing may yet prove to be a serious liability for the ANC's election hopes in June.

Persistent problems regarding the quality of construction, shoddy workmanship, the inadequacy of the government's R15 000 subsidy, the small size of the new dwellings, allegations of corruption, and the vulnerability of new homeowners to fraudsters have caused anger among potential voters.

People have given the new low-cost "RDP houses" several derogatory terms that reflect discontent with their size and construction, among them "unos" - after the small Fiat Uno car - "matchboxes" and even "toilets".

According to a recent nationwide poll by the Human Sciences Research Council, housing tops the list of South Africans' complaints. But it's not only the lack of housing that's causing the anger.

In the small Klein Karoo town of Calitzdorp, several of the recently built houses have massive cracks right through the walls. Residents fear that the strong winds that whip over the nearby Swartberg mountains could demolish their homes at any moment.

Failure by both the New National Party-led provincial government and the ANC to

assist residents led to virtually the entire town signing up with the PAC in March.

In Aberdeen, Eastern Cape, RDP houses have been abandoned, unfinished, because the council ran out of funds. Those that have been completed are a fraction of the size of the houses built by the government before 1994, conjuring unflattering comparisons and fuelling further discontent.

"The ANC can't do anything right. They have failed to govern the Eastern Cape properly. They'll never be able to do what the NNP did in past years," said local NNP organiser Stephanus Lewis.

Building industry representatives complain that the government subsidy of R15 000, even taking into account the imminent increase of the grant to R16 000, is not enough to build a 30sq m home, as stipulated by the government in recently approved minimum-standards legislation.

Building Industries Federation of SA president Ian Robinson said earlier this year that the Housing Ministry was being unrealistic in its setting of minimum standards for the low-cost housing industry. The subsidy could at most provide for a house of 10sq m - little more than the size of a small room, he said.

Although millions of people have been housed and sheltered since the last election, the problems associated with that housing may yet cost the government dearly when it faces voters once more next month.

Couple get house after 22-year wait on 'the list'

(124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

It was a big day for Nyanga East resident Malingatshoni Nonjonjo.

He met City of Cape Town Mayor Noma1ndia Mfeketo for the first time, then he got the keys to his new house

Mr Nonjonjo's meeting with the mayor yesterday culminated in her unlocking the front door of his new house between Sithandathu Avenue and Fifth Avenue

Ms Mfeketo addressed the Nyanga East community, then went on a walkabout and handed keys to eight families who moved into units in the huge housing complex

The eight beneficiaries formed part of the last group of 48 families moving into the 80-plus units, which formed part of the council's rental stock.

The City of Cape Town upgraded

and developed the buildings, previously male hostel single units, into family ones

The council is turning several single-unit hostels into family-size houses in Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu at a cost of about R10-million

Mr Nonjonjo and his wife, Nokhelingi, parents of five children, have been living in backyards in Nyanga East for many years

Mr Nonjonjo, 49, a gardener working in Newlands, said he had been on the council's waiting list for a house since 1977

"Today I'm very happy because I met the mayor for the first time in person

"I only saw her before in the newspapers

"Receiving keys from her for a house makes the occasion even more exciting, one I'll remember for the rest of my life"

Nyanga East African National

Congress ward councillor Templeton Mgxekeni said the area's Masakhane Campaign had led to an increase in payments being made

Within 14 days about R15 000 had been collected in rent

Ms Mfeketo said the city council planned to upgrade and develop all single-unit hostels in Nyanga, Langa and Guguletu into family units by 2007

Between 2002 and 2007 the council planned to upgrade and develop 1 200 units in the three areas

Cape Flats building contractor Cornelius Petersen, who is working on the upgrading project, said he had already approached the council in connection with a further R10-million tender to complete the venture

Yesterday's proceedings were attended by senior council housing officials and politicians, including Western Cape Legislature ANC MP Roseberry Sonto

66/15/17
PAG 24/5/09

Couple get house after 22-year wait on 'the list'

(1214)

NORMAN JOSEPH
Memo Report

It was a big day for Nyanga East resident Malungatshoni Nonjongo

He met City of Cape Town Mayor Nomandla Mfeketo for the first time, then he got the keys to his new house

Mr Nonjongo's meeting with the mayor yesterday culminated in her unlocking the front door of his new house between Sithandathu Avenue and Fifth Avenue.

Ms Mfeketo addressed the Nyanga East community, then went on a walkabout and handed keys to eight families who moved into units in the huge housing complex.

The eight beneficiaries formed part of the last group of 48 families moving into the 80-plus units, which formed part of the council's rental stock

The City of Cape Town upgraded

and developed the buildings, previously male hostel single units, into family ones

The council is turning several single-unit hostels into family size houses in Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu at a cost of about R10-million.

Mr Nonjongo and his wife, Nokhlehla, parents of five children, have been living in backyards in Nyanga East for many years

Mr Nonjongo, 49, a gardener working in Newlands said he had been on the council's waiting list for a house since 1977

"Today I'm very happy because I met the mayor for the first time in person. "I only saw her before in the newspapers"

"Receiving keys from her for a house makes the occasion even more exciting, one I'll remember for the rest of my life."

Nyanga East African National

Congress ward councillor Templeton Mfexekeni said the area's Masakhane Campaign had led to an increase in payments being made

Within 14 days about R15 000 had been collected in rent.

Ms Mfeketo said the city council planned to upgrade and develop all single-unit hostels in Nyanga, Langa and Guguletu into family units by 2007

Between 2002 and 2007 the council planned to upgrade and develop 1 200 units in the three areas

Cape Flats building contractor Cornelius Petersen, who is working on the upgrading project, said he had already approached the council in connection with a further R10-million tender to complete the venture

Yesterday's proceedings were attended by senior council housing officials and politicians, including Western Cape Legislature ANC MP Roseberry Sono



Mayoral handover: City of Cape Town mayor Nomandla Mfeketo unlocks the front door of Malungatshoni Nonjongo's new house, to his delight

WANNE GONNARD

R85m set aside for valuation roll

Tim Cohen

CAPE TOWN — The Cape metropolitan council has set aside R85m to establish a new valuation roll which will be implemented throughout the council's area in July 2001

The council said yesterday all properties would be given a market value at January 1 next year and that the properties would be valued on the basis of market value of land plus improvements

It is estimated that the total cost will be R85m, which includes the outsourcing of a number of functions and setting up a team of 20 to 30 valuers, 160 data gatherers, 70 capturers and administrative support staff

(124)
The council's intention is to achieve equity and will bring local authorities into line with the provisions of the Local Government Transition Act and the Municipal Structures Act

Until now the metropolitan local councils have been using outdated valuation rolls and, in some cases, several different valuation rolls to assess rates

The internationally accepted computer-aided mass appraisal system will be used for residential properties and the conventional manual process for the non-residential sector. The Cape metropolitan council has budgeted R50m for the project in the next financial year. Local councils will contribute R15m in proportion to the number of properties in their areas

IMPLEMENTATION TO COST R85M

Single rating system for Cape Metropole in 2001

PROPERTIES throughout the metropole are to be rated according to the market value of the land on January 1 next year plus improvements. **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports.

AFTER months of controversy the Cape Metropolitan Council has decided to implement a common property valuation and rating system throughout the Cape Metropolitan Area in July 2001.

All properties would be given a market value on January 1, 2000, the CMC said.

The estimated total cost of about R85 million includes outsourcing certain functions and setting up of a team of 20-30 valuers, 160 data gatherers, 70 data capturers and administrative support staff.

Until now, the Metropolitan Local Councils (MLC) have been using outdated valuation rolls, and

CT 5/7/99
in some cases several different valuation rolls, to assess rates. A common roll is intended to achieve equity and bring local authorities into line with the provisions of the Local Government Transition Act and the Municipal Structures Act.

Properties will be valued on the basis of market value of land plus improvements. The internationally accepted Computer Aided Mass Appraisal system will be used for residential properties and the conventional manual process for the non-residential sector.

A pre-implementation plan prepared by outside consultants and accepted by the CMC and the MLCs proposes a metropolitan pro-

ject management team to co-ordinate the process.

The CMC has budgeted R50m for the project in the next financial year, with the MLCs contributing R15m in proportion to the number of properties in their municipal areas. As the municipality with the most properties, the City of Tygerberg, for example, will contribute R5,1m, while Helderberg will pay R800 000. The balance of the funds required will be carried over to the following financial year.

To meet the July 2001 implementation date, the project will get under way in July and details of tender documentation will be published by the end of this month. A steering committee consisting of the exco and finance committee chairpersons and representatives of the six MLCs will have the task of achieving this.

D
A
of
C
ve
1,
L
bo
day
Sto
wou
wh
avail
who
to d
expl
eb
Sat
rig
th
a
v

Council housing gets R12-m upgrade

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO-REPORTER

Although burdened by rent arrears of about R65-million, the City of Cape Town has spent more than R12-million upgrading and developing its rental stock on the Cape Flats.

Cape Town mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo went to Nyanga East, Athlone and Manenberg this week

to hand keys to beneficiaries and inspect several upgrading projects to flats and houses.

Today, Ms Mfeketo will help workers paint flats in Hanover Park. Municipal spokesman Theo Koopman said even though the council was owed almost R65-million in rent arrears, upgrading would continue.

In Athlone's Kew Town where Ms Mfeketo inspected blocks of flats

ARG 7/5/99 (124)
built in the 1940s for World War 2 soldiers, the council spent R1,8-million on upgrading.

She was shown work in progress such as the construction of fire-proof walls, new-look courtyards used for netball and basketball, and new washing lines.

The council has spent R10-million to convert single male hostel units into family-size dwellings in Nyanga East.

Fight against water privatisation has finally dried up

CT (MR) 7/15/99

~~123~~ (124)

The trade union battle to halt the privatisation of waste and water services in Nelspruit and on Kwazulu Natal's Dolphin Coast has finally been lost

This often-announced event appears at last about to be confirmed since the unions' final round of ammunition has proved to be a dud.

Cosatu and its affiliated municipal workers' union, Samwu, were relying on the clauses of the national framework agreement on local government restructuring in order to mount a rear-guard assault. But legal opinion, sought by Cosatu, was that the framework agreement, struck between the unions and central government in December last year, was simply "not enforceable".

According to the lawyers, the agreement, which stressed that the public sector should be the "preferred option", could not legally be relied on.

Union hopes of a possible constitutional challenge to the Dolphin Coast deal were also dashed when Cosatu was informed that this was also unlikely to succeed.

This amounts to a severe defeat for the anti-privatisation lobby and will give encouragement to other councils

contemplating outsourcing and privatisation measures. It also signals perhaps the final turning point in ANC-alliance local government policy.

The formal truce in the Nelspruit/Dolphin Coast battle, which has strained relations between the ANC and substantial numbers of its trade union allies should be declared today. The announcement should come after a meeting of the sectoral forum on local government restructuring.

This "10-a-side" gathering of government representatives and trade unionists - six from Cosatu and four from the independent Federation of Unions (Fedusa) - is scheduled to discuss both the Dolphin Coast and Nelspruit public-private partnership agreements.

The inclusion of this item on the agenda is apparently an attempt to smooth union feathery, which were badly ruffled by the manner in which the deals were done.

There does not seem to be any other reason, since both contracts have already been signed and the parties



TERRY BELL

are, therefore, legally bound by them. There is no provision in either contract for new amendments.

However, as an evident sop, the department of constitutional development and provincial affairs has offered, in the case of Nelspruit, to "assist Cosatu" in putting pressure on the council to amend the agreement should it not meet with the conditions previously laid down by the unions.

But, at the same time, the department also announced that, having studied the agreement, it was satisfied that it complied with all conditions.

This is likely to raise a few hackles since the contract was given to the department to peruse and not the unions. But the seven "bullets" or conditions laid down by the unions are likely to have been met. In any event, the unions do not appear to have any legal basis to object.

This has caused some anger directed, particularly, at the department, coupled with vague verbal pledges to fight on. Yet there seems nothing more than can be done as regards Nelspruit

and the Dolphin Coast.

It was an awareness of this fact that caused Samwu national office bearers to fight so hard at a meeting with the Johannesburg council on Tuesday.

Debating the Igoli 2002 restructuring proposals, they managed to gain agreement that all such matters be dealt with through the local division of the national bargaining council.

The union had obviously learned a few lessons from the Nelspruit and Dolphin Coast experience. They played a variation on the same legalistic game: decisions of the bargaining council are legally binding.

Johannesburg is now committed to negotiating its proposed changes with the union on a metropolitan basis in a manner that may be legally binding.

Samwu intends to demand similar arrangements from Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town, where councils are contemplating wide-ranging restructuring.

"We remain committed to fight hard to ensure that the public sector remains the preferred option," said Roger Romme, the Samwu general secretary. "and we will use whatever means are available to us."

Rich face steep rates increases

Overall rise to be lower than inflation

TOM HOOD

(124)

ST(CM) 9/5/99

THE City of Cape Town municipality has decided on a below-inflation overall rates increase of eight percent starting from July 1

The new tariff will be staggered according to the perceived increase in the value of properties, with home owners in some poorer areas having to pay just one percent more and those in more affluent areas such as Clifton having to fork out up to 17 percent more.

The municipality increased rates by a flat 10 percent last year

The new structure is aimed at a fairer distribution of the cost of municipal services. According to a draft capital and operating budgets document to be submitted to the council on Tuesday, property owners in areas that have benefited from a sharp increase in land values over the past few years will have to pay more than those in areas where values have shown modest increases or remained stagnant.

The city bowl, Mouille Point, Green Point and Sea Point will pay 13 percent more, and Camps Bay and Bantry Bay 15 percent.

Some parts of the Cape Flats will see a five percent increase. People in Manen-

berg, Nyanga, Guguletu and Langa will be charged an extra three percent. Businesses in the CBD face an eight percent increase.

The other municipalities in greater Cape Town are expected to announce their increases in the next few weeks.

The new system is based on the different increases in property prices in 32 demarcated areas over the past 20 years.

Parts of large suburbs such as Claremont will pay different percentages because some areas of the suburb show higher increases than others.

The system is an interim measure until a metropolitan-wide rating system is adopted, possibly in two years.

The council's total budget, if approved on Tuesday, will rise 6,25 percent to R3,4-billion from R3,2-billion this year. A joint meeting of the executive and finance committees on Thursday heard that tight control of capital projects (roads, sewerage, water, infrastructure) cut the capital budget by R17-million to R688-million, keeping down borrowing costs despite high interest rates. The operating budget is estimated at R2,7-million, only R200-million more than last year.

Changes to the rates rebate system will bring reductions to ratepayers earning less than R2 000 a month.

How the new rates system will affect Cape Town

TONY ROBINSON

Market values system will be seen as fair but will hurt pensioners who may be forced to sell their homes

THE argument on property rating systems in the Cape is over. The government has decided that there will be one rating system for the whole country and that it will be based on the market value of both the land and the buildings on it.

At a recent meeting in Pretoria representatives of the six local councils in the greater Cape Town area and the Cape Metropolitan Council were told by the Department of Constitutional Development that legislation on rating will be published by the end of June and the plan is for it to become law in December this year.

It will take about two years to complete the required new general valuation throughout the megacity so the earliest date for implementation of the new system is 2002.

In terms of the legislation properties

will be valued every three years but the province will have the power to extend the life of a valuation roll by a maximum of two years.

At present Cape Town is operating on a 20-year-old valuation roll while some areas like Constantia and Grassy Park are using 25-year-old rolls. This makes a mockery of the system and leads to an unfair distribution of the rate burden.

The problem in the Cape is that provincial legislation has made it necessary for valuers to inspect each and every property. This has become an enormous, time-consuming and expensive task, but the new legislation will simplify matters by permitting a "computer assisted mass appraisal" system which will eliminate the need for the majority of inspections.

The valuation will be based on market values pertaining on January 1, 2000. The new system will generally be perceived as fair in that it reflects market values and, in theory, the ability to pay. But it will not be without its disadvantages.

In the first place the property a family

owns does not reflect its wealth. For one family a house will be its biggest asset while, to another, it may be just 10 per cent of the assets with the bulk of the family wealth residing in an invisible portfolio of shares.

Another problem is that it will re-enforce the elitist nature of our fashionable suburbs.

A few examples will make this clear. Take the case of a school teacher who bought a house in Camps Bay 30 years ago when the area was no more expensive than most other suburbs in Cape Town. Since then property values in the area have soared and the man, now retired, finds himself living in a property worth nearly a million rands, but with a pensioner's income. So his home is certainly not an indication of his ability to pay.

There will also be cases where people with fairly ordinary jobs have inherited expensive property. All their wealth will effectively be wrapped up in their homes and they will not have the money to pay the kind of rates bills that await us in the

future

Or consider the case of a widow on a fixed income. The house she continues to live in is unlikely to reflect her ability to pay and she will probably have little choice but to sell up and move to a smaller home on the other side of the railwayline.

The new rating system will force many people to uproot themselves. Their places will be taken by the wealthy, the young professional couples with double incomes and those who come shopping for houses with pounds and marks. This will tend to re-enforce elitism in fashionable areas.

But at least there is the consolation that the pensioner will get a good price for his home when he tears out his roots. This has not been the case in the past when people have been forced to move.

The problem is by no means confined to the elite suburbs for it will be faced by widows and pensioners throughout the city. This was recognised by the old Cape Town City Council which introduced a system of rates

(24)

er 10/5/99

Rates rises range from 1% to 17%

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

Property owners in the City of Cape Town area face rates rises of between 1% and 17% from July 1

The council agreed an average rise of 8% yesterday but actual increases will depend on where ratepayers live

People in more affluent areas face hefty rises in what was described by the chairman of the council executive committee as an attempt to correct historical inequities

The council's new budget was approved after a six-hour debate. The African National Congress and New National Party voted in favour but Democratic Party councillors abstained, saying they had "major problems with it"

The budget is for R3,4-billion - R2,7-billion for operating expenditure and R688-million for capital expenditure, representing more than half the total local government expenditure in the Cape metro area

■ Mitchell's Plain ratepayers will have 7% deducted from the increase, and so will only have a 1% increase on their rates bill

■ Clifton and Bishop's Court face a 17% increase (9% will be added to the 8%)

■ Most of the City Bowl and Sea Point will pay 13% more (an extra 5% is added)

■ Most of the Cape Flats will have their rates reduced by 3%, keeping the overall increase to 5%

■ Rondebosch and Athlone residents face a 9% increase

All property rates tariffs will be based on property valuations, and the thinking is

To page 8

City rates rises range from 1% for poor to 17% for rich

From page 1

that home-owners with more expensive properties will face steeper increases

In an interview, executive director of corporate finance Philip van Rynveld said most property rates had been based on a property valuation carried out in 1979

Since then the values of some properties had increased markedly while others had increased by only a small amount

For example, many properties on the Atlantic seaboard were now worth 35 times more than they were 20 years ago, while this was certainly not the case with many properties on the Cape Flats

Executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said that the area-differentiated increase was an attempt to address inequity in an interim period, until a new property valuation was carried out across the entire Cape metro area

"This new property rates system based on a new metropolitan-wide general valuation will come into effect in July 2001," Mr Mowzer said

Other implications of the budget approved yesterday are that

■ Domestic consumers of electricity will pay 7,5% more, while industrial and commercial users face a 3,5% increase. The aim of this is to promote

greater investment and economic growth in Cape Town

■ There is a shift from a three to five-step domestic water tariff, meaning that consumers will pay more if they use more water, but most domestic consumers will see their water bill go down

The first six kilolitres of water are to be much cheaper for everyone, and will provide a lifeline tariff for the poor

Consumers using more than a 1 000 litres a day will face an increase above the inflation rate. Those using less than 300 litres a day will see a substantial drop in their bill. Mr Van Rynveld said a household consumed an average of 600 litres a day

Democratic Party councillors opposed the area-differentiated property rates system, saying they were in favour of a site-rating system

The DP's Belinda Walker said the council's system was vulnerable to legal challenges

Ms Walker said the system was crude and "needed fine-tuning"

She said that while there might be mansions along the Atlantic Seaboard's beachfronts, there were ordinary houses in nearby neighbourhoods which could not be grouped with expensive dwellings

In his response, Mr Mowzer, said the council could not continue using old, outdated valuation rolls of 1979

CMC budget good news for city firms

Housing projects get R19-million boost

(124)

ARG 13/5/99

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

Business levies in the Cape metropolitan area are to remain unchanged after the Cape Metropolitan Council approved an annual budget of R1,9-billion.

Yesterday, the New National Party-controlled metropolitan council was supported by African National Congress, Democratic Party and African Christian Democratic Party councillors, ending a 90-minute meeting on a high note with applause

The Metro Council is to raise its income from a levy imposed on businesses' payrolls

The budget included an operating expenditure of R1,5-billion and capital expenditure of R374-million

Operational allocations to the six local councils in the Cape metro area will be R176-million

Provision for housing infrastructure within local council

areas, one of the budget's highlights, will increase from R104-million to R123-million, speeding up housing delivery to the 232 000 people on the waiting list

An amount of R86-million was set aside for other infrastructure projects across the Cape metro area

The operating expenditure of R1,5-billion for the next financial year will be funded mainly by business levy income of about R503-million, and income of R596-million from the supply of bulk water and waste services to the six local councils

Executive committee chairman Pierre Uys said because his council did not levy property rates, it relied heavily on the business levies. But these would not be increased, and had not been increased in the past four years

Mr Uys said the reason for this was to stimulate economic growth in the central business district

Because the levies had not

been increased, there had been a 5% growth in levy payments, meaning that more businesses had moved into the CBD over the four-year period

Metropolitan council mayor William Bantom said business in central Cape Town promoted economic growth and job creation

Mr Uys said a lot of hard work had gone into the preparation of the budget, which balanced the demand for services and infrastructure in communities with cost-cutting where feasible

"By maintaining the subsidy to local councils at its present level, we will help them to keep property rates down to a minimum.

"At the same time we have kept salaries and wages in the council down to 20% of net operating expenditure, which is a sign of good house-keeping

"We have also given attention to the need for low-cost housing by increasing our spending by R19-million"

Hope for homes in CMC budget

PRISCILLA SINGH

(124)

THE wait is almost over for at least 232 000 people on the housing list of the Cape Metropolitan Council, which has upped its housing budget from R104 million to R123 million for the coming financial year.

The CMC got its 1999/2000 budget of R1,9 billion approved yesterday and is one that balances development needs with good financial housekeeping, according to CMC executive committee chairman Pierre Uys.

"We have also given attention to the need for low-cost housing by increasing our spending on the provision for housing infrastructure by R19 million for the next financial year," Uys said.

The CMC voted on the budget yesterday and it was unanimously passed after a short debate. The budget increase has been trimmed to 5,49%, but this excludes special adhoc projects such as "radio trunking", the compilation of a common property valuation roll and water demand management functions.

Areas in the CMC holdings include Cape Town, Tygerberg, Blaauwberg, Oostenberg, Helderberg and South Peninsula. Operational allocations to these six Metropolitan Local Councils (MLCs) will be maintained at R176m, the same level as the current financial year. Mirroring the City of Cape Town's priority to provide more houses, the CMC's budget has made greater provision for the housing infrastructure, Uys said. Other projects have been allocated R86m.

"Business tariffs, which provide a large portion of the CMC's income, will remain unchanged. The business community has been fully consulted in the budget preparation process," Uys said.

The operating expenditure of R1,58bn for next year will be funded mainly by levy income (R503m) and income from the supply of bulk water and waste services to the six MLCs (R596m).

"By maintaining the subsidy to the MLCs at its present level, we will help them to keep property rates down to a minimum. At the same time we have kept salaries and wages in the CMC down to 20% of nett operating expenditure, which is a good sign of house-keeping," Uys said.

Killer disease hits townships

ST(CM) 16/5/99 (124)

TOM HOOD and BOBBY JORDAN

SEVENTY-SIX cases of dysentery — including some fatalities — have been reported after an outbreak at informal housing areas of Nyanga and Guguletu

The disease was traced to contaminated water and poor sanitation, said Ahmed Vawda, Cape Town's director of community development

"We have recognised for some time that informal areas could become a health hazard so we are distributing potable water and providing basic sanitation"

Sanitation would be improved by replacing the "night soil" bucket sewage removal system with a reservoir system that was cleaned out every few days

City health officials had planned workshops with local communities to raise awareness of the disease and how to combat it, Vawda said

"People often contaminate their drinking water or pick up dysentery from unwashed hands. But it is not an infectious disease"

According to Mike Marsden, director of municipal services, the city's water mains would be extended into informal areas through shared taps

Electricity would also be extended to informal areas to cut down on fires. The fire hydrant system would also be enlarged

The dysentery outbreak coincides with a hard-hitting report outlining serious flaws in the Khayelitsha sewerage system, written by the

Service Delivery Task Group and due to be tabled next week at a Tygerberg Council Community Services meeting

The study found that thousands of people were exposed to serious health hazards due to blockages in sewer pipes that resulted in shacks being flooded with raw sewage. Shacks built on top of manholes made it impossible to clear the blockages, the report said. In one area only one out of 20 manholes was accessible

"Most blockages occur on servitude sites where informal squatters establish themselves without proper sanitation"

"These blockages sometimes last for weeks due to the inaccessibility to the manholes. Informal squatters living in the public open areas of Site B knock holes in the sides of manholes to dispose of nightsoil and general refuse and in the winter, the stormwater runoff washes sand and other material into these manholes and again causes blockages," the report said. The latest figures reported an average 3 816 blockages a month along the 2 600km of sewers in the Tygerberg area

The report recommended the relocation of illegal squatters as well as an "integrated communication and information campaign" on the role of services and the residents' responsibility towards services

City reaches out to its forgotten parts

(124) (2027)

Councillors give green light for R120m for poor areas

ST (CM) 16/5/99

BABALWA SHOTA and TOM HOOD

MORE than R120-million will be pumped into more than 45 major projects in the "hopelessly neglected" areas of Cape Town when the next financial year starts in July

Clinics, libraries, swimming pools, sports fields, road projects, halls and community centres and taxi ranks are on a list that was given the green light by councillors when they approved Cape Town's R3,4-billion budget

Capital spending on new infrastructure and facilities will total R688-million

"Since the new City of Cape Town was formed, over R1,6-billion has been spent on capital projects and infrastructure," said Saleem Mowzer, chairman of the executive committee "In the hopelessly neglected areas of the city, the council has repaired and rebuilt virtually the en-

tire infrastructure A stormwater system has all but eliminated the winter flooding that brought hardship to so many people for decades "

● Spending on 15 new halls or community centres includes Crossroads (R2,2-million), Zolani (R1,8-million), Endlovini (R1,7-million), Philippi West (R1,7-million), Belthorn (R1,6-million) and Langa (R1,2-million)

● Libraries at Brown's Farm and Philippi East will share R5,1-million

● Among health centres and clinics are Nyanga (R3,4-million) and Weltevreden North (R3-million)

● Almost R10-million will be spent on swimming pools at Lentegeur and Philippi

● Of R27-million earmarked for sports fields, R10-million will go on upgrading Athlone Stadium, R1,4-million on replacing artificial turf at Athlone, R6-million at Vygekraal Stadium and R1,5-million for a sports field at Brown's Farm

● Another R4,9-million will be spent

on taxi facilities at Mowbray, R3,4-million on the NY3A taxi rank, R2,1-million to finish Philippi Station's transport interchange and R950 000 on taxi ranks at Koeberg and Matieland stations

Nyanga councillor Templeton Mgxekeni said residents had fought long and hard for the R3,4-million upgrading of their very basic centre and were happy with the grant The funds would help renovate and expand the offices, teach skills to the disabled and build a parking area and children's playground

Philippi East councillor Mzwandile Matiwane said while there had been a lot of development, the community wanted a library of their own as they had to go to the city centre or Mitchells Plain to get books

● The city this week launched an innovative housing finance plan for low-income families, in which the government subsidy will be topped up with a loan for those who can prove they have a solid savings record



Signed with a flourish Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane signs a shareholders' agreement for the new Cape Town housing company, flanked by Mayor Nomandla Mfeketo, right, housing committee chairman Whitey Jacobs, standing at right, and Lawrence Ramashamole of the National Housing Finance Corporation

City gives top-up boost to housing subsidy

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124)

The City of Cape Town, via a new housing company, is to help top up the national housing subsidy for prospective home owners.

This support will be available only to buyers who show they have the ability to save at a reputable bank.

The council is to contribute R125-million over the next five years to support the Cape Town Community Housing Company,

launched on Friday. The council is the biggest shareholder.

Anglican Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane, chairman of the company, told a big audience in Heideveld that those prospective buyers who were able to save the equivalent of the existing monthly council charges of R50 - for an initial period of six months - would qualify for the council's top-up money, which averaged about R5 000 an applicant.

This is in addition to the R18 000 subsidy to the potential buyer

BD 17/5/99

Buyers on waiting lists will have to build up a savings track record with an accredited financial institution, such as a bank, to earn this recognition.

This innovative financing scheme means that people who are prepared to save and to contribute will be able to afford a home which otherwise may have been out of their reach, the Archbishop said.

"The Cape Town Community Housing Company stands on the brink of introducing a new method

whereby people who are able to save will have access to a better quality and size of house," he said.

Mayor Nomandla Mfeketo explained "All potential beneficiaries will be required to save in a specific manner in order to have a chance of qualifying."

Ms Mfeketo said all new housing stock would be built by the private company. It could be expanded into a metro-wide operation if necessary. The savings campaign will be launched on June 1

Democracy's a luxury in the dumping ground

The new South Africa has yet to arrive in Elsie's River

By Alan Paterson

(14)

TREVOR OOSTERWYK
STAFF REPORTER



The physical impact of decay, dirt and dilapidation is the overriding impression everywhere in Elsie's River. Litter and rubble mark every street and vacant space. Public parks and playgrounds are unkempt and vandalised. The bleakness is emphasised by the squalid rows of small blocks of flats.

Estelle, who lives in White City, Eureka Estate, one of the smaller suburbs of Elsie's River, said "Democracy has not meant anything for us here in Elsie's River. Nothing has changed for me or in my life at all. It seems that things are only getting worse rather than better."

At this time of electioneering there is a sense of hopelessness in Elsie's River. It has always been a difficult place to live in.

From its founding the place became a dumping ground - not just for dirt and night soil, but also at various times a dumping ground for people who could not find anywhere else to live.

The valley that became known as Elsie's River had been, until the 1870s, peaceful farming country, in private hands. But then people

began to arrive and settle. Land was cheap because the valley was sandy and was flooded by the Elsie's River every winter. In the early years it was described by successive generations as unattractive for human habitation - because it was sandy, low-lying and damp, and it was exposed to both to the prevailing south east and north-west winds. But the desperate could not be too choosy.

The first serious wave of settlers arrived when people were pushed off their land during the South African War.

The valley was one of the few options open to them. During the drought of 1924-1930, many labourers were forced into towns to look for work and settled in the area. As the great depression of the 1930s affected Cape Town's industry, many people went bankrupt,

causing thousands of workers to lose their jobs. They moved into Elsie's River because land was cheap and houses could be built out of tin, sacks and wood.

Then, during the implementation of the Group Areas Act in the 1950s, many working-class people living in Goodwood suddenly found themselves declared illegal residents, and many moved to Elsie's River.

It grew from an empty valley to a crowded township - and then an overfilled ghetto, which offered little chance of escape.

The biggest problems that confronted residents were rising unemployment, widespread vagrancy and high levels of crime. During the 1960s the place had the highest number of people killed in knifings and similar violence in the Western Cape. In fact Elsie's River had the reputation of having a shebeen in every street and a prostitute on every block.

And it was reported that the only people in the area who made any money were shopkeepers, shebeen owners and dagga merchants. Historical facts are sometimes inadequate to represent real life experiences. The facts and figures of the effects of apartheid and poverty do not tell nearly as much as the story of one individual.

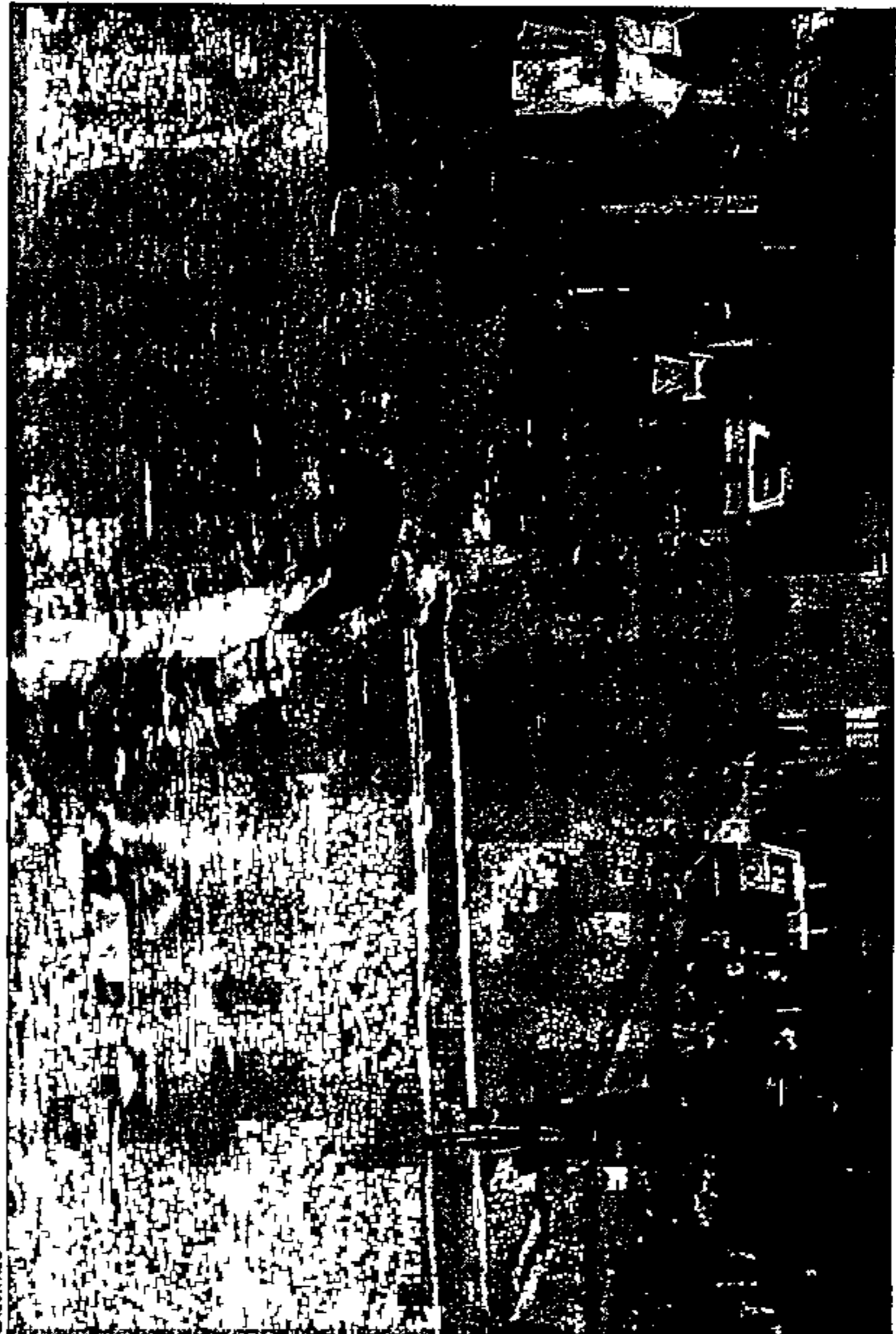
Estelle in White City knows at first hand the power and tyranny of the shebeen owners and the ways in which they control people's lives. She was desperately eager to speak, even though the pain in her voice and eyes was clearly visible.

"Our house was bombed and almost completely destroyed last January - just a short while after my 15-year-old brother was shot dead right in front of our house," she said with tears in her eyes.

Her brother died because he refused to take the rap for a murder he did not commit. A gangster and shebeen owner who, she claimed, was responsible for the original murder, then killed her brother. But then the man suspected of killing her brother was acquitted.

"It seems to us that the law is on their side and no one wants to do anything about it," she said. She explained why she and her neighbours live in perpetual fear. "The area is under the control of a single shebeen owner. He and his family are very powerful and they dictate all affairs of the area."

"The other people in the street are too scared to say or do anything, even though many of them saw what happened to my brother. But none of them had the guts to come forward." Estelle also related a sad tale of unemployment.



Dogged by decay: littered streets and unkempt dogs characterise the hardship among potential voters in Elsie's River. ROY WIGLEY

"I have been without work for a number of years. And I see very little prospect of finding work soon."

For the 1999 elections it seems spurious to expect the people of Elsie's River to make informed choices. The business of survival is far more important than worrying about

who to vote for. With a high level of idleness, the intensity of criminal activity and the perpetual prevalence of joblessness, it is not surprising that so many people in Elsie's River seem apathetic, disinterested and fearful.

"In 1994 I voted for the New

National Party and this year I will do the same. At least when they ruled the country we had work and felt safe," says Estelle.

Elsie's River residents do not feel part of the new South Africa. Only improved conditions will show them transformation also belongs to them.



of the few options open to them. During the drought of 1924-1930, many labourers were forced into towns to look for work and settled in the area. As the great depression of the 1930s affected Cape Town's industry, many people went bankrupt,

CAPE TOWN RATES

fm 2/5/99 (124)

BRIDGING THE 20-YEAR GULF

New valuation formula starts to iron out inequities between Mother City's suburbs

For just over two decades, huge economic and social gulfs between Cape Town's distinct ethnic communities have been ignored in property valuation for rates purposes

Whether you lived in Clifton or Athlone, Muizenburg or Bantry Bay, the annual rates determination applied irrespective of the often starkly differential rise in the market value of properties. This is about to change.

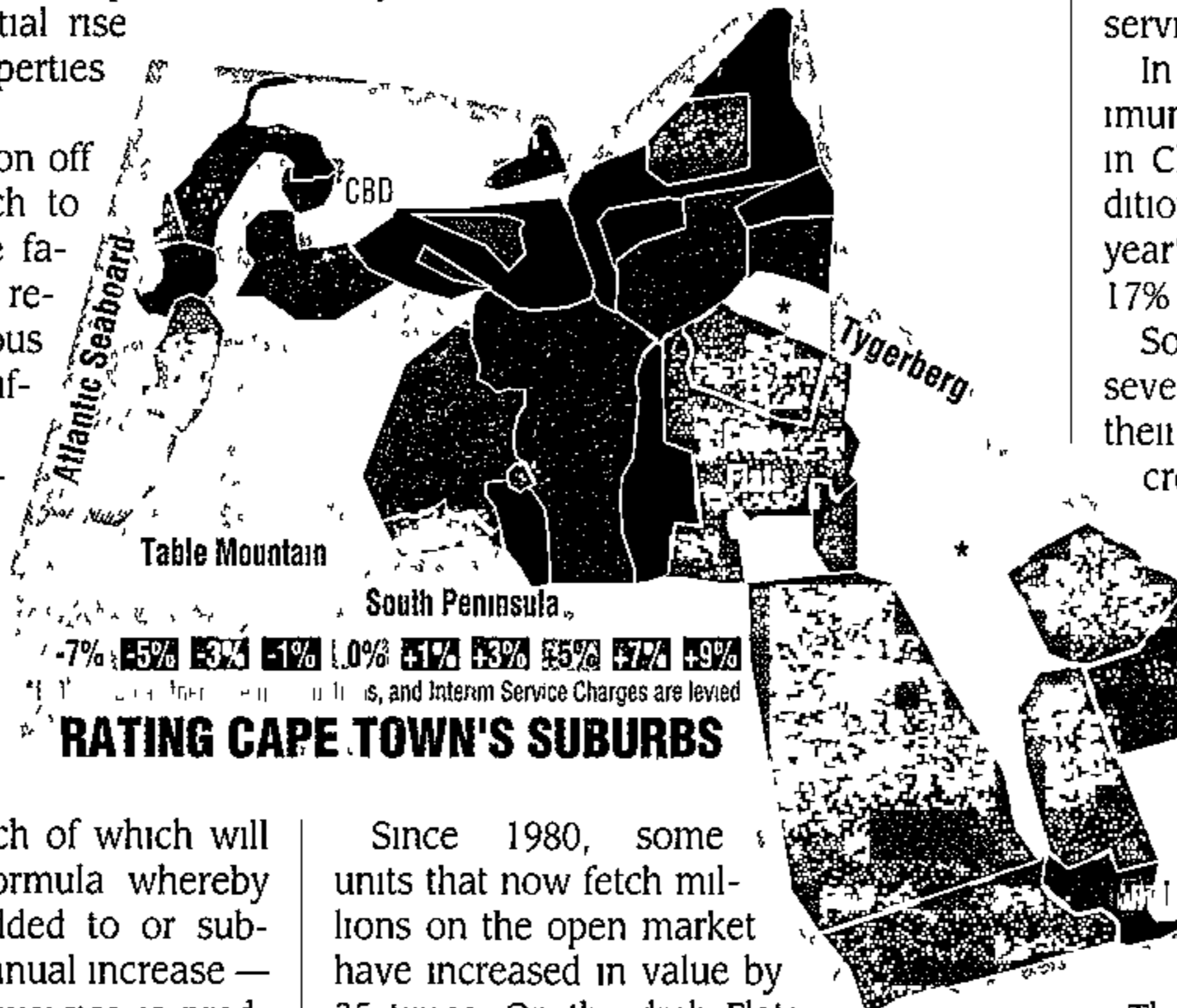
The intention is to siphon off higher rates from the rich to subsidise the poor — the familiar redistribution of resources which SA's various cities have tackled in different ways.

At times this redistribution has triggered rates boycotts by the affluent or overtaxed business sector. The process has often fostered race, income and class resentments.

Cape Town has been divided into 32 areas, each of which will pay rates based on a formula whereby percentage points are added to or subtracted from the overall annual increase — 8% this year. The entire exercise is predicated on an interim assessment of the rise or fall of property values in the 32 areas since the completion of the last valuation roll in 1979.

It's no secret that Atlantic seaboard

property values have risen swiftly in recent years, outpacing escalations elsewhere except, perhaps, in the plush suburbs of Bishopscourt and Constantia. Hard-currency speculators snapping up bargains have helped drive the racially based divergence of prices between gangland and Baywatch terrain.



Since 1980, some units that now fetch millions on the open market have increased in value by 35 times. On the drab Flats, however, while there is a property market of sorts, most values have barely risen at all in real terms. The only real winners have been developers of shopping centres with their "captive" market.

Informal settlements of black communities like Crossroads and Khayelitsha are not subject to any rating system, though the residents are responsible for paying interim service charges.

Water, electricity and sewage removal are built into these charges, but cross-subsidisation is necessary for any of the services to be provided consistently.

In terms of the new formula, the maximum "surplus" rates increase for a house in Clifton or Bishopscourt will be an additional nine percentage points on this year's 8% general increase — a total of 17%.

Some Mitchells Plain suburbs will have seven percentage points deducted from their obligation, thus paying a 1% increase.

Suburbs like Rondebosch and Athlone, with a 9% increase, will escape the full penalty of the new system, which comes into effect on July 1.

Cape Town's plan, pending a new general valuation roll due to come into being in July 2001, has gained the support of the ANC and New National Party in council. The Democratic Party, on the other hand, opposed it.

Watching the sun set over the Atlantic will be a little more expensive for those who own property there. Another G&T may be called for.

Peter Wilhelm

NATIONAL PROPERTY REGISTER

RADEBE'S IN THE MONEY

Minister can claim R7bn rent

Jeff Radebe can now prove he's SA's biggest landlord by far. With 239 494 properties worth at least R120bn, he far outstrips the leading private-sector rival, Old Mutual, which has "only" 600 properties worth R7,5bn. All the institutions together own R60bn.

Radebe, the Public Works Minister, could soon also be the richest landlord when his department starts collecting around R7bn rent a year from its mainly government tenants.

But it's not only those tenants who will be disappointed with the results of Radebe's digital national property register, a three-year, R56m project. There are also the occupants who should not have been in the 847 houses that will now be sold, or the perpetrators of R53m in maintenance fraud discovered in Justice Department-related properties alone during compilation of the register.

Then there are the private landlords who will now get R40m-a-year less rent

because the registry compilers checked rents paid against leases signed. And that is just the beginning.

The register will in future form part of the government accounting system and control all aspects of government property.

Charging rent is only the first step in proper asset management. Rent-paying officials, with 4m m², occupy three times more space than the entire Johannesburg CBD. If the right action is taken, their office space could be imploded, properties sold and, if Radebe can keep the kleptocrats at bay, he could contribute tens of billions of rand to social projects or tax reductions.

Ian Fife

Back to shacks as houses air

Rates cost people their only government-subsidised home

ARL 26/5/99 (124)

MYOLISI GOPHE
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Some owners of the new government-subsidised houses in Du Noon near Milnerton are selling up to raise money to pay off debts and are returning to live in shacks.

In many cases, people have large municipal services arrears and say they have no choice but to sell to get money to pay the bill.

The community claims the municipality took too long to send them accounts and now they face high bills they cannot pay

Many are thousands of rands in arrears.

But the provincial housing ministry has warned would-be sellers that they may be giving up their only chance of owning a proper house

There was also concern that the residents who were leaving were selling their houses not to locals or people desperately in need of them, but to people from Khayelitsha, Langa and Guguletu, who wanted the buildings for business purposes

David Mbolombo, a committee member of the Du Noon housing task team, said residents had been promised that nearby factories and the council would employ people staying in that area so they could afford to pay their rates and other accounts

Mr Mbolombo, who is unemployed, sold his house after he got a municipal

bill for R2 108,54. He is now living with his unemployed wife in the home of a relative who is in hospital. He said he did not know what he would do after the relative was discharged

Several residents showed the Cape Argus municipal service accounts of more than R2 000

They said they had been promised that the unemployed and pensioners would get their houses free, while workers would have to add R7 000 to the government subsidy of R17 250. But, in fact, everybody was paying the same

Sekethwa Jikwana, secretary of housing committee in Kwa-Five informal settlement, where some of Du Noon residents came from, sold her house for R8 000 to repay a funeral debt and was now back in a shack

She said although people were worried about winter and leaking roofs, they had sold their brick houses for a number of reasons

Some were moving back to the Eastern Cape, others had moved to farms while others were overcoming their financial problems "like me", she said

She sold her house for R8 000 because she had to repay a R6 000 loan taken out to bury her sister's child

She claimed some of the houses had been sold for as little as R800

Ms Jikwana said residents were aware they would not be entitled to another government subsidy, and living conditions in informal settlements

were worse, but people had no choice

Charlotte Sims, director of housing and health for Blaauwberg Municipality, said the sale of houses was legal

She said organised local government and housing professional bodies had warned the Government that its "lackadaisical" attitude to housing sales would lead to a significant percentage of housing subsidy money being thrown down the drain

Both the African National Congress and the New National Party in Blaauwberg were unhappy about the selling of government houses and vowed to investigate and stop it

Chris Potgieter, the New NP's chief whip in the council and district chairman for Table View, dismissed claims that the sale of houses was politically motivated, saying both his party and the ANC were working hand in hand to provide housing in the area

"We fought for years to house people and we can't allow these houses to be thrown away to people taking advantage of the situation. I will stop it," he said

Mr Potgieter, who said he had lived in informal settlements for 30 years, said people, who wanted to sell their houses because of arrears, should consult the council and make arrangements to pay their bills instead.

The ANC's Miley Desai said he was not aware of the matter and would investigate it, adding that his party wanted everybody to be housed.

Surita Botes, the provincial housing department's spokeswoman, said many people did not understand they would not be entitled to another government subsidy

Some had already tried to apply for a second subsidy in another town province, but the national housing database meant they could easily be identified.

Mzunani Sonto, provincial ANC housing spokesman, said people who bought or sold government houses were complicating the provision

He said people needed to be advised about paying rates as it was a big thing to most of them



DEALY & WATNER PHOTOGRAPHY & MARKETING

"The DP and completely d the changes to South Africa ANC is in fav it calls "trans means making of its cronies

As houses are sold to pay debts

ARL 26/5/99 (124)

By government-subsidised home

ing with
me of a
, said he
do after

re Cape
units of
omised
ioners
while
000 to
17 250
ng the
ary of
infor-
of Du
ld her
ld debt
wor-
oofs,
for a
the
ed to
ngs
me",

were worse, but people had no choice.
Charlotte Sims, director of housing
and health for Blaauwberg Municipal-
ity, said the sale of houses was legal
She said organised local govern-
ment and housing professional bodies
had warned the Government that its
"lackadaisical" attitude to housing
sales would lead to a significant per-
centage of housing subsidy money
being thrown down the drain

Both the African National Con-
gress and the New National Party in
Blaauwberg were unhappy about the
selling of government houses and
vowed to investigate and stop it.
Chris Potgieter, the New NP's chief
whip in the council and district chair-
man for Table View, dismissed claims
that the sale of houses was politically
motivated, saying both his party and
the ANC were working hard in hand
to provide housing in the area
"We fought for years to house peo-
ple and we can't allow these houses to
be thrown away to people taking
advantage of the situation I will stop
it," he said.

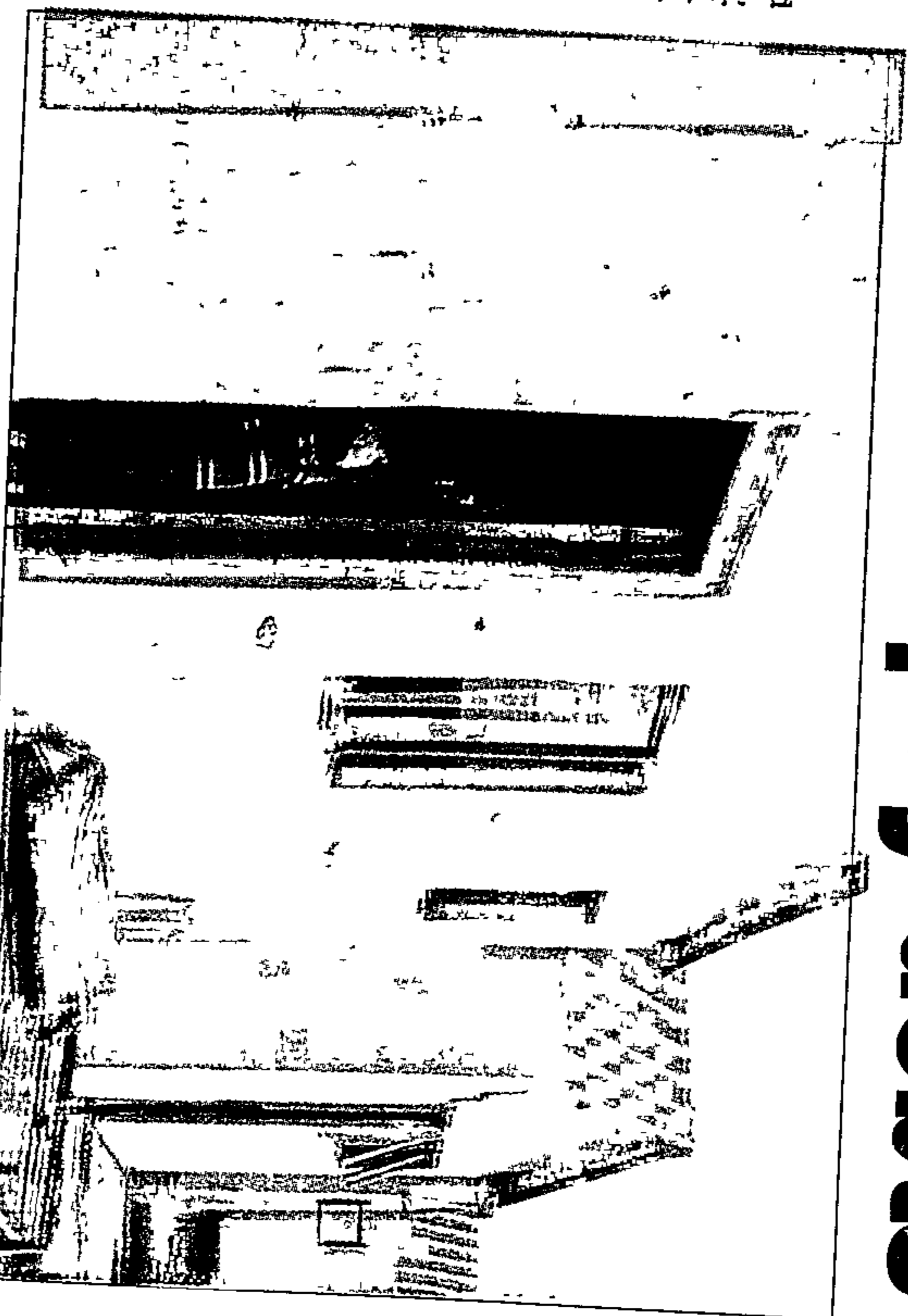
Mr Potgieter, who said he had lived
in informal settlements for 30 years,
said people, who wanted to sell their
houses because of arrears, should con-
sult the council and make arrange-
ments to pay their bills instead

The ANC's Miley Desai said he was
not aware of the matter and would
investigate it, adding that his party
wanted everybody to be housed
Surrta Botes, the provincial hous-
ing department's spokeswoman, said
many people did not understand they
would not be entitled to another gov-
ernment subsidy

Some had already tried to apply for
a second subsidy in another town or
province, but the national housing
database meant they could easily be
identified

Mzunanani Sonto, provincial ANC
housing spokesman, said people who
bought or sold government-subsidised
houses were complicating housing
provision.

He said people needed to be advised
about paying rates as it was a new
thing to most of them.



Seeking refuge: David Mbolompo is staying with a relative after high bills forced him to sell his house

MONDE DIKAVU

1 000
loan
had
ere
d to
liv-
% its
OGILVY & MATHER RIGHTFORD SEARLE-TRIPP & MAKIN 39597

"The DP and the ANC have completely different

Rent increases set to hit poor hardest

And more are in the pipeline, says council

PETER GOOSEN

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Life is tough for the thousands of poor and not-so-poor people who rent formal housing in the South Peninsula. They are faced with an 8% rental increase from the end of July.

And despite the South Peninsula Council's giving them a last-minute reprieve by bringing the increase down from 9%, their future still looks bleak, says housing committee chairwoman Beulah Smith.

The increase is about R8 a month for 7 224 tenants who pay R114,75 in rent. Tenants paying R80 a month will pay R6,40 more, while those paying R160 will pay R12,80 more.

Tenants in old-age accommodation have been exempted from the increase.

The increase was bitterly opposed by African National Congress councillors Hennie van Wyk and Vernon Seymour, as well as Philip Bam, a councillor for the Lotus River, Ottery and Grassy Park



Neighbours

Send your neighbourhood news and

notices to Jenny Viall at

488 4218, fax 488 4075 or

e-mail: nhood@ctn.independent.co.za

Ratepayers' Association.

And the council's 3 692 home owners haven't escaped either. The monthly administration charge has increased from R30 to R33.

Mr Seymour said he could not support any increase in spite of understanding the economic rationale behind it.

He showed councillors a petition signed by tenants of Dennehof, Keurbom Hof and Syringa courts objecting to the proposed increase.

Ms Smith said the rise in rentals was to pay for badly-needed maintenance of homes.

By law, we have no alternative

but to increase rentals and in six months' time, the Government has made it clear, we will have no option but to charge economic rentals. This is going to mean further hardship for the poor."

Councillor Siva Moodley said the council felt for the people faced with the rent increase, but it was also the duty of councillors to encourage their constituents to pay their bills.

If some of the R38-million in outstanding rentals was paid, it could cancel out further rent increases. Councillor Deon Kruse said the difference between hikes of 8% and 9% amounted to about R150 000 a year.

Tired old fire engines raise alarm

PETER GOOSEN

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

They're old and battered. They leak oil, their brakes are dodgy, their power steering is wonky and they must be repaired every other week.

No, it's not the contents of a shady used-car lot, it's the South Peninsula Municipality's fire engine fleet. It appears probable that only a few of the vehicles would pass the municipality's own roadworthy test.

A status report by the director of protection services, Roger Bosman, on the south's 21 fire-fighting

vehicles, many of them "second-hand" from the City of Cape Town or the Cape Metropolitan Council, tells a sorry tale.

Take a 1985 Dennis motor pump fire engine. It has brake problems, a continuous oil leak, continual electrical problems, its water tank has leaked for two years and its pump is overworked and cannot be serviced because of the lack of a replacement fire tender - and that's only five of its 17 faults.

A younger (1989) Dennis motor pump vehicle's engine cuts out continually, it has recurring electrical

and starting problems, the locker locking device is faulty and it has broken down 19 times in five months.

A 1992 Dennis has recurring power steering problems and electrical problems which cause beacon failure.

Escaping with only minor dents and a bit of rust are a 1993 Mercedes, a 1980 Unimog and a 1973 Mercedes.

There is some relief. Unable to afford new fire engines, the south has bought two refurbished units at a fraction of the cost - R281 751 each - and both are fighting fit.

Squatters evicted from low-cost houses

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

ARG 28/5/99

(124)
The West Coast Transitional Council says it will not provide alternative accommodation to 153 homeless families who illegally occupied houses in Saldanha.

The transitional council, also known as the Vredenburg Town Council, is asking the families to go back to where they came from

The council called in the sheriff of the court to start evictions on Tuesday this week, forcing people to leave the low-cost houses which they had illegally occupied for several weeks.

Town clerk Peter de Klerk said. "We understand the frustrations, but are doing our best to provide low-cost, affordable housing"

Mr De Klerk said provincial housing minister Cecil Herandien had asked the council to hold

back the eviction order, but this could not be done "because the project must proceed"

Mr Herandien's spokeswoman, Surita Botes, said he had asked the council earlier this week not to execute the eviction order - because there was an investigation under way into allegations of irregularities in the allocation of houses.

However, to avoid any legal actions against the council from impatient beneficiaries, it was decided to go ahead with the evictions, Ms Botes said

All the illegal occupants were evicted by the sheriff by yesterday

Saldanha police commissioner Jorrie Jordaan said police would patrol and protect municipal workers on the site, and prevent further occupations

A full investigation into the allocation of houses in Saldanha was being launched

New dam will keep taps flowing

CT 28/5/99

(124)

PRISCILLA SINGH

A MAJOR new dam, needed to meet the growing demand for water in the greater Cape metropolitan region, was yesterday approved by Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal after an 18-month delay.

"It is a relief to have reached this point. I have carried the submissions around in my briefcase for 18 months before I was satisfied that sufficient work had been done on the integrated approach and demand management, for me to give my approval," Asmal said.

The Skuifraam Dam will be on the upper Berg River in the La Motte forest near Franschhoek and will be operated with Theewaterskloof Dam as an integral part of the Riviersonderend tunnel system. The dam storage added will be about twice the size of the two Steenbras dams combined.

The Skuifraam supplement scheme, also on the upper Berg River, will be a winter high-flow diversion scheme which will

pump water for use from a point about 11km below the dam.

"Both the Skuifraam Dam and the supplement scheme have been found to be technically feasible, economically desirable and socially acceptable," Asmal said.

He said a water demand strategy was critical to the success of the project, which is expected to cost about R780 million.

"Only if we are managing the water we use carefully and not wasting it, can we justify spending money on developing new water resources. I am, however, greatly encouraged by the work done by local government authorities to promote demand management and water conservation."

Studies have shown that the combination of the Skuifraam Dam and the supplemented scheme was the best way in which to make more water available to meet the area's growing needs. Asmal said the Western Cape's strategy was a good example of the new approach to water management, which is being introduced throughout South Africa.

The project will provide a stimulus for the currently depressed construction industry and emerging small contractors will be used where possible. Communities in the area will benefit from job creation, and recreation and tourism opportunities once the dam is complete.

The crest length of the dam wall will be almost a kilometre. The wall will be 60 metres high, most likely a concrete gravity wall with an overspill section 150 metres long. The dam will store 126 million cubic metres of water and add 56 million cubic metres per year to the current supply system.

In what was probably his last briefing before the elections, Asmal used the opportunity to hail the efforts of his department over the past five years.

"I believe that as a country, we have made remarkable strides in water resource management and have managed to place ourselves among the forerunners in integrated water resources management throughout the world," he said.

Minister hands 400 houses to Grabouw

ET 28/5/99

JOCELYN JOHNSON

(124)
AFTER years without a permanent place to call home, farm workers watched with pride as their dream became a reality and Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu Mahanyele handed over 400 houses to the Grabouw community yesterday.

This is the first phase of a plan to build 1 273 houses by March 2000.

Yalezwa Witbooi, an administrative assistant of the Grabouw housing department, said the second phase is estimated to begin in July.

"We must wait for the provincial housing board to confirm that the money needed for construction can be released," she said.

Typically, housing a family of five, the one-roomed houses each stand on 25m² of land. They include a bathroom and running water, but electricity is not provided.

Residents can install an electricity box for about R100, after which they will have a prepaid service.

Witbooi said the need for land developed due to a political and historical legacy that prevented blacks from residing in the area.

New dam to meet city's water needs

R780-m project on Berg River

JOHN YELD
ENVIRONMENT WRITER

(121)

Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal has given the go-ahead for the R780-million Skuifraam Dam and its associated water implementation scheme on the upper Berg River between Franschoek and Paarl.

Although there is a two-month period in which any environmental objections can appeal to Environmental Affairs Minister Pallo Jordan, Professor Asmal's decision effectively brings to a close a decade-long debate over the best options for meeting Greater Cape Town's future water demand.

Speaking at a packed media conference yesterday which was also attended by senior city and metropolitan officials and water specialists, Professor Asmal said he had been sitting on the decision for 18 months, despite recommendations from his advisers.

This was because he had not been

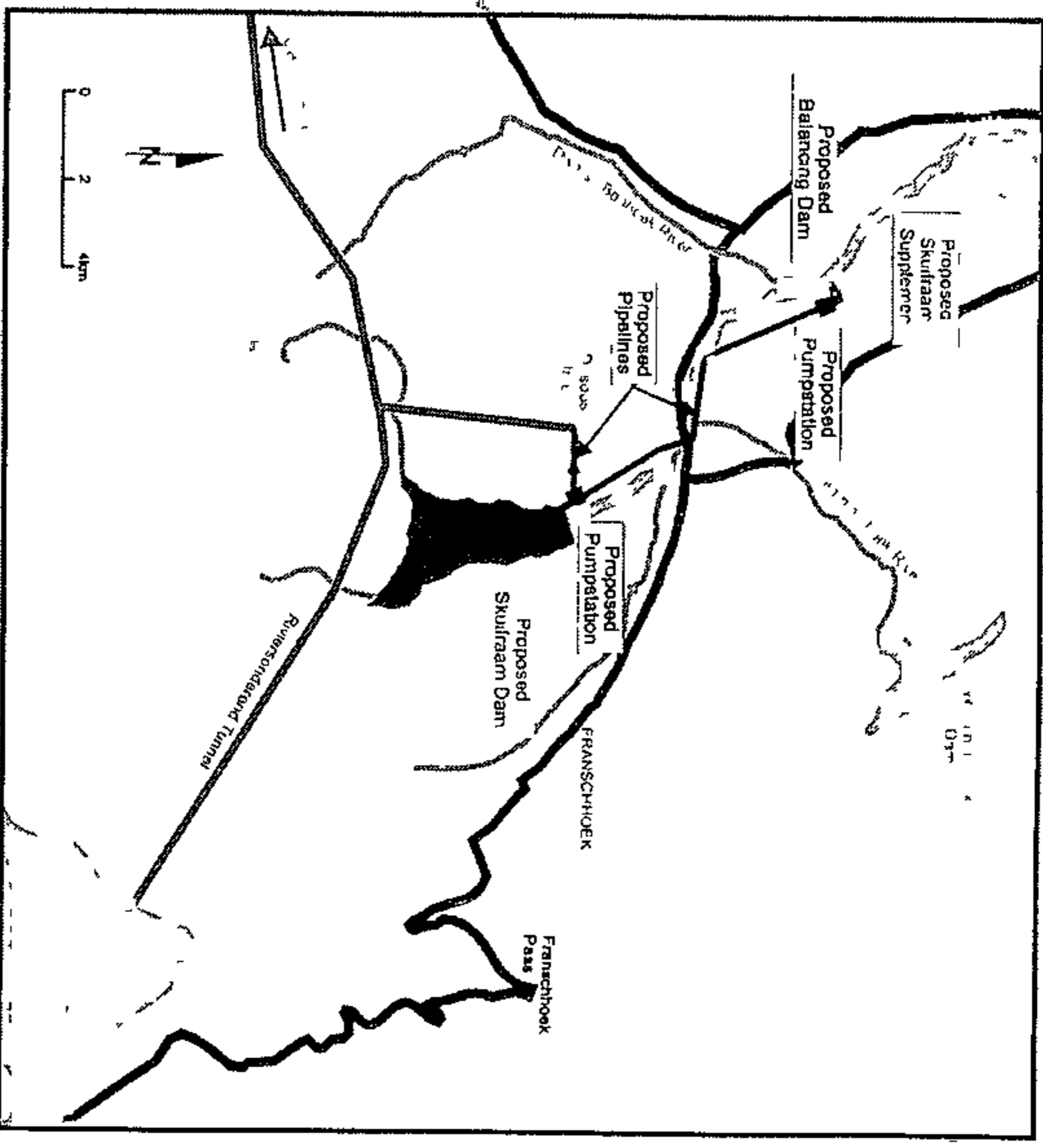
satisfied with water conservation and water demand management measures being applied in Greater Cape Town.

However, the Cape Metropolitan Council had now established a dedicated water demand management unit, and had initiated programmes such as the repair of leaks, improvement of water metering, and "retrofitting" to eliminate wasteful plumbing fixtures.

The Metro Council had also officially adopted the goal of reducing metropolitan water demand by 10% by the year 2010. "These measures being implemented, however, are actually aimed at a 20% reduction by that date, and I would like to see an even higher target being officially adopted and achieved," Professor Asmal said.

There was still a need to augment water supplies through traditional methods like dams to ensure the city and its surrounding areas did not face water shortages, he added.

"No minister, no matter what his views on dams or rivers might be, can



Waterwise: the R780-m Skuifraam Dam system on the upper Berg River near Franschoek

be so irresponsible in the unpredictable and variable climate of South Africa as to put a population of between two-and-a-half and three million people at risk.

"Should we delay implementing augmentation schemes further, and should this area have below average rainfall, water restrictions may become necessary."

The dam and the associated augmentation scheme will add a total of 80 million cubic metres, or some 17%, to the region's existing 475 million cubic metres annual water supply.

Construction is expected to start within two to three years, and will take about four years. The Skuifraam Dam will be built on the upper Berg River in the La Motte forest near Franschoek, and will have a 60m high wall of almost 1km. It will be able to store 126 million cubic metres of water.

The supplement scheme involves a pump about 11km below the dam near Paarl which will divert water during winter's high flow back to the dam or via the Riversonderend tunnel system into the Theewaterskloof dam over the mountains.

RESIDENTS SIGN DEED OF SALE

Council tenants able to buy Bo-Kaap flats

A **WOMEN'S** initiative of 1995 came to fruition yesterday with a new arrangement which enables council tenants to buy their properties. **YAZEED KAMALDIEN** reports.

THE Cape Town City Council's 7 500 capital discount scheme came to fruition yesterday when the Bo-Kaap Residents' Deed of Sale was signed

This historic event — marking the first time that residents can buy council property — was held at the Boorhaanool Centre in Pentz Street, Bo-Kaap

The mayor of Cape Town, Nomandla Mfeketo, the chairperson of the council's executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, and residents from the council-owned flats in Bo-Kaap attended

One of Bo-Kaap's oldest residents, Mymoena Abrahams, 93, signed the deed of sale along with

Mowzer and Mfeketo

From now on, tenants will be able to purchase their flats from the council

"Most tenants have been staying in the flats for over 50 years. This is a good example of how the council and the community can work together to achieve success," Mowzer said

The flats were initially built in the 1940s for the Muslim community and many tenants have stayed in them ever since

In 1995 it was the women residents who initiated the scheme to buy their flats, which range from one- to three-bedroom units

Buyers are to pay between

R1 800 to R8 400, "depending on the size of the flat"

Eighteen blocks of flats, totalling 191 units, are available

"To qualify, they must not own other property and they can only purchase their own flat, in which they are currently staying," said Saleem Patel, the lawyer representing the residents.

Flats will be bought on a "voetstoets", or "as is", basis

This means that when residents purchase their flat, they will accept full responsibility to upgrade it.

The council will make no further improvements

"The structures are very solid and the residents are getting a bargain," said Patel

The 7 500 capital discount scheme is open to all tenants of council-owned houses or flats



SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Bo-Kaap residents sign the deed of sale which will enable them to purchase council property. In some instances, residents have been tenants of the properties for 50 years or longer

PICTURE MUJAHID SAFODIEN

RESIDENTS SIGN DEED OF SALE

Council tenants able to buy Bo-Kaap flats

A WOMEN'S initiative of 1995 came to fruition yesterday with a new arrangement which enables council tenants to buy their properties. **YAZIED KAMALDIEN** reports.

THE Cape Town City Council's 7 500 capital discount scheme came to fruition yesterday when the Bo-Kaap Residents' Deed of Sale was signed.

This historic event — marking the first time that residents can buy council property — was held at the Borthaanool Centre in Pentz Street, Bo-Kaap.

The mayor of Cape Town, Nomandla Mleketo, the chairperson of the council's executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, and residents from the council-owned flats in Bo-Kaap attended.

One of Bo-Kaap's oldest residents, Mymoena Abrahams, 93, signed the deed of sale along with

Mowzer and Mleketo

From now on, tenants will be able to purchase their flats from the council

"Most tenants have been staying in the flats for over 50 years. This is a good example of how the council and the community can work together to achieve success," Mowzer said.

The flats were initially built in the 1940s for the Muslim community and many tenants have stayed in them ever since.

In 1995 it was the women-residents who initiated the scheme to buy their flats, which range from one- to three-bedroom units.

Buyers are to pay between

R1 800 to R8 400, "depending on the size of the flat"

Eighteen blocks of flats, totalling 191 units, are available.

"To qualify, they must not own other property and they can only purchase their own flat, in which they are currently staying," said Saleem Patel, the lawyer representing the residents.

Flats will be bought on a "work-steps", or "as is", basis.

This means that when residents purchase their flat, they will accept full responsibility to upgrade it.

The council will make no further improvements.

"The structures are very solid and the residents are getting a bargain," said Patel.

The 7 500 capital discount scheme is open to all tenants of council-owned houses or flats.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Bo-Kaap residents sign the deed of sale which will enable them to purchase council property. In some instances, residents have been tenants of the properties for 50 years or longer.

PICTURE: MUWAHID SAFODIEN

Water makes your housing subsidy grow

Big thank-you for Asmal

(124)

ARG 1/16/99

Some city house-owners will have a little more elbow-room in their newly-built, subsidised houses in future, thanks to millions of rands saved through the "Working for Water" programme.

This was revealed by Finance minister Trevor Manuel at a function in the Bellville Velodrome last week, when several thousand programme workers said "thank you" to Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal.

Mr Manuel, who was handed a copy of the programme's annual report by Professor Asmal, announced that the City of Cape Town had decided to increase housing subsidies by R5 000, using about R15-million saved through the programme.

This meant that the houses built with the subsidies could be significantly bigger.

In 1995 Professor Asmal initiated the innovative programme, which involves using previously unemployed and marginalised people to remove invasive, alien "water hungry" plants from catchment areas throughout the country.

According to the 1998/99 annual report, released at the function, 23 662 people were employed on the programme - 54% of them women and 16% of them youths between 15 and 25 - and more than 107 000ha were cleared of aliens, with vital follow-up work being done on another 128 000ha, at a cost of R250-million.

During the past four years, more than 42 000 people have been employed for some part by the programme.

Professor Asmal described the



ENVIRONMENT WRITER

programme as "one of the massive success stories of the first five years of democracy".

"It is difficult not to be moved by what the programme has done to try to honour the issue that has pride of place in our Constitution - dignity," he said.

"There are workers who have told me how much it means to them to have the dignity of putting food on the table of their children (and) of knowing that their children are safe while they are at work.

"The way in which the programme is helping to de-racialise the country, with brown and black and white South Africans all working towards a common goal, is evident here before us."

Professor Asmal said he had been told that the workers had gathered to thank him for developing the programme.

"But it is the wrong way around. It is I who should be here to thank you for making this programme what it is."

"This is your programme. It is your work that will make this programme succeed."

Professor Asmal and Mr Manuel were presented with gifts - including a coffee table and a wine rack - bought with personal contributions made by the workers.

WATER AFFAIRS

KADER ASMAL DECIDES IT'S TIME TO BUILD A DAM

(124) AM 4/6/99

Skuifraam a model of international best practice

There was a valedictory quality to Kader Asmal's media conference last week, his last as Minister of Water Affairs & Forestry before the election. He may return to the same job under Thabo Mbeki, or he may go elsewhere. "We'll have to see," he remarked cryptically.

The occasion marked Asmal's decision to proceed with the building of a new dam — the Skuifraam, on the upper Berg River in the La Motte Forest, 5 km west of Franschhoek in the Western Cape. It will be the first structure of its size and scale under the new government, and with associated water schemes the capital cost is put at R780m, to be funded on the "user pays" principle, which could mean borrowings by utilities such as affected local water authorities.

Consultation has been of the essence, the environmental impact has been assessed, and Environmental Affairs Minister Pallo Jordan has given the go-ahead, though there is a two-month window for appeal. Local communities, Cape Nature Conservation and various metropolitan, farming and industrial bodies were drawn into the process, which has gone on for years.

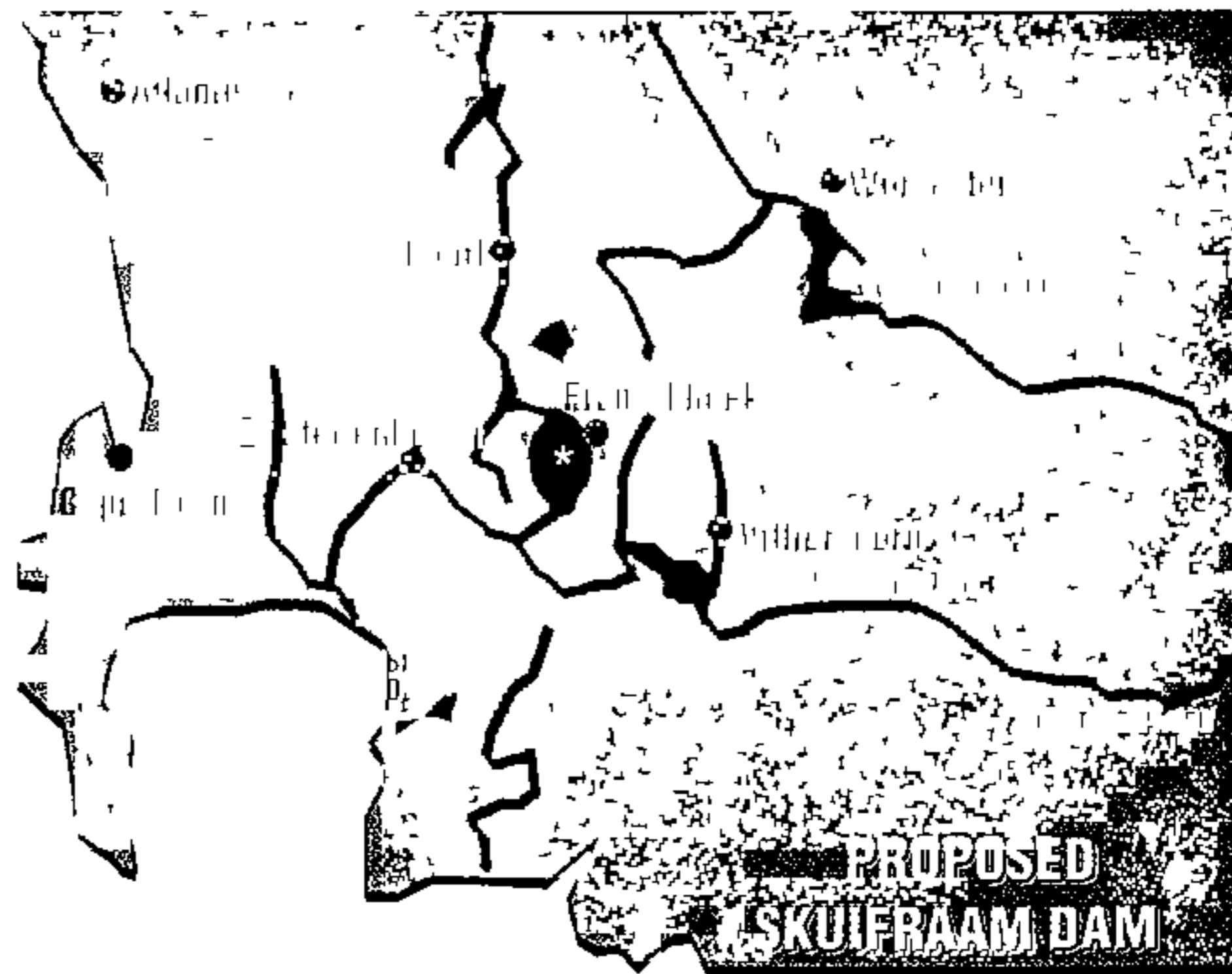
Asmal delayed the announcement for 18 months, contemplating it from various angles. He is known as an intellectual and humanist — not without a tendency to inflated rhetoric ameliorated by humour — and must be taken seriously when he says things like "Water is the essence of life. Without sufficient water in adequate quantities and acceptable quality, there will be none of the prosperity and human dignity we all aspire to, a full and healthy future will escape us and our children, and our children's children."

Yet the building of dams is a controversial matter. In SA's past, their construction has frequently been a political statement — like that of the Hendrik Verwoerd Dam after Sharpeville — with less than full consideration of their hu-

man and environmental costs. In SA, that dam, now the Gariep, led to population removals.

Worldwide, the building of a dam is considered as but one in a range of options for securing water. So while Asmal may once have dreamed of being our only Water Minister never to build a dam, the go-ahead for the Skuifraam project — the dam will be 60 m high, about a km across, store 126m m³ of water, and add 56m m³ to current supply — forms part of an integrated approach to water use in SA.

The blunt facts are that SA is water-scarce and cash-strapped. With the new National Water Act, conservation and value for money become paramount. Through a variety of means, the Cape Metropolitan Council has accepted a 10%



were fears that reduced flow, or flooding, in the Berg River estuary could degrade its importance as a bird habitat.

That situation will now be monitored, but the other drawbacks should be offset by new economic and recreational opportunities.

However, one overriding factor is that the Western Cape in the post-apartheid era has become a magnet for those now free of influx control seeking work and a better life. Industrial developments up the West Coast — which draw water from the same system as Cape Town — also have their demands. Soon in the next century, demand would exceed supply.

The intensity with which the situation was considered was representative of the new approach to water use, Asmal emphasised, and was predicated on

widespread, long-term consultation. Asmal boasts "Not only is (the project) a first for SA, but it is also a model for other countries on how major decisions that involve vast expenditure of money and enormous environmental and social aspects, should be taken. I will be submitting this process to the World Commission on Dams to consider in the process of developing best international practices."

If nothing else, Asmal has succeeded in transforming a Ministry previously considered little more than an adjunct to politically-inspired public works programmes. He has done the unexpected, and made water use policy crucial to industrial, urban and environmental planning.

Peter Wilhelm

reduction in projected water demand by 2010. Asmal believes the figure will be closer to 20% and would like to see it even higher.

The reduction in usage is achieved in several ways: tracking down and repairing leaks, improved metering and billing, more accurate accounting systems for water use and wastage, and a differentiated tariff system. "It is quite clear that it would be inappropriate to spend large sums of money on building a dam while water is being used wastefully and excessively," Asmal says. "It is interesting to note that only five years ago, the idea of saving water instead of building new dams was seen by many as a whimsical idea."

➔➔ I will be submitting this process to the World Commission on Dams to consider. Kader Asmal

A now-famous contribution to conservation has been Asmal's Working for Water programme, whereby previously unemployed workers are enlisted to clear out invasive plants from catchment areas — where they consume more water than indigenous plants. So far 100 000 ha have been cleared in the Western Cape, 4 000 jobs have been created to do so, and the estimate is that clearing increases runoff in rivers by 3,5m l/ha/year.

The feasibility study for the Skuifraam Dam pointed to some adverse effects. About 10% of the La Motte Forest plantations would be lost, heavy construction traffic could affect Franschhoek's viability as a tourist destination, rising water would cover the Dewdale trout farm, and there

Families promised houses six years ago still living in shacks

Mystery of R1 066 water bill for home which has no taps

(124) ARG 4/6/99

JERMAINE CRAIG

Liban Basson was astonished when he got a bill for R1 066 from the Helderberg municipality for water used at a house in Smartie Town, Macassar.

That's because Mr Basson has never lived at the house at 21 Waxberry Street and, what is more, it has no taps. The reason for the bill remains a mystery and the council is investigating.

The house was built for Mr Basson but was never completed and he has not been able to move in. It has huge holes in the walls and a pile of rubbish where the toilet is meant to be.

Strangely, the account was delivered to Mr Basson's address at 17 Chris Hani Park, a shack settlement where he has been living for more than five years in anticipation of moving into his house in Smartie Town.

Mr Basson's tale is one of a number in the Western Cape which have lifted the lid on the chaotic state of

housing provision in some areas. Housing was used as an election issue to woo voters desperate for roofs over their heads.

Western Cape African National Congress leader Ebrahim Rasool asked the Heath Commission, the Public Protector, the Auditor-General and provincial government to investigate the situation of families in the Chris Hani settlement who were promised houses six years ago but are still living in squalid shacks.

The story begins during the Easter weekend of 1994 when Zandvliet farm was flooded and 33 families who lived there were moved to the Macassar Civic Hall as an emergency measure.

The families were allowed to set up temporary structures on a site earmarked for a school, which came to be known as Chris Hani Park.

About the same time the former Western Cape Regional Services Council granted money to the then Macassar management committee to provide 488 serviced sites on a

piece of land which came to be known as Smartie Town.

Just before the 1994 election, then deputy minister in the House of Rep-

'The house has huge holes in the walls and a pile of rubbish where the toilet is meant to be'

resentatives, Cecil Herandien, who is now the provincial housing minister, made money available for 263 self-build houses on a portion of this land.

In 1996 the NP-led Helderberg council decided that 106 of the

remaining 225 plots in Smartie Town would be allocated to families in Chris Hani Park and 119 to people on the official housing waiting list.

National Party councillor Jannie Beukes was appointed project coordinator and the ANC alleges that the NP promised people in Chris Hani Park houses in return for their votes in the 1996 local elections.

The developer of the project, Charles Swanepoel, operating as Embu Homes, apologised to the Helderberg council in April this year for being unable to finish the job. He said his materials had been stolen and people were not prepared to pay additional money he needed to complete their homes.

He admitted he had caused discomfort to the people of Chris Hani Park and said he considered it "very important" to complete the project.

Mr Swanepoel said he had offered to complete the houses, but if the

council did not find his offer acceptable he would then try to repay the money he had been paid. The bulk of this money came from housing subsidies.

The director of Helderberg's urban planning, housing and development committee, J J Degenaar, said the council had been putting pressure on the developer constantly to finish the job and would seek legal opinion on how to deal with the matter.

The Helderberg council's deputy director of revenue, Henry Dowling, said the case of Mr Basson's water bill and others similar to his were being investigated and there would be more clarity by the end of next week.

"It is a very contentious issue. There have been cases where people requested a connection, paid for it and the bill was sent for the water used. Who used the water we do not know."

"We will have to find that out in our investigation," Mr Dowling said.

ed houses six ing in shacks

(124) ARG 06/99

ome which has no taps

to be
ion, then
of Rep-

remaining 225 plots in Smartie Town would be allocated to families in Chris Hani Park and 119 to people on the official housing waiting list

AS

National Party councillor Jannie Beukes was appointed project coordinator and the ANC alleges that the NP promised people in Chris Hani Park houses in return for their votes in the 1996 local elections

n

The developer of the project, Charles Swanepoel, operating as Embu Homes, apologised to the Helderberg council in April this year for being unable to finish the job. He said his materials had been stolen and people were not prepared to pay additional money he needed to complete their homes

e

He admitted he had caused discomfort to the people of Chris Hani Park and said he considered it "very important" to complete the project

en who
g minis
le for 263
m of this

Mr Swanepoel said he had offered to complete the houses, but if the

er berg
of the

council did not find his offer acceptable he would then try to repay the money he had been paid. The bulk of this money came from housing subsidies.

The director of Helderberg's urban planning, housing and development committee, J J Degenaar, said the council had been putting pressure on the developer constantly to finish the job and would seek legal opinion on how to deal with the matter

The Helderberg council's deputy director of revenue, Henry Dowling, said the case of Mr Basson's water bill and others similar to his were being investigated and there would be more clarity by the end of next week

"It is a very contentious issue. There have been cases where people requested a connection, paid for it and the bill was sent for the water used. Who used the water we do not know

"We will have to find that out in our investigation," Mr Dowling said



SQUATTER CRISIS: Ebrahim Rasool Inspects houses at Smartie Town



UNFINISHED BUSINESS Mr Rasool checks an incomplete and damaged house with the owner, Laban Basson

MONDE DLAKAVU

Rates bills drive out poor residents

(124)

New home owners in South go back to old shacks because they can't pay

ARG 7/6/99

PETER GOOSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Poor people in the South Peninsula have been selling their new houses cheaply and going back to their old shacks after seeing their first municipal accounts.

This was disclosed by South Peninsula executive committee chairman Graham Lawrence in his budget speech - in which he announced an 8% increase in rates. Mr Lawrence said Government policy was that, once services were provided, communities were expected to pay the full cost.

"But the reality is that many poor communities simply cannot afford to pay for even very basic services." In spite of some remarkable achievements by local government in the Cape, it remained starved of national funding that would ensure its achievements were sustainable.

And it was not only the South

Peninsula that was faced with trying to sustain its achievements.

He said it had been the dramatic withdrawal of national subsidies that had most constrained the South

Peninsula from achieving its development potential.

"We had to implement a 19% rates increase in our previous budget, while shrinking our real

expenditure growth by 4,6%

"This year our subsidies from national government drop another 30%," he said.

Current policy was that the Gov-

ernment would fund the initial provision of basic services and facilities, and local government would cover the cost of running and maintaining the service.

"In reality, current national funding is neither sufficient to provide acceptable services in urban areas, nor is it able to satisfy community expectations."

The Government assumed that the larger local authorities were more viable and therefore more able to finance themselves.

"Because of this assumption, we find that most subsidy support is channelled into rural areas increasingly, leaving the metropolitan areas and secondary cities to fend for themselves.

"Yet nearly 87% of all outstanding arrears, R9,8-billion, are in the larger, local-authority areas."

In the Western Cape alone, arrears were up from R1,2-billion to nearly R2-billion.

Wealthy areas face bigger rates rise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Rich municipalities in the South Peninsula are set to see by as much as 25% in their rates in 2000.

The 1999-2000 budget of the South Peninsula Council has been approved by the council. It includes a 25% increase in rates for the wealthy areas of the South Peninsula.

it's capital and it's focused on development in the urban areas.

The 1999-2000 budget of the South Peninsula Council has been approved by the council.

It includes a 25% increase in rates for the wealthy areas of the South Peninsula.

The 1999-2000 budget of the South Peninsula Council has been approved by the council.

It includes a 25% increase in rates for the wealthy areas of the South Peninsula.

The 1999-2000 budget of the South Peninsula Council has been approved by the council.

It includes a 25% increase in rates for the wealthy areas of the South Peninsula.

Dam will boost Cape water supply

Louise Cook (124)

THE new R620m Skuifraam Dam to be built in the vicinity of Franschhoek and Paarl in the Western Cape will add a yield of 56-million cubic metres a year to the current water supply system for Cape Town and surrounding areas

Unlike past practices of simply building dams when water was needed, the building of the Skuifraam Dam was closely linked to resource demand management strategies, water affairs and forestry director Babs Naidoo said yesterday

"There comes a time when you have to build a dam, but it has to be subject to further conservation policies to ensure the proper management of the resource," she said

Construction of the dam as well as the Skuifraam supplement scheme on the upper Berg River would go ahead in two to three years' time

Water conservation and demand management schemes linked to the building of the dam include the clearing of invasive alien vegetation and the establishment of a dedicated water-demand management unit by the Cape Metropolitan Council

Also due to receive attention would be repairing leaks, improving metering and removing wasteful plumbing fixtures, the department said Organised agriculture would also be consulted with a view to promoting more efficient water usage in the province

The planned Skuifraam Dam will be located on the upper Berg River in the La Motte forest, about 5km west of Franschhoek

The dam will be linked to the Theewaterskloof Dam via the Riviersonderend tunnel system

MD 15/6/99

SHACK ATTACK

Professor says 64 settlements around Cape Town will be a problem forever unless 'idealistic' policy is revamped

TOM HOOD (124)

ST (cm) 20/6/99

ONE of Cape Town's most accomplished civil engineers has called for an overhaul of the housing policy for the city and surrounding areas

John Abbott, professor of civil engineering at UCT, said municipalities should upgrade shacks instead of taking on the near impossible task of rehousing people in new brick homes

Abbott was commissioned five years ago by the Cape Metropolitan Council to assess the growth of informal housing in greater Cape Town

According to a report released this week, he identified 72 100 shacks in 64 informal settlements up to May last year. This figure was growing by about 16 percent a year

The number of shacks grew two-and-a-half times from 28 300 to 72 100 from January 1993 to May 1998. The number of shack settlements had grown from 52, according to a council document

Asked for comment after the release of the figures, Abbott said: "Without an urgent and clear change in policy the real issues will not be addressed"

"We have passed the point where we can talk in an idealistic way simply about rehousing everyone"

About 25 000 shacks had been upgraded in Gauteng after the owners had received security of tenure and similar attempts were being made in Durban and Port Elizabeth

Cape Town should adopt a similar approach instead of relying on the R15 000 government subsidy for low-income families

Another council document showed the sub-economic housing backlog was about 220 000 and population growth

would boost this to 260 000 by 2010. This equalled housing an extra 20 000 families which would take up all the housing subsidies available a year

Almost all the shack dwellers in greater Cape Town were from the Eastern Cape and one-third of black families lived in informal settlements

A new tendency revealed by the survey was the growth of backyard shacks in the newly developing low-income housing areas. This indicated that migration was far higher than the 16 percent recorded by informal settlement growth. Abbott said the growth in backyard shacks reduced the growth of informal settlements

Abbott said the City of Cape Town had the most shacks of the six municipalities, with 42 percent of the total

The 1998 shack count for the municipality was 31 618, a six percent growth in two years despite 4 000 new housing sites being allocated to squatters. The number is predicted to grow to 34 000 over the next two years

Blaauwberg resettled more shack residents, as a percentage of total shack population, than other municipalities. But the number of shack dwellers there had increased

The Marconi Beam settlement in Milnerton should have been cleared a year ago but the density was back to what it was before relocation to Joe Slovo Park because as people moved out new people moved in

"It is clear that this is a textbook case-study of failed relocation, using an imposed solution that does not recognise the forces underpinning urban migration," said Abbott

Brian Watkyns, chairman of the Cape Metropolitan Council's planning committee, said the six municipalities would be consulted before recommendations were made

Probe into 'phantom houses'

(124)

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 23/6/99

The Helderberg Municipality has asked the Public Protector to help investigate the failure of a building contractor to complete low-cost houses in Macassar for which he was paid.

A full council meeting debated the crisis for almost three hours yesterday, before deciding it was in the interests of those left homeless that the matter be investigated at the highest level.

The Macassar housing issue began about two years ago when the provincial housing board approved individual housing subsidies for the residents of the informal settlement of Chris Hanu Park.

The community, with the help of attorneys, appointed a local contractor, Embu Homes, to build their houses. In an attempt to get the funds released, the residents signed contracts indicating they had received their houses.

Helderberg Municipality's director of housing, Hans Degenaar, said problems arose when the contractor failed to deliver on his promise.

"He handed over some completed houses, others were partially completed and a lot of the 106 houses were never built at all. As a municipality, we are looking at ways of getting the people housed."

"Part of this process includes calling in the Public Protector, Selby Baqwa, to investigate," he said.

African National Congress provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool said his party commended the municipality for calling on the Public Protector to investigate the matter.

"This same contractor, in spite of the fact that the houses were not completed, has since been awarded subsequent contracts by the provincial housing board - with the knowledge of the Minister of Housing, Cecil Herolden," he said.

The contractor could not be reached for comment.

MPs' staff kicked out of parliamentary village

Houses 'wrongly allocated' to support workers

LYNNE RIPPENAAR
STAFF REPORTER

Employees working for Members of Parliament are being evicted from Pelican Park after houses were wrongfully allocated by political parties.

Greg MacMaster, regional manager of the national Department of Public Works, said they had arranged with political parties in 1994 that each one would get a housing quota and that the party's whips would allocate houses.

However, houses which were meant for MPs had wrongfully been allocated by parties to MPs' support staff.

"The accommodation in the three parliamentary villages is intended for parliamentarians and sessional officials," said Mr MacMaster.

"Some of the political parties gave some vacant houses to parliamentary support staff."

In July 1997, the department gave the "illegal" residents verbal notice to quit the houses. Two written notices were sent to residents in August and November 1997.

The matter went to court after residents failed to leave the premises and the court ruled residents had to move by June 15.

Mr MacMaster said that of the six tenants who had been served with eviction notices, four had moved while two had remained in the houses and had had to be put out.

Yesterday, Munsoer Anthony, whose wife works in one of the national government departments, said he was "very angry" about the eviction. His wife, whom he said could not be named, had asked for a 10-day extension until they could move to their new home in Grassy Park on July 1.

Some of the government employees being evicted did not want to reveal their names to the press for fear they might be



Out in the cold: the belongings of a government employee, who was evicted from Pelican Park yesterday, at the entrance to the parliamentary village near Zeekoevlei

WAYNE CONRADIE

reprimanded or lose their jobs.

The two families evicted yesterday had lived in Pelican Park for three years.

"Now Public Works say we are illegal occupants. We paid to stay here and they gave us keys," said Mr Anthony.

Next door to the Anthony home there are two similar empty houses, and one resident said most of the one-bedroom houses were unoccupied. Standing at the entrance to Pelican Park, Mr Anthony said that he was waiting for his children, the eldest of whom is 10, to come home from school.

"This is going to be a shock for them," said Mr Anthony. "My eldest daughter is very upset and the five-year-old said she was going to miss the place."

"We don't have a place to go."

One government employee said she had been at work when the sheriff of the court came to her house.

She had started packing her belongings

with the intention of moving as soon as she found a new home for herself and her two children, but instead had found all her furniture and other belongings at the entrance to the village when she got home yesterday.

"I don't really know what to say. I am not thinking straight now," she said.

"I said I was ready to move, but they did not give me time. I told them I was looking for a place. I asked for an extension."

As the woman tossed books and other items into a rubbish bag, she said "I don't want to look at it, because then I won't throw it away and I can't take it with me."

Mr MacMaster said residents had been told they did not meet criteria to stay.

"Two-and-a-half years is enough time to get a new home and we need the houses for MPs and sessional officials."

He said the process of getting rid of tenants had taken so long because new laws introduced in 1998 made eviction difficult.

Housing boss threatens to sue Rasool

ANC leader faces court action

ARG 24/6/99

(124)
NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien is threatening legal action against African National Congress leader Ebrahim Rasool for making allegations about an incomplete housing development in Macassar.

An outraged Mr Herandien said yesterday that to accuse him of condoning irregularities and incompetence was nothing short of defamation of character.

He had spoken to his attorneys who were studying Mr Rasool's remarks.

The allegations refer to problems with a project in Chris Hanu Park, also known as Smartie Town, and involve Government subsidies paid out for 106 houses. Some of the houses were never built and others were not completed.

On Tuesday, the Helderberg Municipality asked Public Protector Selby Baqwa to help investigate the failure of a building contractor to complete low-cost houses for which he had been paid.

The municipality launched an investigation this week and was seeking legal advice.

Mr Rasool commended the municipality for calling on the Public Protector to investigate.

He said "This same contractor, in spite of the fact that the houses were not completed, has since been awarded subsequent contracts by the provincial housing board with the knowledge of the Minister of Housing, Cecil Herandien."

Mr Herandien said the residents had appointed the contractor themselves and that he had not been involved in this process.

Of the 106 units originally scheduled to be built, 64 were completed, 25 were still under construction and 17 had not been started.

Mr Herandien said the project had been continuously monitored and various problems had been identified, some relating to the processing of subsidy applications.

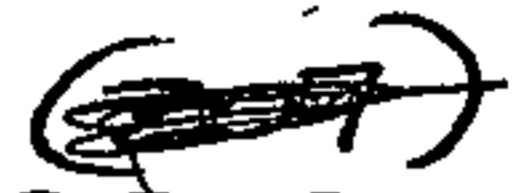
He said individual residents had paid their subsidy money to a firm of attorneys, who were in turn responsible for paying the contractor. This was normal practice.

Mr Herandien said that he was confident that the problems in Macassar would be sorted out through the correct channels.

Last night the contractor, Charles Swanepoel of Grabouw, declined to comment.

Shack-dwellers praise plan to upgrade homes

ARG 24/6/99



Don't move, improve – UCT research professor

(124)

A proposal to upgrade shacks rather than replace them with brick houses is a cost-effective way of providing low cost housing, says a professor of civil engineering.

John Abbott, professor of civil engineering at the University of Cape Town, said the idea required a new approach, but it was "a cost-effective way of development".

The idea has been welcomed by shack dwellers in a snap survey by the Cape Argus

People said government housing subsidies might go further when it came to upgrading dwellings, rather than building new ones

They said, also, that the brick houses that were being built were too small.

Professor Abbott said Cape Town faced a number of different housing problems, such as overcrowding in Mitchell's Plain and Hanover Park, and a proliferation of backyard shacks and informal settlements.

He said the last meaningful housing project in Cape Town was Mitchell's Plain

When shack dwellers went from an informal settlement to formal housing, the vacant land was invaded by more people

NORMAN JOSEPH



METRO REPORTER

and the backlog increased.

About 25 000 shacks had been upgraded in Gauteng after shack dwellers received security of tenure.

Similar efforts regarding shacks were being made in Durban and Port Elizabeth

Cape Town should adopt a similar approach instead of relying on the R15 000 government subsidy for low-income families, said Professor Abbott

The Cape Metropolitan Council commissioned Professor Abbott to conduct a pilot project to evaluate shacklands to see whether upgrading would be a better alternative than relocating people to low-cost housing schemes on far-away sites

The project team is checking to see which methodology or guidelines could be used to upgrade informal settlements

The team is taking aerial photographs of shanty towns, looking at the demographics, identifying the number of

shacks in an area and capturing details such as the structures' numbers and open spaces available for possible roadways.

A survey is then made of the residents' skills and how the settlement could be developed economically.

"Obviously, physical changes will have to be made, such as the shifting of certain families within certain settlements," said Professor Abbott.

Local authorities should develop good relationships with informal settlement communities.

Key policy principles should be mapped out and the manner in which the development will be done should be discussed with communities

"It is a process and depends on how much funds are available"

Professor Abbott said the aim was to transform informal settlements into desirable communities and to get people involved in their own development.

There were hidden costs for people who were maintaining a home for the first time, such as rents and rates.

"Not everyone can afford it," said Professor Abbott.

In terms of his scheme,

households could choose how to pay for the new venture which "makes it affordable"

The project team would forward its findings to local authorities for their study

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien welcomed the professor's suggestions, but doubted whether shanty dwellers would be enthusiastic

However, a snap survey by the Cape Argus proved him wrong.

Several homeless people said new brick houses were even smaller than most shacks.

Nomthandazo Yawa of Samora Machel informal settlement near Philippi said "It's a very good idea."

She said contractors always told people they could not build decent houses with the government housing subsidy.

But they said it was possible that the subsidy would go further when it came to upgrading existing dwellings

Nomangesi Luti, who lives in a backyard shack in NY72 in Guguletu, said new houses were so small people could not get all their belongings in.

Miriam Deseu of Khayelitsha said new homes had only one room and no toilet, and "contractors always complain that the subsidy is too little"

Herandien defends housing policy

KARIN SCHIMKE
POLITICAL WRITER

WESTERN Cape housing MEC Cecil Herandien has accused ANC leader Ebrahim Rasool of defaming him by saying he was condoning irregularities in a Macassar housing project

Herandien was reacting yesterday to Rasool's speech in the provincial legislature on Monday. Rasool said "The re-appointment of Cecil Herandien (as housing MEC) is cynical in the extreme, given that his role is being investigated by Judge Heath in the housing development in his constituency of Macassar where a contractor has admitted to receiving

money more than one year ago, yet 18 houses stand incomplete and 19 have not yet been built, and people are being charged for water consumption at these plots"

The Helderberg council this week decided to ask the Public Protector to look into the matter of uncompleted houses in Smarty Town in Macassar

Herandien reacted yesterday by saying it was not the responsibility of the housing department or the housing MEC to pay the contractor

"The subsidy money (for 106 houses in Smarty Town) was paid to a firm of attorneys, who were in turn responsible for paying the funds to the contractor. This is normal prac-

tice in cases such as these"

He said the Helderberg municipality had investigated the matter

Herandien said since the inception of the housing subsidy scheme in 1994, the province had provided around 110 000 new "housing opportunities". More than 80 000 new houses had been built or were under construction

Herandien added that the Macassar contractor had been appointed by the housing beneficiaries themselves

"Of the 106 units, 64 have already been completed, 25 are under construction and 17 have not yet been started," he said

CT 24/6/99

Spotlight on faulty homes

TOM HOOD

ST 4/7/99

THE fate of 1 000 badly built council houses at Lost City, Mitchells Plain, will be discussed by Cape Town's housing committee on Wednesday

Every house in a sample of 20 was condemned for structural defects by independent surveyors, who said they should be demolished

Lost City residents have rejected a council offer to repair the houses and demanded that:

- The council sell the houses voetstoots to the residents for between R5 000 and R15 000

- Failing this, the council should add a room with a door to each house

- Alternatively, the houses should be knocked down and rebuilt properly.

"At the least we want another room with an outside door," Hendrina Sauls, chairwoman of the Lost City Civic Association Forum, told Cape Metro

Over 90 percent of the residents have refused to pay rent because of the state of the houses

A report by housing manager Daphne King said the council could be held liable if it failed to repair structural defects and would consider repairing the houses

Overcrowding stunts Khayelitsha's growth

Shacks occupy land meant for projects

AR 15/7/99
 Khayelitsha to another area in Delft South.

MORRAN JOSEPH
 MERNO REYNOLDS

Overcrowding in Khayelitsha is preventing economic development and informal settlements are occupying sites earmarked for projects such as the construction of a factory

African National Congress councillors in the City of Tygerberg recently requested their council and the provincial housing department to make available vacant land in Delft South, so that people living in densely populated areas such as Silwerdustria in Khayelitsha could be moved to make way for proposed building projects.

The projects are aimed at creating jobs and stimulating economic growth in Khayelitsha.

But not all areas in Delft belong to the Tygerberg municipality. Several sites belong to the Western Cape Housing Development Board.

And New National Party councillors have taken the stance that people can't be placed on land that is not owned by the council or on a site where ownership is unknown.

The council's finance committee recently discussed who should pay for the transfer of people from

over all the properties in its area of jurisdiction and not only selected "blue-chip" pockets of land.

Vuyane Ngcuka, African National Congress councillor and chairman of the urban planning committee, said the council had awarded a tender to a company to build a factory

At this stage, it was not known what kind of factory was planned.

He said the tender award was done in anticipation that the council would be able to transfer occupants from various sites to an alternative site.

Mr Ngcuka said, "We have made a passionate plea to the MEC for housing (Mr Herandien) to help find alternative accommodation for families who occupy strategic parcels of land in areas where projects are planned."

"Our discussion with the MEC to acquire or access a piece of land in Delft South proved fruitless."

"On numerous occasions we have been asked to furnish more information and comply with new requirements."

"It is an undeniable fact that Khayelitsha is overcrowded and, as a result, it has become impossible to provide any kind of alternative accommodation."



No room: so far, urgent pleas for vacant land to house Khayelitsha shack dwellers have not borne fruit

Armour against landlords

TARZAN METTA
 SWAN REPORTER

Landlords who exploit their tenants must beware. Help is at hand in the form of Sayed-Iqbal Mohamed, a Durban Metro Councillor and a director of the Organisation of Civic Rights (OCR).

Now that they have firmly established themselves in Durban and the Eastern Cape, Mr Mohamed feels the time is right to let tenants in the Western Cape know their rights.

He will be delivering a paper at

a workshop entitled The Rights and Obligations of Tenants and Landlords, which will discuss anything from notice to vacate property to maintenance of the building.

"Landlords always charge exorbitant rents, yet pay scant regard to the maintenance of buildings," he said.

Research has shown that in South Africa there are more than eight million people who live in rented space, and that most do not know their rights as tenants.

"Worse still, landlords have a tendency to threaten people with

eviction if they complain about living conditions," he said.

His organisation aims to set up a network of other organisations that have the interests of tenants at heart.

The OCR also aims to empower groups in the Cape to know their laws governing their rights.

Entrance is free, and the workshop runs from 10am to 3pm at rooms 4 and 5 on the seventh floor of the Provincial Administration Offices in 4 Dorp Street.

For further details, contact Mr Mohamed at 082 928 8512 or Shireen at 082 202 5867.

City housing logjam grows

BYULISI GUPHE
 SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The long list of people waiting for houses makes it almost impossible for local government to meet the burgeoning housing need in the Western Cape.

Officials said money allocated for houses by the Government was not nearly enough to meet demand.

They appealed to banks and other big businesses to get involved in housing delivery.

At least 221 000 people are on the waiting list of the six Cape Metropolitan Council municipalities but only 22 000 houses can be built with the R350-million budget earmarked

by the housing department for the next three years.

And to compound the problem, so far this year 48 953 applications for housing subsidies have been approved by the provincial housing board.

Every year in the metropolitan area 26 000 new families are added, of which 20 000 have an income under R2 500 a month.

This figure excludes those who arrive from other areas.

This results in illegal land invasion by squatters who are impatient with the slow moving list.

Members carry plastic shields, teargas, guns and batons as they demolish shacks that sprung up overnight.

This is in order to avoid snags caused by the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, which requires a court order to remove people once they are living in a shack.

Housing is the second most important challenge, after employment, for the Government.

Now officials from the six CMC municipalities echo the same sentiments.

Many housing officials believe each council should set aside "reception areas" where homeless people

can obtain temporary settling rights with a chance of getting a permanent home at some stage.

They also think that rudimentary services, including water electricity and sanitation, should be provided.

But the officials want communities to co-operate by paying for these services.

Rick Brouseus, head of housing at the Tygerberg council, said

Capetonians should work together as a "uni city", where banks and other businesses were partners in housing delivery.

He said politicians should not interfere too much in the housing process because this had delayed progress in some cases.

Investor's court bid to evict squatters

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124) ARG 15/7/99

A German investor is applying to the Cape High Court for an eviction order to remove hundreds of squatters from a Philippi site earmarked for a R12-million industrial estate

Helmut Ernst's attorney, Peter Pearson, is in the process of compiling documents for the application to evict the people from the 20ha site at Monwood in Philippi.

Mr Ernst, director of four companies, is also a representative for a group of German investors who are to be involved in industrial development on the site

An eviction order would prohibit people from re-occupying the site they first set foot on in February

Recently Mr Ernst and Mr Pearson approached political parties, the City of Cape Town and several other government departments for help, but without success. They have now opted to take the matter to court and get an eviction order

At yesterday's city council planning committee meeting, it was decided that a special meeting involving the committee and the housing committee would be set up to work out a plan of action regarding the invasion of about 2 000 squatters in the Philippi industrial area since February

The planning committee is to investigate whether Monwood's neighbouring sites are viable for an industrial estate or should be rezoned for housing

Councillor Belinda Walker handed in a motion to the planning committee calling for a full discussion on land invasions in Philippi, in particular the Monwood industrial estate

She asked that a report on the issue, by council officials, be submitted to the committee within 30 days

Ms Walker said land invasions in the Philippi area were affecting development, and the issue needed to be addressed as soon as possible

Councillor David Ntlanganiso drew support in yesterday's meeting when he said, "We must look at how to prevent land invasions"

"In this building we talk and talk and take no action. There is an invasion as we speak at De Lix (near Samora Machel squatter camp) and it's not a political issue"

Planning committee member Revel Fox described the invasions as a "local emergency", and said the joint meeting with the housing committee must deliver a plan of action

■ Meanwhile, it has emerged that council workers allegedly used municipal trucks recently to move building materials for squatters on to vacant sites in Philippi

According to reliable sources, after an internal investigation several workers were given warnings

Shigella outbreak claims three lives

ERIC NTABAZALILA

AN outbreak of shigella, a particularly virulent form of dysentery, has occurred on the Cape Flats and has caused the deaths of at least three children in areas where the bucket system is used

Dr Ivan Toms, medical officer of health in the City of Cape Town, confirmed the outbreak of the disease

"There was a recent outbreak of shigella which caused the deaths of children who were exposed to human faeces. There was a high incidence of the disease in areas which were still using the bucket system," he said

Toms said that the bucket system resulted in unpleasant odours and flies which spread diseases

Professor of Paediatrics at Red Cross

Children's Hospital, Alan Sive, described shigella as a bacteria that causes dysentery — an infection of the intestinal tract causing severe diarrhoea tainted with blood and mucus

He said it caused an associated disease which affects the blood and kidneys, causing children to develop kidney failure and for them to bleed heavily. These conditions can lead to death

However, he said not all patients with shigella developed kidney failure and bleeding. He said the disease attacked adults as well, but children were more at risk

"We had a recent outbreak of the disease at the Red Cross Children's Hospital and interestingly, the majority of the patients were from Gugulethu

□ Turn to Page 3

'I can't say how many people died'

□ From Page 1 (124) 15/7/99 "But I'm not sure whether they were coming from areas where the bucket system was used

"However this disease is much more common in areas where there are sewerage problems. It has led to deaths, but I cannot say how many people have died

"I have been involved in one of the cases where a patient's colon had to be removed," he said

Lindiwe Mndayi, a Silvertown resident in an area where sanitation is supplied by 1 400 buckets, is one of the worried parents after her baby was diagnosed with diarrhoea

"I was told my child has developed this disease because we are staying in a dirty area full of germs. I'm very worried because I have heard that the same disease can kill a child"

There are 50 other buckets scattered around Khayelitsha, while the Cape Town City Council services 600 buckets for residents from Vygieskraal, KTC, Tambo Square, Mpinga Square, Mkhonto Square, Mpetha Square and Boys' Town

Toms said: "The city council would like to move to a point where all residents are provided with flushing toilets as the bucket system is dangerous

□ See Insight Page 13

'WE WON'T BE THREATENED' — CITY COUNCIL

Battle to restore SERVICES

ET 16/7/99

(1247)

A GROUP of unemployed residents from Gugulethu have vowed to continue their week-long disruption of services by the Cape Town City Council. **ERIC NTABAZALILA** reports.

THE Cape Town City Council and Sanco are fighting to bring services back to Gugulethu after a week-long disruption by a group of unemployed residents who threatened to disrupt the services unless they were employed permanently by the council.

But despite efforts to avert the situation, the group which claims to represent more than 500 unemployed people from Gugulethu, vowed not to stop their action until they have been permanently employed.

The group started disrupting services at the Kapa Town Council at the old Fezeka on Monday after meeting Mike Marsden, executive director of municipal ser-

vice at the Cape Town City Council last week. They gave him an ultimatum to employ them permanently by Monday or they would disrupt the services.

On Monday, they started dumping rubbish and burnt tyres at the entrance of the city council premises every day, preventing council workers from entering the premises.

The group went to see Marsden at his city council offices last Wednesday and demanded to be employed.

Marsden said yesterday that he sympathised with the unemployed residents, "but we are not going to be threatened by any group to provide jobs. I met them and explained to them that if they dis-

rupt services in the area, the whole community would suffer and they would be held responsible for the disruption of services. We are not an employment agency and these people were not working for the city council before."

Sanco provincial chairperson Mzunani Sonto said "We believe they have a right to demand their right to have a job, but they should not do so in a manner that would deprive the community of the basic services. We do not at any stage undermine their demands to have jobs, but it is in the interests of all that services be rendered to the community."

Sanco was planning to meet the group and discuss the situation yesterday, but had not been able to establish who the group's leadership was.

Thubalakhe Mbhobho, who spoke on behalf of the group yesterday, said their actions should in

a way be applauded as they were trying to refrain from doing crime

"Many of us are tired of being beaten up by taxi drivers because of being involved in criminal activities. We are tired of going to jail because of stealing. What we are demanding is to make an honest living. We are asked to pay for services but we are not given jobs. How are we expected to pay for such services and feed ourselves and our families if we don't work? We are aware what we are doing is going to affect our community, but we are appealing to people to understand our plight."

Marsden said he had been in contact with councillors in the area and his staff to inform them about the progress of the situation. Marsden said the city council has refrained from sending police to remove the group as he feared the situation could resolve next week.

Provincial Masakhane award for Riversdale

MANDLA MNYAKAMA

CT 23/7/99

RIVERSDALE has won the annual Masakhane Top Achiever Town award, beating other Western Cape towns such as Vredendal, Wolseley, Blaauwberg, City of Tygerberg, Oosternberg, Ceres, Wellington, Oudtshoorn and Worcester.

The Riversdale town council was presented yesterday with a cheque for R100 000 by Local Government Minister Pierre Uys.

There was a set of criteria participants had to comply with.

"We encourage community development and service delivery in communities. This award is to say to the community of Riversdale 'thank you for getting your community involved'," said Uys,

adding that in winning the award they should be seen as an example for other municipalities.

Chris Taute, the mayor of Riversdale, said the money would be used to educate people about Masakhane — about the payment of services.

"We entered this because we wanted to uplift the standard of living in our community."

Taute said Riversdale won the competition because it had taken a more humane approach. It had not forced people to pay for services, but had instead involved all those in arrears in community-based projects.

Riversdale will now represent the Western Cape in the national Masakhane Awards competition.

Cape's winter water crisis

TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARING

Cape Town faces summer water restrictions - and rural districts are on the verge of being declared disaster areas more than halfway through a winter that has so far been the driest of the decade.

The Cape Metropolitan Council has asked people to use water sparingly as the main dams supplying the city are considerably lower than last year.

Thus week's light rains made little impression on the growing water crisis in Cape Town and failed to reach large parts of the southern Cape where farmers are suffering crop losses.

The Western Cape provincial administration is considering declaring parts of the southern Cape such as Heidelberg disaster areas.

Airne Singles, head of the CMC's water department, asked people to use water sparingly now to help prevent restrictions later.

Mr Singles said it was still too early to decide on restrictions because the council usually took that decision at the end of October.

But he told Saturday Argus that if consumers were careful it would

be possible to reduce consumption by 20%.

The major dams supplying Cape Town are the Steenbras Lower, which is 51.4% full (compared with 55.7% this time last year), Voelvlei, which is 55.3% full (66.8% last year), and Theewaterskloof, which is 75.7% full (97.47% last year).

Dam levels on Table Mountain are especially low compared with last year, but Wemmershoek and Steenbras Upper have bucked the trend and are fuller than a year ago.

Despite a very chilly night last night, unseasonally warm weather for the past weeks has caused fruit trees to blossom prematurely, fueling fears of global warming caused by the greenhouse effect.

The rain in the southern Cape recently has been too little too late to save barley, canola and wheat crops.

Embattled farmers in many areas in the southern Cape will not be able to harvest enough grain to make ends meet in what has been described as the area's lowest yield in 70 years.

"It's an absolute disaster," said

Ben Saaiman, advisory head of the provincial agricultural department.

Mr Saaiman said the rains had come too late for the grain farmers, and the Western Cape's agriculture department was gathering information pursuant to classifying certain districts disaster zones.

In areas such as Heidelberg, 75% of crops are expected to be lost because of poor rainfall.

If disaster areas are declared, committees will be set up to assess farmers' financial needs.

Mr Saaiman said Riversdale, Albertinia and Mossel Bay were expecting to harvest half a ton of grain a hectare, about a quarter the usual yield.

"These yields will not cover costs," he said.

The Swartland wheat belt north of Cape Town fared better although rainfall figures were also below average.

In the southern Cape dams were on average 60% full instead of the usual 90% for this time of the year, a clear indication of rainfall being at least 25% lower than usual.

The unseasonal weather has also

had a negative impact on deciduous fruit farmers in the Elgin area.

Hugh Campbell, manager of industrial affairs for the Deciduous Fruit Producers' Trust, said producers were under severe financial pressure.

Fruit trees needed low temperatures to become dormant, but higher than usual winter temperatures meant trees were blossoming early. There was a fear of lower quality fruit.

In Cape Town the question on everyone's lips is what has happened to Cape Town's winter.

Weather experts say the dry spell is comparable to the drought of the 1930s that devastated agriculture during the Great Depression.

But Bruce Hewitson, of the Climatology Laboratory at the University of Cape Town, said people were quick to jump to conclusions based on short term analysis.

Although this year's winter started late and last summer was dry, the unusual weather was not totally unprecedented, he said.

The Cape Town Weather Bureau reports that temperatures over the past year have been on average 1°C warmer than usual and rainfall considerably lower than average.

Fact file:

Comparison of dam levels July 98 and 99		
	1998	1999
Wemmershoek	59.7%	72%
Steenbras lower	51.4%	51.4%
Steenbras upper	62.8%	82.4%
Voelvlei	66.8%	55.3%
Theewaterskloof	97.47%	75.7%
(Table mountain dams)		
Heyl Hutchinson	100%	63.8%
Woodhead	98.6%	46%
Victoria	99.7%	63.1%
Alexander	105.6%	58.7%
De Villiers	99.70%	79.3%
(Simon's Town)		
Kleinplaspie	55.8%	22.15%
Lewis Gov.	91.1%	75.6%

Cape Town Airport 1999 rainfall compared to annual expected average		
1999	expected average	
January	1.2mm	9.7mm
February	0.9mm	18mm
March	0.4mm	22.1mm
April	57.2mm	55.5mm
May	34.8mm	76.7mm
June	83.3mm	98.3mm
July	40.1mm (so far)	96.9mm

(124) ARG 24/17/99

Report and drought pictures, see page 27

Cape Town's hostels of shame

Abandoned relics of apartheid era provide a life of squalor for thousands of indigent families

ST(CM) 27/7/99
(124)

TOM HOOD and BABALWA SHOTA

A DAMNING report on private and council-owned hostels near Cape Town's city centre has lifted the lid on the squalor and dangerously unhygienic conditions that many of their 11,000 residents live in.

Hidden in Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu, most of the 17 hostels are relics of the apartheid era's labour policies and have been abandoned by companies as squatters moved in.

For an average K7-a-month rent, up to 16 people share a toilet, 23 share a kitchen, 22 share a washbasin, 12 share a tap and up to three people share a bed.

The dismal conditions were uncovered when Cape Town's housing committee ordered an investigation.

Novusumuzi Nyangwa, 30, shares a tiny room with 14 other people — including her husband and eight children — at a Langa hostel.

She said she was concerned about her children's health. "This is unhygienic and no place to raise children, but we don't have a choice. There are about 60 people who share six rooms here and when my husband and I go to work we have to rely on them to look

after the kids," said Nyangwa, adding that they queued "like ants" in the mornings to use the single toilet and the cold shower.

Monde Manzana, 37, who moved to the Cape Provincial Administration hostel in Nyanga 12 years ago from Transkei, said residents were prepared to pay rent but wanted the provision of electricity and services.

Langa hostel dwellers said this week their living conditions were worse than in the squatter camps.

Anderson Mbambalala, 59, spent months in hospital after contracting pneumonia from living in a damp room next to a toilet.

His roommate, Humphrey Skenjana, 59, also became ill and suffers from severe flu every winter.

"The room is damp and mouldy, the smell from the toilet drifts inside and more than 50 people share six rooms, a toilet and a kitchen," said Skenjana, who has lived there for 25 years.

"I can't bring my wife and children from the Transkei to live in such an environment — I'd rather go to the squatter camps where life is better. We don't even have a shower or a proper kitchen," he said.

Only 12 of the 96 hostels inspected in the municipal survey have access to hot water during the cold Cape winter and only three have

baths. The overcrowded rooms have as many as four bunks in a 3m by 3m space. Sometimes three families live in a 20m² room intended for three labourers.

But, having been abandoned by private companies, the hostels are no longer regarded as anyone's responsibility.

Most of the hostels were built about 50 years ago and many of the owners went out of business years ago. Others simply walked away as the hostel dwellers left and squatters moved in.



DIRT BOX: Hostel resident Monde Manzana stands amid garbage outside one of Cape Town's forgotten hostels. Picture: DAVID HENNING.

Squatters have also built over 300 shacks next to the hostels for their relatives.

Only 19 companies which still own the largest are Eskom and the Cape Provincial Administration.

Eskom spokesperson Trish Ormiston said Eskom was nominally the owner of a hostel it built in Nyanga. But the lease expired in 1993 and in practice the hostel belonged to the council.

Only six of the tenants were Eskom employees but all rents were paid to the council.

INNOVATIVE SCHEME FOR NEW HOME-OWNERS

Poor set to get 'show' homes

AT LEAST 200 to 300 poor families will be new home-owners before Christmas, thanks to an innovative new housing development from the Cape Town Community Housing Company, writes **PRISCILLA SINGH**.

THE first show village — specially built and set up for prospective owners to see what they could afford — was visited in Woodlands, Mitchells Plain yesterday by Cape Town mayor Nomaandla Mfeketo and Anglican Archbishop Nonjongkulu Ndungane, who chairs the scheme.

The housing company is a partnership between the City of Cape Town and the National Housing Finance Corporation, which has been set up to achieve additional "top-up" funding towards people's houses and to open a line of credit in the form of personal or microloans to those who can afford it.

Those able to save R50 — the equivalent of the existing monthly council charges — for an initial period of six months will qualify for the council's top-up which will be on average R5 000.

The end product will be bigger and better quality housing to

are able to repay R100 per month plus the R50 for council charges, a 64 square metre unit which will be repaid at R250 a month, and then a 64 square metre house for those able to afford a repayment of R350 a month.

Company chief executive officer Mervyn Brightman said the repayment level will vary from project to project depending on size constraints, cost of finance, interest rates and inflation.

"There will also be costs such as electricity, and a factor to cover these aspects, such as insurance and maintenance of these units," Brightman said.

To qualify for the council's contribution to the subsidy, prospective home-owners will have to build up a record of saving.

As a shareholder, the City of Cape Town will be the force behind the Housing Company and ensure the delivery of houses, while a private company, KMMT Brey, will oversee the commercial and financial risks.

City manager Andrew Boraine said he believed there were about 8 000 applicants already wanting to be part of the new scheme

"We haven't even marketed the scheme yet, and thousands of people have filled in forms. A lot of people do qualify and have demonstrated that they can save and we know the scheme will work."

"The show village is also a good idea because people can see what they are getting," Boraine said.

The first batch of applicants will be informed in about six weeks whether they were successful in getting a house, which is scheduled to be completed by December. By that time they would have also built up a substantial savings account to prove they can pay for the houses, Brightman said.

At the end of the required four-year holding period, provided that all personal or micro-loans have been paid, the company will pass the title deeds to the beneficiaries.

"While the initial beneficiaries will qualify after a six-month savings period, the fact that we are currently limited to 5 000 top-up opportunities a year means the length of stay in the savings queue will increase over time," Ndungane said.

Show houses for the homeless get the thumbs-up

MYOLISI GQOME
STAFF REPORTER

Thousands of Cape Town's homeless are in line to get homes after municipal and religious officials gave five show houses in Mitchell's Plain the thumbs up for both size and quality yesterday.

The Cape Town Community Housing Company show houses were built as part of an innovative partnership between the City of Cape Town, communities, financial institutions and a board of directors.

The scheme aims to address the housing shortage, which is one of the biggest challenges facing local government. The partnership was formed to speed up the delivery of houses and give low income families in the city access to finance.

Cape Town mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane, city council manager Andrew Boraine and the council's executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer inspected the show houses and later described them as "good houses".

The successful inspection probably means the go-ahead will be given for the construction of 5 000 quality houses a year.

The city council contributed R5.5 million to the whole Metropolitan area.

tion towards the scheme and buyers who qualify for the project stand a chance of getting R5 000 to support their purchase.

But this support will be made available only to those who show they have the ability to save at a reputable bank.

Mr Boraine said it was the council's top priority to get poor people housed and the scheme was created to give them a better product.

He said it was up to people to choose what houses they needed and those who wanted bigger houses should start saving soon.

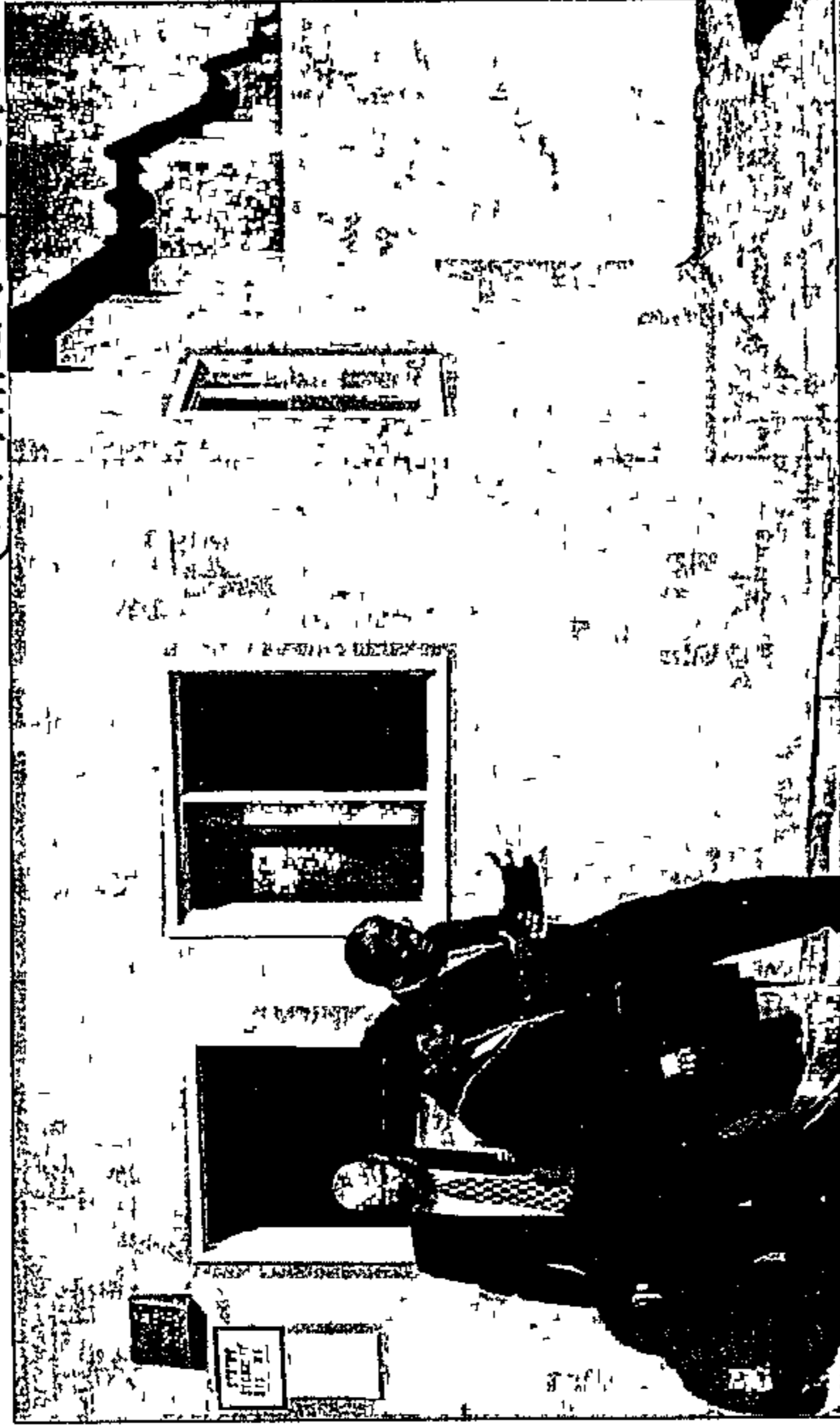
The council, as a shareholder, is to ensure the delivery of houses while the housing company will oversee commercial and financial risks and other technical matters during the building phases.

Ms Mfeketo said communities desperate for houses needed to commit themselves and start saving now. She said this would be an indication that they would pay for their services.

So far, about 10 000 people have joined the scheme. Houses range from 40m² upwards and the housing company will also help create small affordable loans.

Those interested in joining the scheme can go to their local council housing estate offices.

The scheme is expected to spread to



The right stuff - Cape Town Community Housing Company executive chairman Mervyn Bregman, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane and Cape Town mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo inspect the show houses in Mitchell's Plain.

(124) ARG 27/7/99

PROJECT DOOMED FROM START

R3,9m to rescue Lost City

(124) ET 30/7/99

ONE THOUSAND crummy houses constructed by the Cape Town City Council at Lost City in Mitchells Plain are to be repaired. Consumer Writer **GUSTAV THIEL** reports.

THE City of Cape Town's top official, Saleem Mowzer, has called for a system of accountability to be put in place to make members of previous city councils pay for their inability to deliver proper housing to the poor.

Mowzer, Exco chairperson, made the call subsequent to a decision by the council to make R3,9 million available from the Social Development Capital Fund for the repair of houses in the Lost City area of Tafelsig. The city housing project, which was initiated in 1992, went badly wrong.

In April this year, independent assessors found problems with houses — ranging from cracked walls, faulty foundations, water seepage and damp floors to leaking roofs.

The council decided not to demolish the houses, but to accept responsibility for the damage and, according to Daphne King, the existing housing stock manager of the council, they are in the process of putting the project out for tender. The housing committee recommended on

Wednesday that BKS Ltd be appointed as supervising engineers on the project.

One thousand houses were constructed during 1992 and 1993, but the houses were built on raft foundations which were inadequate.

Mowzer told the *Cape Times* yesterday he deemed the council's decision to approve the recommendation of the joint housing and finance committee, which met on Wednesday, to be "one of the most historic decisions taken by the council. We basically decided to say that it was the city's fault that the housing project in Lost City went wrong and that we are going to do everything in our power to rectify the situation."

"It is our responsibility as an ANC council to make sure that we deliver to the poor and this decision proves our commitment."

He added that he believed the current state of housing in the province, which includes the Lost City project, was the result of "the inability and attitude of the DP council which was in place at the time, to deliver proper housing to

the poor."

"We are stuck with a situation that was basically the previous council's fault and I think we will have to look at ways to make these people financially accountable for their actions."

Mowzer said the DP chairperson of the housing committee in 1992, Neil Ross, and Isobel Edelstein, who is now the deputy mayor in the Metropolitan Council, should specifically be made to answer for their inaction in delivering houses to the poor.

In response to Mowzer's allegations, Ross said "he is talking crap" and added that "Mowzer should check his facts before speaking out."

"What he fails to understand, it seems, is that we were dependent on the province at the time for money to build houses for the poor and the province decided to cut the governmental subsidy for houses." Ross added that "even in our darkest days we managed to build more houses for the poor than Mowzer is managing today."

"The money that the council will use to repair the houses in Tafelsig is money that was gained from the sale of rented bungalows on Clifton beach, so in effect Mowzer's council is using money that we made available."

Hans Smit, who was director of project management services in the council in 1992 and is currently director of housing in the South Peninsula Municipality, also said yesterday he believed the provincial government, under NP housing ministers Cecil Herandien and Gerald Morkel, had more to do with the fact that delivery of low-cost housing to the poor did not occur the way it should have.

"The houses in Tafelsig were built on raft foundations because there simply wasn't enough money to afford different kinds of foundations. Our engineers did not find serious problems at the time with the foundations, but the area where the houses are situated is particularly exposed to strong winds and erosion," Smit said.

The council's housing committee admitted this week that the project was doomed from the start. The development proposal steering committee said that at the start of the project, they had had reservations about using raft foundations.

In late 1993, before the legal tenants could take possession of the houses, 300 of them were illegally occupied. By the time they were eventually vacated, damage amounting to R900 000 was done.

W Cape faces blitz on housing subsidy rip-off merchants

Heath unit wants go-ahead to investigate

ADRIAN MADLAND
POLITICAL EDITOR

A big crackdown on widespread fraud in the Government's housing subsidy scheme has been launched in the Western Cape.

The initiative, a joint operation by the housing ministry and the Heath anti-corruption unit, is part of a national effort to bring thousands of individuals and hundreds of development companies to book for the abuse of housing subsidies.

The Heath unit confirmed that it has applied for a presidential proclamation extending its inquiries to the Western Cape.

It said a number of allegations involving housing subsidy fraud had come to light in the province.

Evidence from other provinces, where the crackdown has already begun in earnest, have revealed the scale of the problem. In KwaZulu Natal alone, 53 000 individual applications are being scrutinised with about 40 housing projects.

In Gauteng, almost 150 projects and more than 100 individuals are being investigated.

The Government pays a subsidy of R16 000 to people wanting to own a home for the first time. It is aimed at citizens with small annual incomes who have previously been denied the opportunity to buy property.

Members of the Heath unit met Housing Minister Sankie Mthemb-

Mahanyele earlier this month to give her an idea of the extent of the fraud being unearthed since its investigations began last year.

A ministry report has been forwarded to the office of President Mbeki, who has taken responsibility for co-ordinating a national anti-corruption strategy.

Subsidy fraud was taking place in a number of ways, said Ms Mthemb-Mahanyele.

Some individuals who had received subsidies, for example, did not meet the criteria. These stipulated South African citizenship, a maximum salary limit and no ownership of other property.

Cases of people with several identity documents receiving subsidies in a number of provinces had been unearthed.

Developers who had received subsidies had been found to have either failed to complete houses, not built them at all, built them to an inadequate standard or charged extortionate fees – in some cases up to R6 000 – for processing applications.

The Heath unit has also alerted the ministry about conveyancers duplicating IDs and applying for subsidies on behalf of beneficiaries who eventually do not get the houses. The beneficiaries are given bribes of between R1 000 and R1 500 and the rest of the money is pocketed by conveyancers.

"The ministry is looking at the

pattern and has worked out how to close the loopholes," said Ms Mthemb-Mahanyele.

A helpline would be established and she had begun to appeal on radio to subsidy applicants to report illegal activities.

"We are determined to root out corruption in all its forms," she said.

The ministry would be improving its subsidy assessment process.

Property deed registers would be checked and a computer database in the national housing office would be revamped to include a tracking system to identify fraudulent applications by including thumbprints. Monitoring of progress at housing sites would be beefed up.

At present, developers have to receive a "happy letter" from subsidy beneficiaries stating that they are satisfied with the completed work before they are paid.

The manager of the Heath unit's Gauteng investigation team, Tinus Rheeder, said: "They (the ministry) can do more ... to get the departments to act in the right manner."

"The whole scheme is aimed at poor people, but there are guys getting rich out of this system and others who are losing out on getting a house."

Ms Mthemb-Mahanyele said prosecutions of subsidy fraudsters had begun to gather pace and many more could be expected in the coming months.

GENBEL

GENBEL SOUTH AFRICA LIMITED

(Incorporated in the Republic of South Africa) (Registration number 05/32379/06)

RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1999

HE

STAF

The
tion
anc
cas

sol

Bid to write off arrears gets nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

(124)

The South Peninsula Council has agreed to approach the provincial MEC for housing to have the arrears on house payments for the 400 residents of St Montague Village, Lavender Hill, written off.

The council has already agreed to reduce the cost of the houses by R10 000 because of poor workmanship

A delegation of residents of St Montague Village, Lavender Hill, heard a

recent meeting of the South Peninsula Council reduce the value of their homes

At last week's meeting the residents said they wanted all the arrears written off as well as the house prices reduced

A report on the debate that appeared in the Cape Argus on Thursday July 29 failed to mention the arrears decision which the residents consider a major breakthrough

The error is regretted

ARG 2/8/99

Council 'shamed' over land for shelter

PETER GOOSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

(124)
ARC 2/8/99
The South Peninsula Municipality should be ashamed that it cannot find a suitable site in Grassy Park for a shelter for homeless people, says Grassy Park councillor Philip Bam.

Mr Bam said at the council's monthly meeting last week that residents had objected so strongly to a haven in Grassy Park that the council had not dared to make any municipal-owned land available.

"We have failed the homeless people of Grassy Park because of our inability to come to grips with this problem

"It's a sad thing, but it's what the community says. Now it's our job to get the community involved to show that we do care. It's a shameful day for this council, a shame on all of us," he said

In stark contrast, African National Congress councillor Vernon Seymour, in whose ward part of Grassy Park falls, seconded the recommendation to turn down the shelter application for council-owned land

The ANC's Dick Meter said the council had been way too passive over this issue

The New National Party's Neville Riley said the council owned a lot of land in Grassy Park and must take the initiative to organise a land swap for suitable, privately-owned land in Victoria Road that for a shelter

Mr Riley was backed by the Democratic Party's Herbert Syre and the New NP's John Mathee

Independent councillor Nicki Holderness said that if the council was going to turn down the Haven's application for council land she would not support it

The DP's Bill Stibbe said the civic associations needed to take responsibility for finding solutions in their communities for the vagrants in their areas

Many civic associations were only concerned with "Nimbys" (not in my back yard) and did little to find solutions for destitute people



RESIST: The National Council of Provinces, Naledi Pandor

Parliament to hail forgotten heroines of the 'struggle'

MOSHIDI MORWENA

A GALA dinner with the theme Women Reaching Out, in honour of women struggle-veterans from all over the country, will be held in Parliament on August 8 as part of the commemoration of Women's Day.

Hilda Ndude, owner of Jumbo Women Empowerment and co-ordinator of the event, said that the feeling was that women veterans, especially those in rural areas who were involved in the struggle, were always "left out".

She said that because these women were old and could not attend every function and rally, they were never included in events.

Said Ndude: "We want them to feel they have not been forgotten and that their contribution in the country's struggle for freedom and human rights was recognised."

Veterans like Fatima Meer, Adelaide Tambo, Nadine Gordimer, Helen Suzman, Phyllis Naidoo and numerous others will be handed commemorative certificates and gifts by President Thabo Mbeki in recognition and remembrance of their contribution.

Ndude said that not only political contributions were significant, women had always spoken against racial oppression and in favour of the liberation of their communities.

The guest list will cut across political party lines, Ndude said. A number of companies, hotels and travel agencies have been approached by Ndude to sponsor the women with air tickets and accommodation.

The City of Cape Town will also be involved in planning the dinner.

Ndude said the guests will arrive in Cape Town on Sunday for the gala dinner and will be taken to Robben Island and Houses of Parliament on Monday.

Ndude said it was difficult to compile the guest list because some of the women were in the rural areas where they could not be contacted "electronically".

Meanwhile, Naledi Pandor, the newly-appointed chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, yesterday urged women to exercise their inalienable right to say "no" to oppression.

"The time has come for women in South Africa to rise up and confront the challenges facing them," Pandor said at a preparatory Women's Day celebration in Muzenberg.

Pandor said women in South Africa should fight back to decrease domestic violence, rape and child abuse, among other afflictions.

MONEY MAY BE LOST CT 4/8/99

Housing subsidy plan led to disappointment (124)

HOMELESS people of Mbekweni who hoped government housing subsidies would give them homes wait while the builders argue **ERIC NTABAZALILA reports**

WHEN the government introduced the housing subsidy scheme to alleviate homelessness, many homeless Mbekweni residents thought their frustrations were over.

But now, three years later, their hopes of ever becoming home owners are fading, and the provincial housing board has threatened to allocate the money for the housing project to some thing else if it is not used.

The problem arose when subcontractor Paul Arendse of Palm Builders and Decorators told the residents at a public meeting that he could build 40m² houses for the same cost as the 27m² houses proposed by the Paarl council.

Bruce Kannemeyer, a former councillor in the area and now a member of parliament, said that late last year the council decided to award Asla Civil Contractors the contract to develop the area called Project 2 for low-cost houses.

He said that after the development of the area only R3 608 was left of the R17 250 government subsidy for each house. Asla then built "wetcore" structures consist-

ing of four concrete pillars, a roof and a toilet.

The residents rejected the structures and said they would oppose anybody other than Arendse who started building houses in the area.

Mandla Ngwenya, a member of the beneficiaries committee, said all the residents wanted the bigger houses to be built. They could not understand why the council should refuse to give the contract to a builder who would build bigger houses for the same price.

Kannemeyer said the council had decided to add R6 892 a house to enable the builder to build proper houses as it felt it could not let the residents stay in "wetcore" structures. "We consulted the community and explained everything about Project 2 to them," he said.

"When somebody said Arendse could build larger houses for same amount of money, we felt we owed it to the community to discuss the matter with Arendse.

"We had out reservations and

our technical people wanted to find out if he could build so many houses. Though we had these reservations we decided to put it to the community to decide which houses they wanted. They obviously chose the 40m² houses," he said.

He said Arendse signed a contract with Asla Civil Contractors to build the houses, but since then he had built only three show houses.

Arendse alleges that Asla Civil Constructors was refusing to sign sureties for him to get material from suppliers.

But Asla Civil Constructors said it was not up to the company to provide finances or financial arrangements for any building company.

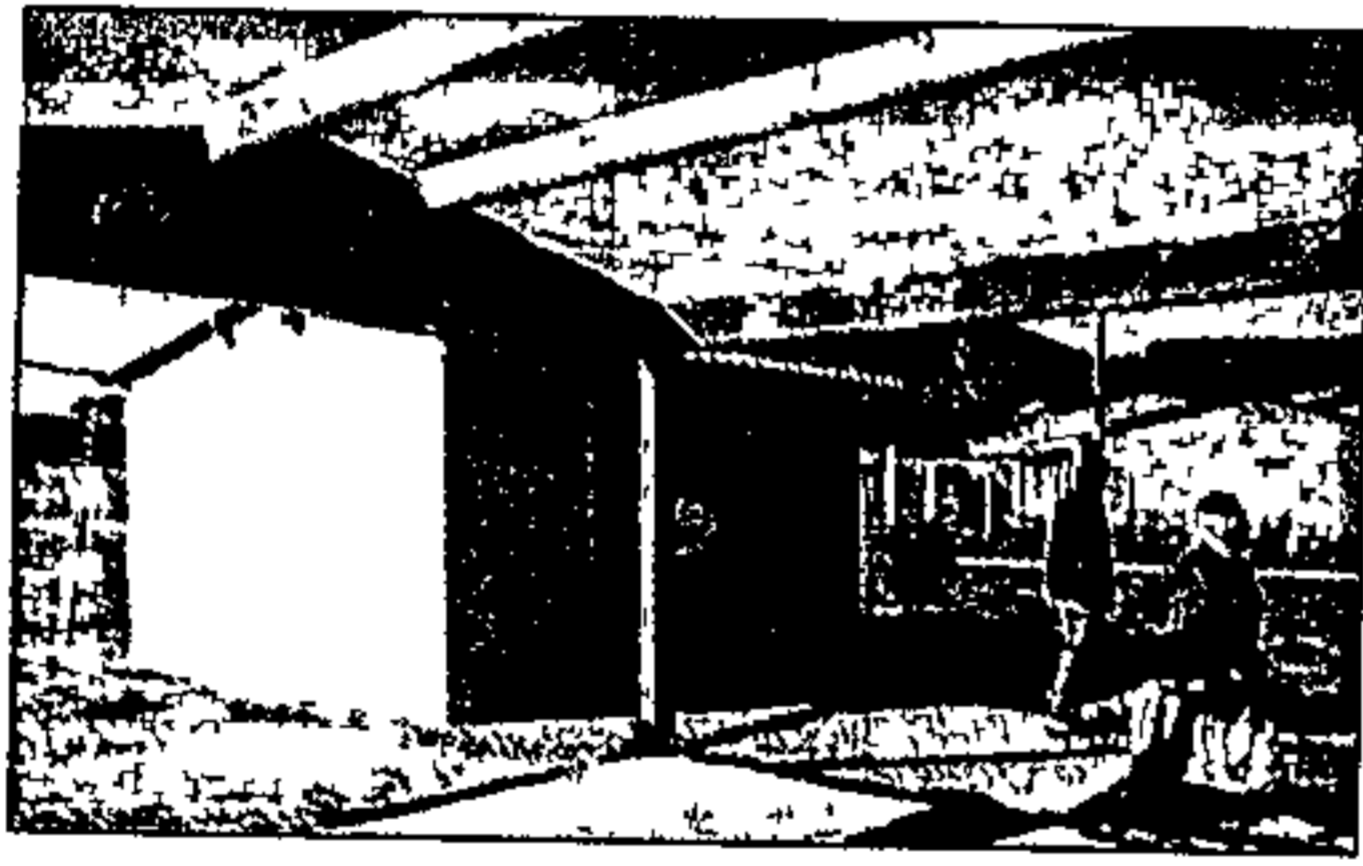
"We have no problem with Arendse. We have given him the go ahead to build the houses. But we cannot provide him with finance," said Asla Civil Constructors' housing manager Deon Kok.

He said that as far as his company was concerned, it was impossible to build a house for so little.

"Arendse is confusing people and playing with their expectations. The material to build one house is about R11 000 and the labour would be about R1 000 and that brings the money to R12 000. He is just confusing people who are desperate to get houses," said Kok.

Paarl mayor Mike Mgajo, who fears for his life after being accused of stalling the housing development, said urgent meetings were being organised to convince the residents that Arendse's offer was "utopian".

"We have tried our best to explain to the beneficiaries of this project that it is impossible to build bigger houses with that amount of money. Our fear now is that we might lose this money to another project in another area if it is not used and the homeless people would be the ones to suffer most," Mgajo said.



LITTLE BOXES: Residents of Mbekweni and the provincial housing board are still trying to resolve a dispute which has further delayed the building of new homes for the community **PICTURE: ANGELO KALMEYER**

Shack-building rate falling in metropole

WHILE the number of shacks in informal settlements across the Cape metropolitan area has tripled in five years, the rate of increase was slowing down, according to a city council study.

The study was commissioned to establish the location, number, growth rate, and nature of informal settlements in each of the six metropolitan local council areas.

The total number of shacks increased by 25% a year from 28 395 units in 1993 to 59 942 in 1996.

"This has since slowed to around 10% annual growth, to reach a level of 72 315 shacks in May 1998," the council said yesterday.

"A significant reason for this has been the relocation of some 8 400 families to assisted housing projects over this period."

In Brown's Farm, where only 2 785 shacks existed in January 1993, the number had grown to 5 125 by May 1996 and to 7 481 by May 1998.

The study showed there was a

compounded 16% increase in shacks overall, with the Helderberg municipality showing a growth of 28%, including relocation, and the Blaauwberg municipality 29% over the 64-month period.

The chairman of the council's Planning, Environment and Housing Committee, Brian Watkyns, said the predominant growth appeared to be around the oldest informal settlements such as Brown's Farm, KTC, Crossroads and northern Khayelitsha, and the poorer formal areas such as Langa and Gugulethu.

"From this, we can infer that social ties still prevail over economic imperative when a family selects a location for a shack," Watkyns said.

"There is still the mounting reality that any increase only places greater pressure on available land resources."

The council is expected to extend the existing study to include backyard shacking and to continue monitoring trends when new aerial photographs become available in 2001. — Sapa

Talks help Cape employment projects to get back on track

Wyndham Hartley

CAPE TOWN — At least one of the southern Cape Working for Water projects stopped last month because of poor financial controls and a lack of productivity is to reopen after talks with local authorities, Water Affairs Minister Ronnie Kasrils said yesterday.

Kasrils said a late night meeting with the mayors of the three affected towns — Mossel Bay, George and Knysna — led to an accord which Mossel Bay had signed already. The other two would follow after informing workers in their Working for Water projects.

Government currently spends about R120m on hundreds of such projects across the country which provide poverty relief for about 24 000 people.

Kasrils said the reasons for the closure of the three projects last month were serious overspending in the first three months of the financial year, a refusal by workers to accept reductions in work time or numbers in the face of budget cuts, poor productivity and discipline, insufficient contributions from local authorities and inadequate financial controls.

He said the mayors, Michael Carelse of Mossel Bay, Melford Notshokuvu of George and Alan Kock of Knysna, had agreed to lift financial contributions and accept reductions in the number of people who could be aided by the programmes. As soon as the other two signed the agreement, with workers' support, those programmes would also be reopened.

(124) BD 6/8/99

Rebels halt building at Vrygrond site

Court slaps ban on group

PETER GOOSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The South Peninsula Municipality has obtained an urgent High Court interdict preventing a dissident minority group from holding up the construction of 1 600 houses for the families of the Muizenberg informal settlement, Vrygrond.

The group, the Vrygrond Community Organisation, has about 120 members in a community of about 5 000 and has been at odds with the legitimate leadership of Vrygrond and the South Peninsula for years.

Members allegedly used sharpened sticks to threaten construction workers on Wednesday, forcing work on the site to be stopped.

The construction group, Ubuntu, was awarded the R30-million contract and Cape Premier Gerald Morkel handed the 52-hectare site to the company on May 17.

Late on Thursday Mr Justice Comrie interdicted the organisation, its members or Jeremiah Thile and nine others from interfering or obstructing any construction activities at the site or intimidating, harassing, assaulting or interfering with any employee of the municipality or Ubuntu.

The organisation and its members were also ordered not to damage, destroy or in any way interfere with the property of the municipality or Ubuntu, or approach within 100m of the site office or construction works.

In a sworn affidavit, the resident engineer at the site, Johann Joubert, told how Vrygrond resident Jeremiah Thile, apparent leader of the break-away organisation, used a loud hailer to summon people to a public meeting in an open field on Wednesday.

About 120 people attended. After a

memorandum was read by Mr Thile, the crowd marched on the construction site, singing and chanting, and carrying sharpened sticks, brandished in a "threatening manner".

"Mr Thile said if we did not stop work they would stop it for us," Mr Joubert said.

The south's executive director of housing services, Hans Smit, said Mr Thile and the other nine, all residents, purported to represent the Vrygrond community under the banner of the Vrygrond Community Organisation.

"Such representation is disputed by the majority of the inhabitants of Vrygrond and the Vrygrond Community Development Trust."

■ The Vrygrond Community Development Trust is supported by more than 90% of Vrygrond residents.

The municipality entered into a partnership with the trust and late in 1996 the Vrygrond Working Group of councillors, officials and Vrygrond representatives was set up.

The social compact between the trust and the SPM breaks new ground in that all the plots for businesses and community purposes will be transferred to the trust. They will probably be sold to provide funds for further empowering work by the trust.

Vrygrond, established in 1942 for trek fishermen, is the oldest informal settlement in the Western Cape.

When Mr Morkel handed the land to the contractors, a key member of the trust, Trevor Siljeur, said "The way the community has moved from outright suspicion of the local authority to a partnership with the SPM is an amazing, heartwarming story."

"This partnership and the way it has delivered to the community should be a model for the rest of South Africa."

(307) (124) ARG 9/8/99

nt
secu
nun
to th
ic se
ploy
oadc
e Mis
the s
m De
nted
uld pr
ly the
-AP

Homeowners aim to tackle council on housing

ARB 10/8/99 (124)

PETER GOOSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Angry residents of St Montague Village, Lavender Hill, are to attend a meeting of the South Peninsula's Housing Committee tomorrow in a bid to air their grievances.

This follows the cancellation of a meeting last week, at which the resi-

dents were planning to discuss their problems with their councillor, James Petersen.

The residents allege Mr Petersen cancelled the meeting, scheduled to be held at the Lavender Hill clinic, without informing them, so they had turned up for nothing.

The basis of their grievances is that the South Peninsula Council has agreed to drop the value of the village's

400 "starter" houses to R10 000 because of bad workmanship and defects. But the residents of the about 400 "full houses" claim that their houses are in just as bad a state and are demanding that the discounted price of R10 000 apply to them as well.

They also want the council to raise with the provincial government the question of cancelling their arrears, as is being done for the "starter" home-

residents. Residents' spokesman Melvyn Seegers said they were contacted by the municipality's chairwoman of housing, Bealah Smith, who said the committee was aware of the residents' problems and no useful purpose would be served by meeting them again.

"But we will attend the housing committee meeting and try to be heard," Mr Seegers said.

South spends R21m but still no houses

(124) CT 17/18/99

BUNTY WEST
MUNICIPAL WRITER

THE South Peninsula Municipality's housing services committee has spent more than R21 million a year in the past two years, but not a single low-cost house has been handed over to the poor

The money was mainly used to pay the salaries of 173 staff, many of them at the housing offices, and for the maintenance of the council's 8 000 rental properties

But Hans Smit, the executive director of housing services at the municipality, said the first new houses would be handed over within the next fortnight and by Christmas more than 1 100 would be occupied

Yesterday officials from the municipality ordered the demolition of an extension to a shack on land set aside for the development of low-cost housing at Vrygrond

The owner of the property, fed up with waiting for a new home, decided last week to build onto his shack but soon found that his efforts had been in vain when council officials moved in to

demolish it

The shack was extended again over the weekend and council again ordered the extension demolished, leading to a confrontation between members of the community and officials

The matter, which could have turned ugly, was settled amicably

In the first hand-over of houses by the municipality, 120 shack dwellers at Vrygrond will be given the keys to their new homes soon

"There are 3 680 houses under construction — including 1 600 at Vrygrond, 700 at Westlake, 800 at Lavender Hill East and 480 in Ocean View," Smit said

"Next April we will begin work on 2 000 homes at Pelikan Park."

There were also many smaller projects in the pipeline, Smith said

"This year we spent R38,4m of the government funding and another R3,4m from the Cape Metropolitan Council on low-cost and affordable houses"

Unless there are mitigating factors — such as at Westlake where families live in poor conditions — priority is given to people on the council's waiting lists

Malay Quarter is reborn

BUNTY WEST
METRO WRITER

CT 18/8/99

BO-KAAP, the historic area west of Buitengracht Street and north of Wale Street in central Cape Town, is to lose its Afrikaans title and return to its former name — the Malay Quarter.

The Forum for Malay Culture, which canvassed many of the area's 12 000 residents and lobbied for more than a year to have the name changed, will celebrate the event on Heritage Day, September 24, during the One City Festival.

Bo-Kaap was originally an area where white artisans were housed during the 18th century. Later the Malays — people of Indonesian descent brought to South Africa as political exiles or slaves — moved in. The area is now 90% Muslim.

The area boasts the oldest mosque in the Southern Hemisphere. In 1794 Imam Abdullah Ibn Kadi Abdun Salaam (also known as Tuan Guru) established the Auwal Mosque in Dorp Street. The build-

ing was originally a warehouse. There are now five mosques in the area, all used daily for prayer and teaching.

Bo-Kaap is also home to the largest concentration of pre-1840 architecture in Cape Town.

In the years leading up to the scrapping of the Group Areas Act, whites began moving back into the area and turning the historic terraces of Victorian and Georgian cottages into upmarket homes.

The area's spectacular views over the bay, its proximity to the city and relatively cheap property prices attracted many white people working in central Cape Town. But Bo-Kaap also has a few skeletons in its cupboards. Drug trafficking was rife in the early '90s and police were called in to stop the Mandrax, dagga, cocaine and LSD trade.

The ceremony to celebrate the rebirth of the Malay Quarter will take place outside the Bo-Kaap Museum in Upper Wale Street from 4 30pm on September 24.

Owners of defective houses fight for relief

ART 19/8/99 (124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

There appears to be hope for hundreds of homeowners who live in defective houses in Grassy Park, Ottery and St Montague Village near Lavender Hill.

Provincial housing Minister Cecil Herandien met a delegation representing homeowners from the three areas and pledged to look into the issues of the houses' initial selling price and the status of arrears.

Surita Botes, Mr Herandien's spokeswoman, said. "In conjunction with the Department of Housing it will be decided which issues fall under Mr Herandien's authority, and which will have to be referred

to the national minister or the Provincial Housing Board

"Taking into account all facts available, a decision will be made regarding relief, if any, that can be provided"

The list of complaints about the houses included cracked walls and damp seeping through the walls and floors

The South Peninsula council recently agreed to reduce the selling price of poorly-structured houses in St Montague Village. The council slashed R10 000 off the initial selling price of about R29 000

Richard Arends, chairman of the Lotus River, Ottery, Grassy Park Residents' Association said the organisation was hopeful that the issue would be sorted out

'THIS IS A VEXING PROBLEM'

(107)

(124)

A lifelong dream of a home of their own



EACH year 20 000 new families join the 2.8 million Capetonians already living here and local authorities appear unable to house the ever-growing population **JUDY DAMON** reports on their frustrations and the state of housing delivery in the province

THE Lwandle/Nomzamo informal settlement on the outskirts of Graham's Bay is peppered with social evils — crime, disease, illiteracy, unemployment and abuse.

It began about four years ago, when hundreds of coloured and African families arrived with everything they owned and settled on the doorsteps of the Lwandle squatter area.

They were not welcome, but the newcomers were anxious to find stability.

Their tin houses and social networks had been uprooted three times, and they vowed it would not happen again.

After they were promised that they would not be moved again, they named their settlement Nomzamo, meaning "the struggle to be here".

This, however, was just the beginning of their housing frustration and now the race for better living conditions is on between the residents of Lwandle and Nomzamo.

Community activist Gertrude Sqwentu said that the dream of having a postal address was the only thing that bound the two warring communities, and could possibly end the devastating social conditions created by the housing frustration.

"All they need is a fair opportunity to obtain homes and jobs to keep them," Sqwentu said. But with a housing backlog of over 220 000 and the addition of 20 000 new families a day, a place to stay each year that their dream for homes may remain just that.

'Invasions' stump bureaucrats

the first case to really test the new Extension of Security and Tenure Act (ESTA). ESTA gives families a legal right to live on land and removes the fear of being evicted by providing security of tenure, says Sibongile Ndasha, candidate attorney at the centre.

Before ESTA, land owners filed their court papers under the Prevention of Illegal Occupation and Unlawful Occupation Act. Then, they only had to show that families were living illegally. Doornbach makes a good test case because families have lived there for 20 years, have nowhere else to go and claim they had permission to be there.

ESTA stipulates that before the land owner evicts anyone, all the circumstances must be taken into consideration. The court will not grant an eviction unless there is alternative accommodation.

In turn, the landowner must prove the people had no permission to be on the land, and ESTA also protects their right of ownership and allows them to set reasonable standards like any other landlord.

"We don't take on eviction cases because evictions are our speciality. We need to get the courts to set a clear precedent for private practices to also take up these cases."

"There is no clear rule as to how the law should deal with land invasions. Although the courts are grappling with ESTA, it is a step in the right direction," Ndasha said.

THE rumbling of bulldozers tearing across the land is the only permission families need to seize the opportunity. First, a handful of shack's emerge and almost overnight, an entire community rises illegally on developing land.

Land invasion occurs for one reason — to jump the housing queue. It has been described as the "biggest headache" in housing.

"The only way to relieve ourselves of land invasion is to give them homes and they know it. So, when development is done they move in, leaving the legitimate owner stranded," says Seymour Bedderson, Housing Director for the Western Cape.

Earlier this month, the Rapid Land Release Programme was approved by the Cape Metropolitan Council and the Provincial Housing Board. It is designed to curb land invasion on state-owned land — the idea is to settle "emergency" families and to provide basic services. They are then placed on a subsidy list and the housing follows later.

"When you are in desperate need of land and you acquire it, you would jealously protect it," said Bedderson.

The Legal Resource Centre represents some 10 000 people who are facing eviction. They come from settlements in Tafelsig, Monwabisi, Atlas Park and Doornbach.

The Doornbach families have made two court appearances and lawyers at the centre say it could be

who are largely unemployed. Some re-sell their homes and move back into the township or build shacks onto their new homes which they rent to other squatters.

Another headache is the not-in-my-backyard syndrome adopted by private home owners.

After spending years and money building their dream homes, its property value instantly plunges because of their new neighbours.

Sqwentu claimed the Heidelberg municipality had protected private homeowners by moving new families into the already overcrowded Lwandle/Nomzamo townships.

A housing plan that appears to be working is the continuous ISLP Project in Nyanga, Guguletu, Crossroads and Langa, financed with RDP funds.

Existing since the early 1990s, ISLP has ensured thousands of cheap homes, schools, libraries, clinics and sports fields, but these projects only worked because of finance from the education and health departments.

Even if the province gets the estimated R2,1 billion to remove the backlog, Bedderson questioned the building industry's capacity to provide housing as the demand grows with development.

Kuhn said a solution would be to upgrade existing squatter camps, install basic services and let the residents build their own homes, creating jobs which is "really the solution to this problem".

Bedderson reluctantly gives the nod to this idea, saying internal upgrading of settlements brought a whole new set of problems.

"If someone's father has been buried under a tree that has been there for years, it is not going to be easy for him to accept having a road built through the burial site."

"You do in the process, disrupt families and you are also likely to uproot social networks if you relocate people."

"This is indeed a vexing problem associated with upgrading in existing informal settlements, a challenge for the housing functionaries who must be sensitive to cultural environments when developing." Bedderson said.

left to the family. Although most of the Western Cape is hemmed in by the mountains and sea, Bedderson said there was enough land to develop. But, money was the problem.

This year the province received R351 million for housing, only enough for 22 000 families.

Of the country's money, only 2% goes into national housing and the absence of promised investments from the private sector has failed to support this meagre national allocation.

So who gets a home first? Presently, housing delivery is based on an application-driven process for subsidies, meeting demand instead of need.

"This means that very little housing can be delivered in the Cape Metropolitan Area."

Mayors outside the metropolitan area, like in George, are vigorous in getting their applications approved first.

"And that is all it really takes," Bedderson said.

Cape Metropolitan Council researcher Jens Kuhn said that in May 1998 there were 64 informal settlements, with 72 140 shacks, indicating demand.

But taking people out of squatter camps and giving them homes seemed to have little effect.

"Last year 8 000 families were taken out of the squatter (settlements) and became genuine home owners. But before we knew it the gaps left by those families were filled."

"We don't seem to be making any reasonable dents," Bedderson said.

A recent study has shown that each year 10 000 new individuals poured into the city, mainly from the Eastern Cape, and moved into existing settlements, filling those gaps while looking for work.

Other problems associated with providing low-cost housing are the attitudes of its beneficiaries

Tale of the two Retreats ...

THE South Peninsula Municipality promised to deliver 1 100 low-cost houses before Christmas after they were accused of dragging their feet on delivery. But for some families it was too late and they have come up with plans of their own.

"Look down any road and you will see one or even two families living in someone else's yard. Overcrowding is a big problem here and is overlooked."

"It is like having two Retreats in one. But we have a plan," says Trevor Trout from the People's Housing Project, based in Retreat.

Local authorities agree that overcrowding is one of the biggest — but most overlooked — aspects of housing in this province.

Jens Kuhn, housing researcher for the Cape Metropolitan Council estimates that only 12% of Cape Town's population lived in shacks, while 40% were living in unhealthy, overcrowded conditions.

The remaining Capetonians lived in market related homes or in single family units. The 40% live on the Cape Flats, Nyanga, Khayelitsha and Gugulethu. The marriage between overcrowding and unemployment has largely contributed to the city's high crime rate, the highest TB rate in the world, gangster-

ism, street children and domestic violence.

It has also led to one of the biggest breakdowns of basic services in the city's history.

Three years ago taxpayers spent R81 million to rejuvenate broken and over-used drainpipes, waterpipes, stormwater drains, and sewerage systems.

Neglect on the part of the residents was crucial in the meltdown of these amenities and local authorities fear a repeat they can ill afford as overcrowding continues.

Presently, overcrowding is addressed through the age-old waiting list system while housing projects take off slowly because of strangled budgets.

The housing department is hoping to start a fresh list by sweeping through each municipality and taking note of the number of subsidies needed to address the housing crisis.

Trout said almost 22 000 families were living in backyard shacks or wendy houses in the South Peninsula alone — the exact number of subsidies the entire province gets for a year.

If money is all that's standing in the way of clustered families getting homes, South Peninsula families have been galvanised into action to find it.

A few months ago, the People's

Housing Project approached black empowerment company, ASBF Marketing, to help them pay off their rent and rates arrears worth millions. They believed that this huge debt had led them to be sidelined.

"With this repayment we are hoping to strike a deal with the government and get them to use those millions to build houses for these families. This must work, it's our only hope," Trout said.

Providing more housing stock would be the obvious solution to overcrowding, but with the trickle of subsidies to this province, only a handful will benefit.

Said Kuhn "Overcrowding is not about how much land is on a single plot. It is about available liveable space, and we have seen plenty of wendy houses in backyards. Why not make it liveable and upgrade that second dwelling?"

At the moment Kuhn is trying to persuade the authorities to split subsidies into two, half for new homes and the rest for upgrading.

"It is the council's job to provide water, sewers and electricity to people anyway. Accessibility could be a problem, but the biggest problem is getting enough money to get more subsidies to do this."

'Children are most vulnerable'

GERTRUDE SQWENTU, founder of South African Female Empowerment (Safe) spent 11 weeks searching for that golden link between the fighting communities of Lwandle and Nomzamo.

For this she invited 24 women, whose lives are like a tangled necklace of pearls, to a tea party, where no time limit existed to process opinions — and they were truly free to say what they felt and thought without restricting questions.

At the end of her research, Sqwentu said they were the "most amazing women" she had ever met and took their stories in their raw form as her final report, which she is sharing with audiences across the world.

Sqwentu starts by telling me about an eight year-old girl who was raped. She spared the details and said only that if the child had lived in a house with running water, she wouldn't have had to walk to the tap that day.

If there were street addresses and numbered houses, the rapist's hiding places wouldn't have all looked the same and he wouldn't be free.

Without homes, the children are the most vulnerable, she said. In the report the women spoke of their dreams of owning a house and how that dream was killed by poverty.

Sqwentu concluded, "Essentially, these people don't have enough money to make demands on society. Nor do they have the power to initiate social amelioration on their own."

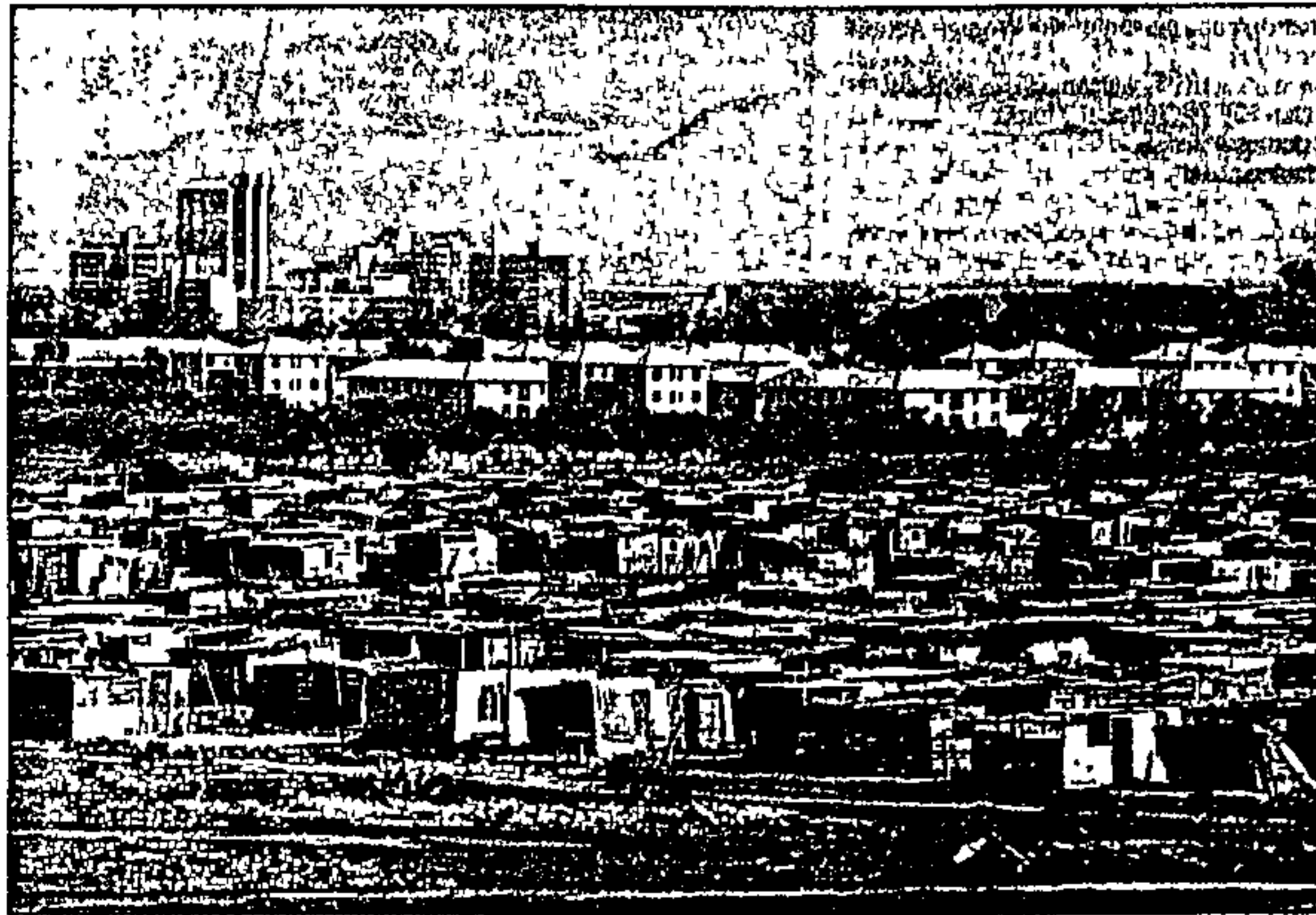
"If they start a business, it cannot grow because, in the words of a Lwandle woman, 'you have no knowledge to make things bigger and when (if) things do grow bigger, you have no means of controlling it — lack of knowledge is poverty'."

"These women want to send their children to better schools. More than sending their children outside to a better school, they want to better the local school. They want better homes — even better than the new RDP houses they know how to build better and cheaper."

"They want to change their community and we must be asking, how can we serve these people so they can carry themselves and their community farther than we could ever imagine?"

"Charity, give-away housing and welfare do not help anybody. Fair pay and job security do."

"These people simply want to be recognised as human beings and treated accordingly in the work place. That power will give them the security and resources to build their communities."



EXPANDING: Nomzamo informal community is growing rapidly and encroaching on the Strand in the background.

PICTURE: ANDREW OCTOBER

A HOUSING subsidy is worth R16 000 and provides a four-roomed house with basic services like running water and sewerage facilities. Maintenance is your responsibility. To get on the waiting list for a subsidised home you must:

- Be a South African citizen and have an identification book to prove it;
- earn from nothing to R2 500 per month;
- have dependents;
- must be a first time applicant for a subsidy;
- live close to a place under development;
- have not previously owned a home or land.

For more information contact your local municipality.

Housing book will pave the way

PETER GOOSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ARG 26/8/99 (124)
The South Peninsula Municipality this year will spend R38,4-million and build more than 3 700 new houses.

This will put it at the forefront of the drive to provide social housing in the Western Cape, says its executive director of housing services, Hans Smit

Mr Smit, who is also president of the Institute of Housing for South Africa, was speaking yesterday at the launch of the municipality's *Housing Handbook*, sponsored by Absa Bank, in Constantia

He said the housing department's new projects included 1 602 homes in Vrygrond, Muizenberg, 813 in Lavender Hill East and 700 in Westlake

"In addition, projects which are being planned and will come on stream next year, subject to the availability of state funding, include 209 houses at Phumlani near Pelican Park and nearly 2 000 houses in Pelican Park Phase 1, while consolidation projects will add 540 homes in Mizamo Yethu at Hout Bay and 457 in Masiphumelele at Noordhoek"

Land identification and planning for housing had received increased attention during the past year with major emphasis on Pelican Park where 400ha of prime land west of Strandfontein Road could make a notable impact on the housing backlog in the south

Mr Smit said, however, South Peninsula had to provide housing for about 28 000 families and the land available would provide only 14 000 plots

The *Housing Handbook* will be available to civics in the south and a copy is available in libraries

CAPE TOWN

(124)

SAVING SA'S CITIES

pm 27/8/99

Public, private sectors unite

To halt the rapid deterioration of Cape Town's CBD, its business leaders have joined forces with local government to form a Section 21 company that aims to steer the city clear of the fate suffered by Johannesburg and Durban

The initiative, driven by the SA Property Owners' Association (Sapoa), comes not a moment too soon as traffic congestion, crime and grime, and a growing sense of disorder, have reached unacceptable levels and the drift to the suburbs has begun

"Property owners have invested an enormous amount of money in the CBD," says Sapoa representative Wendy Hartshorne "They continue to do so, which shows confidence in the future of Cape Town's city centre, but we have to ensure that their risk is matched by reward. This is what the partnership aims to achieve"

The Cape Town Central City Partnership aims to revitalise the central city by developing, managing and promoting it as a leading centre for retail, commercial, residential, cultural, entertainment, educational, tourism and leisure activities

"Though cleanliness and safety are primary concerns at the moment, the partnership will focus on much more than this," says the partnership's chairman, Waterfront CEO David Jack "The urban environment, planning, pedestrianisation, the creation of a longer-hour shopping zone, parking issues and traffic accessibility will also form the basis of our delivery"

The idea is not to usurp the role of the Cape Town city council, but to act as a lobbying and co-ordinating body to guide decision-making and to provide expertise and resources to help solve the city's many challenges

The partnership draws heavily on Johannesburg's experience and the success of private-public-sector partnerships in rejuvenating inner cities around the world, including New York and Washington Jack stresses that Cape Town's problems are a feature of many cities in both developed and developing countries, and that private-public partnerships have proved the best way to tackle them

Key to the plan is the creation of 12

central improvement districts within the CBD. In accordance with municipal bylaws already passed by the city in line with those adopted by Gauteng, businesses in each district will be able to collect levies to top up a guaranteed minimum level of municipal services

The plan looks great on paper, provided local companies take a long-term view, but will the partnership have the power to move city bureaucrats?

Unlike Johannesburg's initiative, where private and public representatives sit on a recognised council structure to promote inner-city development, Cape Town's initiative relies on lobbying the right people

"From our experience, the most important thing is to ensure that it doesn't develop into a talk shop. Unless you have a clear implementation strategy and timetable that people are accountable to, it won't work," says Central Johannesburg Partnership executive director Neil Fraser, who has advised the Cape Town initiative

He denies that the Johannesburg initiative has been a flop, pointing to a host of new developments in the CBD, including the creation of dedicated hawker markets and taxi assembly areas, the R3m Van der Bijl Square development, and the R500m Absa Campus resettlement project. The latter will bring 4 500 people to the Carlton area in addition to the 6 000 Transnet employees who will be moving in. But the general feeling is that Johannesburg left it too late, while Cape Town may be able to nip its deterioration in the bud

Cape Town has got off to the right start with R450 000 in seed money from the two local authorities and business already in the bank, and commitments for R1m for the first year. It also has the likes of Jack, Cape Town city council exco chairman Saleem Mowzer, Golding Commercial MD Theodore Yach, and Intersite executive manager Kevin Roman on its board

Founder members include the City of Cape Town, Cape Metropolitan Council, Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Cape Town Tourism, Business Against Crime and the Cape Town Heritage Trust

Roman has high hopes that the partnership will stimulate numerous infrastructural projects that have been on the city's agenda for years, like the R1bn central station redevelopment project and inner-city public transport plan

"I'm confident that we've got the top decision-makers who want action and who believe the city's important," he says "If they can't change the way officials think, then we've got no hope" **Claire Bisseker**

KICK-START FOR URBAN RENEWAL

Upgrade for disaster areas

ET 1/9/99

(124) DIMP

THE CITY COUNCIL believes the tornado that devastated parts of Manenberg, Gugulethu and Surrey Estate will help kick-start urban renewal in the city's slums. **JUDITH SOAL** reports.

THE areas worst hit by Sunday's freak tornado will never be the same again. Rather than restoring the neighbourhoods to their former states of overcrowding and neglect, the Cape Town City Council is planning a multi-million rand project to turn them into "people-friendly" environments.

Medical Officer of Health Ivan Toms has been appointed project manager of the redevelopment.

"This is not just about patching up the damaged houses and putting up new buildings," Toms said yesterday. "We see the disaster as a multi-million rand opportunity to reshape our city."

"Manenberg and Gugulethu are some of the places where this is most needed, so although it has been a tragedy for the people involved, in a sense God has intervened."

Manenberg, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, has long been characterised by social disintegration. There are about 45 gangs operat-



'GOD HAS INTERVENED': Medical Officer of Health Ivan Toms

ing in the area; two-thirds of the population is unemployed and nearly half the residents live in backyard shacks.

"Society has progressed since Manenberg was built," said Toms. "We have new ideas on how to build better, even if not the space to build bigger."

The project involves upgrading housing and schools, building recreational and sports facilities, creating a secure environment and facilitating business development. It has as its buzz phrase "community participation".

"We haven't worked out the exact details yet because those will be formulated in consultation with community organisations," said the city's executive director of community development, Ahmed Vawda.

The move towards urban renewal through community participation began over a year ago when Manenberg and parts of Gugulethu were identified as two of nine "zones of poverty" in need of upgrading within the city council's jurisdiction. Vawda says the fruits of this move were seen in the response to the disaster on Sunday.

"There was a new and constructive energy — everyone from radio stations to religious groups to private businesses made themselves available to help wherever needed. There has been hardly any looting; the crime rate is down to zero."

"The gangs have been completely excluded from the process. This is the kind of energy we need to harness for."

□ Turn to Page 3

Manenberg plan

(124) DIMP

□ From Page 1
urban renewal."

City manager Andrew Boraine said it is impossible to put a price tag on the project yet. "We are still assessing the extent of the damage. Once this is done we will put a budget to the cabinet."

There are different avenues for funds: If President Thabo Mbeki declares the area a

disaster zone when he visits today — as is expected — money will be available through the state budget. Insurance payouts on council homes will cover a portion of the bill. There is also the possibility of using the proceeds from the sale of the Clifton bungalows, estimated at about R40 million.

"The most important aspect of (redevelopment) projects like these is accurate information," said Vawda. "In the past week we have learnt more about these areas than if we had employed 100 sociologists."

ET 1/9/99

EFFICIENT BUILDING SYSTEM

Plan for more than 300 low-cost homes

SARAH-JANE BOSCH

A LOW-COST building process is set to make adequate housing available to a sector of the community that was previously unable to meet the requirements for conventional mortgage bonds, according to Cardinal Properties managing director Ben Kho

Cardinal Properties plans to build more than 300 houses for lower and middle-income earners in the Western Cape using the "shutter system"

In this system the foundations are laid and the door and window frames, plumbing and electrical connections are put in place. Then re-usable "shutters" made of galvanised steel and laminated plywood are erected where the walls will stand.

The pre-mixed cellular lightweight concrete, reinforced with synthetic fibres, is cast continuously, either directly from the Readymix truck, pumped from a tank on site, or in buckets by hand. The concrete is left to cure in the "shutters" for at least seven hours and the next day the "shutters" are stripped for re-use on the next house.

"This efficient building system was developed and patented by the Thyssen-Hunnebeck group in Germany and has been used successfully worldwide for more than 40 years," says Kho.

The company has already constructed several of these houses in the RDP project at Sun City in the Sir Lowry's Pass Village and Kho says it is working well.

"A standard home with door, window frames and piping cast inside can be produced in less than 24 hours. Finishing and roofing is exceptionally easy.

"Cellular lightweight concrete is an aerated mortar — a combination of sand, cement and water mixed with a highly stable, non-toxic chemical for thermal and sound insulation. Synthetic fibres are added reinforcement.

"The building method requires no formal construction training or building skills. Unskilled workers can learn the entire process in less than a week, enabling them to get involved in projects to provide housing in their communities."

Kho says Cardinal has signed agreements with private owners of serviced and unserviced plots in Eerste River in the Western Cape and is negotiating with provincial authorities to secure further land in the province.

The houses are being marketed to people who earn less than R3 500 a month.

With the assistance of government and Provincial Housing Board subsidies, local banks and initiatives such as the National Housing Finance Corporation's Gateway programme and Nurcha (National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency), many low-income earners could be enabled to afford a house of their own.

Kho says the next phase of the project will include middle-income earners with salaries of up to R6 000 a month.

(124) ET 3/9/99

AID PLANS MATERIALISING

Better houses after storm

CT 6/9/99 (124)

A FULL REPORT on the extent of damage in the tornado-ravaged areas of Manenberg, Gugulethu and Surrey Estate will be ready for scrutiny tomorrow. **PRISCILLA SINGH** and **ERIC NTABAZALILA** report.

THIS comes after a joint initiative by local, provincial and national government to bring in a panel of experts from up-country to assess the total damage of last Sunday's freak storm.

An inter-ministerial task team will look at the report tomorrow night and pass it to a Cabinet sub-committee on Wednesday morning, for a final decision on how rebuilding should be tackled.

Thousands of people were left destitute after the massive storm in the early hours last Sunday, which also left six schools damaged, one church destroyed and another damaged.

By Friday, total damage was estimated at about R153 million and expected to climb, with more than 650 families displaced.

Cape Town mayor Nomaandla Mfeketo said it was imperative for families that had not yet registered as claimants to do so urgently, so that they could be compensated.

Individuals affected by the storm have access to claims, but those who had private insurance

aged and unsafe dwellings with another 774 partially damaged and 98 families displaced.

In Surrey Estate, where houses were mostly privately insured, five houses were destroyed, 325 partially damaged and 60 families displaced.

In rebuilding these areas, their previous form and design would have to be reviewed, using the effects of the storm as part of a reconstruction and urban renewal plan for the poverty-stricken communities.

Most council areas — for services — also were found in these areas and fears were rife among people last week that, if they owed the council money, they would not get a new home.

Executive committee chairperson Saleem Mowzer said these were separate issues, and that people would not forfeit storm aid because of non-payment.

The issue will, however, be addressed later, he said.

"We have to change these communities from passive recipients to active participants. The key to this, in focusing on arrears, is to use a situation (such as this) to rebuild the community on its own terms," he said.

Mowzer added that they may

have to demolish entire blocks of flats in order to build new structures and that this could take some time. Meanwhile, the council was hoping to repair partially damaged homes in a month's time.

Disaster relief payment of R500 per family is expected to start this week, totalling at least R1,2m.

Mfeketo yesterday told stricken Gugulethu, Manenberg and Surrey Estate residents that they will get better houses.

Addressing a multi-religious service, held at Tambo Square hall, Mfeketo told the audience that, although the tornado had killed and injured people and left thousands homeless, it had enabled authorities to find out whether the structures were safe for people stay in.

"The only way we can honour those who died is by building proper houses," she said.

Mfeketo told the meeting, which was attended by the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town Njongonkulu Ndungane, ANC provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool, imam of the Claremont Mosque Rashed Omar, Jim Kenney from the Parliament of the World Religions and other church leaders, that the tornado has helped to unite the people of Cape Town

Young city blacks opt for shack life

ARGUS 11/9/99
(124)

Squatter camps are seen as preferable to bleak hostels

MOSES MTHETHHELI MACKAY

There comes a time in the life of most young people when they just have to leave the parental home, especially if it is a room in a grim, overcrowded hostel built in the apartheid era.

This is the reason more and more young black Capetonians are choosing to live in shack settlements, according to research by the University of Stellenbosch.

Contrary to popular belief, informal settlements are not merely being filled by a growing influx of people from the Eastern Cape. In fact the influx of squatters from the neighbouring province has slowed.

But young people, many born and bred in Cape Town, are leaving their parents' homes and setting up shacks, the only type of housing they

can afford.

The trend is especially prevalent among families living in the former single-sex hostels such as those in Langa, which are now used to house families.

Entire families cram into one room, a grim place for any young adult to come home to. Compared with this, a shack is heaven.

Langa hostel dwellers say many young people leave the hostel and now live in the Joe Slovo informal settlement nearby.

A few young people "inherit" the hostel rooms from their parents who return to the Eastern Cape. About 70 families live in one Langa hostel building.

The study was commissioned by the Cape Metropolitan Council to determine migration trends. It found that the traditionally circular

pattern of migration of people between Cape Town and the Eastern Cape had virtually ceased, because most migrants were choosing to stay.

The study by Catherine Ross, Simon Bekker and Gary Eva has far-reaching implications for housing in the city. It shows that many migrants want to return to the Eastern Cape, but are unlikely to because of the lack of jobs there. Their children are even more unlikely to return once they get used to city life.

The study shows that the stream of migrants to Cape Town slowed from 57 000 between 1989 and 1993 to 49 000 between 1994 and 1998.

Langa hostel dweller Joseph Nomakete, 41, said he moved to Cape Town in October 1989 to look for work. "I looked for a job for five months. I got one in 1990 as a cleaner

at the Cape Town municipality."

He lives with his wife, Nosapho, 36, and their children, Lusindiso, 15, and Anela, 6, in one room.

Mr Nomakete, who was born in Umhata in Transkei, said he would not stay in Cape Town permanently because he was supporting his mother Mandziphas Nomakete, 66, in Umhata.

Fellow hostel dweller Nkosinathi Mki, 34, from in Gouwa in the Eastern Cape, is still jobless.

"We came to Cape Town in search of jobs. When workers are on holiday they go back to the Eastern Cape for cultural reasons. I return to Gouwa and perform rituals and traditional ceremonies."

Mr Mki said many black people chose to stay in Cape Town for good and performed their rituals and traditional ceremonies here.



STARTING OUT on aerial shot of a shack settlement where young blacks are starting a new life



Tornado refugees now fear gangs

Site chosen for 'container village' in Manenberg seen as a battle ground (124) ARG 21/9/99

YUNUS KEMP
STAFF WRITER

A community-initiated relief fund set up to help the victims of last month's tornado on the Cape Flats is planning to move about 60 affected families into containers it has rented.

But several families say they are unhappy with the site chosen for the container village - behind the Jordan Road mosque in Manenberg - because it is a gang battle ground.

Since losing their homes, most of the victims have been housed in various community centres. But now the fund hopes the acquisition of the temporary homes will reunite families living in different shelters.

Spearheaded by Surrey Estate cleric Sheikh Ibrafaan Abrahams, the Darul-Islam Relief Fund has been one of the programmes providing food and clothing to people left homeless and destitute by the tornado.

The containers, rented from a private contracting company, have been delivered to the open field behind the Jordan Road mosque.

"We have set up a committee that has a list of all the affected families and we will select people who need to be moved here. We hope to move people into the cabins in the next couple of days," said Mr Abrahams.

Yesterday volunteers were digging trenches for sewerage pipes to be laid and there are plans to fence the field.

"We are waiting for the council, who said that they will put up lights and help us with the pipes," said Mr Abrahams.

He added that the city council was aware of the project, and that the fund had permission to place the containers in the field.

Mr Abrahams emphasised that the container village was intended as a temporary home, and said the containers had been rented for plus minus two to three months.

"We are hoping that the council will be able to solve the problem by



House proud, volunteers from the Darul-Islam Fund oversee delivery of containers intended to house about 60 families affected by last month's tornado

giving these people homes" said Mr Abrahams.

Community worker and architect Malcolm Campbell, who has been helping with the planning and layout of the project, echoed Mr Abrahams's comments.

"These containers are okay for a short term, but they are definitely not a long term solution," said Mr Campbell, adding that as cooking would not be allowed inside the containers, the fund would provide breakfast, lunch and supper for all the families.

Mr Abrahams said "Although it is an expensive undertaking to house

Surrey Estate was also damaged, the disaster brought with it some good.

"Through all this there has been a fantastic relationship built up among the different religious groups in the end this is a community initiative and we'll do the best we can," he said.

Some of the families earmarked for the containers were, however, less enthusiastic.

People staying in Silverstream Primary School in Manenberg, said the field selected by the fund for the container village was unsafe and a 'gang battle ground'.

The also said they would not leave

the school without the people who had been "looking after" them - the Nakhilistan feeding scheme.

Shafiq Edries, one of Nakhilistan's facilitators at Silverstream, said that he understood the families' concern.

"We don't want people to be uprooted again. Nakhilistan does not want people to move from here."

"They are safe here and we are here 24 hours a day to protect them if anything should happen," he said.

And most people agreed that they would move into the containers only if they were put somewhere other than the field designated.

Misuse of funds for flood victims probed

SEMUKATA MBESE
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

About 470 Khayelitsha families were supposed to get R500 from the provincial government after they were affected by the recent floods, but many families did not receive anything because of alleged corruption.

Now provincial Department of Social Services and the City of Tygerberg, which is acting as the disbursing agent, has stopped all payments.

It is alleged that families not affected by the recent disasters, have also put in claims and that officials have misused the funds.

Tygerberg municipality official Chris Haynes said the process had been put on hold until an investigation into corruption and the misuse of funds was completed.

A week ago, two residents went to the Khayelitsha police station to give statements about how they had been used by other people to get flood disaster funds.

Nompumela Valeta said: "A person came to me and requested my ID book and I gave it to her. She sent a child to pick up the ID and said I should meet her the following day in the hall where the money was being issued."

"They gave me a ticket with a number 179, and a small card on which was written R500. I went to the till where I got R500. But my house was not damaged at all."

"The lady that approached me came back in the evening to request her money, she only gave me R100."

Police are also investigating two officials who were issuing the funds to see if they were involved in the scam.

Department of Social Services spokesman Johan Smith said the department was "furious" and would act swiftly to find those involved.

EXCO DECISION ON DAMAGE

Rent-to-buy plan unveiled

(124) CT 22/9/99

MANY TENANTS rendered homeless by the tornado are to be encouraged by the city council to buy their new homes
Metro Writer **BUNTY WEST** reports

TENANTS whose homes were flattened by the tornado, which hit parts of Manenberg, Gugulethu and Surrey Estate three weeks ago, will not automatically get new homes, it was decided in a city council exco meeting yesterday

Even though the houses were insured, many of the tenants will be asked to enter into a "rent-to-buy" scheme as the council will not be building rental units in future

The new houses will be offered to the former tenants first, either for sale or bought through a government-subsidised housing programme, but if they decline the offer they will not be rehoused

and will have to go back to the end of the housing queue

When the houses were destroyed, the council's lease with the tenants was automatically terminated, though tenants are still liable to pay back any money outstanding for services. Legally the council is not obliged to supply another home, but is prepared to do so through the two schemes

Tenants wishing to be rehoused will be required to sign an acknowledgement of debt concerning outstanding payment for services on their old homes

Work will start in the next few weeks on the rebuilding of houses damaged but not destroyed by the tornado. Yesterday the council

gave officials the go-ahead to start the ball rolling and a list of contractors is being compiled of those companies which can tackle the jobs. They will be required to use local labour to rebuild the units

It is estimated that only 50 Manenberg households are up to date with their service payments while between 60 and 70 families owe as much as R7 000. A few households owe only R1 000, while most debtors have bills of over R3 000

While the legal tenants will be looked after through the schemes, the same does not hold true for those who were in sub-let properties or living in backyards. They have no legal standing and apart from the temporary shelter they were given, the council has no obligation to look after them

To ensure that tenants whose homes were destroyed are

rehoused as soon as possible, the council is to build temporary houses on council land in Manenberg and Gugulethu. The first 50 of 200 will be erected within a month. Another 150 may also be supplied at a later stage

The houses, measuring 25 to 30m², will consist of two rooms and will have electricity and an outside tap

Ablution blocks consisting of three toilets, three handbasins and three showers will be provided for every 10 houses

The cost of providing the temporary homes is R5 000 per unit and R250 000 to provide the services, and it will cost R1,7 million to hire and maintain the ablution facilities

The houses, which can be lifted and re-used, will be used for up to 12 months while formal housing is built

Khayelitsha boasts 98% electricity payments

ERIC NTABAZALILA

THE culture of not paying for services seems to be a thing of the past for the more than one million Khayelitsha residents who have become the most reliable payers in South Africa

In 1994, more than 70% of Khayelitsha residents did not pay their electricity bills.

But today more than 98% of residents are doing so

Mac Mdingi, general manager of Phambili Nombane — an Eskom project which electrified 43 000 houses over five years, attributed the change to good customer care

- ◆ "Khayelitsha has the best customer service in the country. Independent audits showed that the customer care level was 99,3%

"We thought nothing short of complete transformation could reverse the situation in Khayelitsha. Raising customer service was an important goal," he said

- ◆ "Community involvement and capacity-building has played a critical role in our success. We received the full support of community organisations"

Despite the drop in the percentage of non-payers, thousands of residents still poach electricity in Khayelitsha

Electric wires hang across main roads from brick houses to informal shacks, while other connections are made underground

ET 5/10/99

(55)

(124)

Common named in housing blueprint

Row erupts over plan for Rondebosch

ARG 7/10/99 (124)

HELEN BAMFORD
STAFF REPORTER

A draft plan naming Rondebosch Common as a site for the development of low-cost housing has raised the blood pressure of a number of city councillors.

The plan was drawn up by the Cape Town Community Housing Company, a company set up by the city council to speed up housing delivery

The company is headed by Mervyn Bregman, the council's former director of housing

The company sent a report to the city council's executive committee for approval on Tuesday and identified 115 land parcels for potential development, including the common

Democratic Party councillor Belinda Walker said the Rondebosch Common was just one of many inappropriate tracts of land identified. She said the report was shoddy and filled with inaccuracies. "It doesn't inspire confidence," she said

Councillor Brian Watkyns said the report had clearly been hastily put

together, and was an ill-conceived plan which did not bode well for the future of the company

"Two of the sites identified in my ward, one in Thornton and the other in Matland Garden Village, are currently on long lease to a golf driving range and soccer club respectively

"Another site is in the industrial area of Epping, which is hardly an appropriate place for housing, and a sizeable portion of it is used as an informal bus depot for 100 long-distance buses," said Mr Watkyns

Ward councillor for Rondebosch Owen Kinahan said he wanted to know whether it was just a sloppy report or whether there was something more to it

Housing had to be integrated but only in the appropriate places and where it fitted into the spatial development framework

Mr Kinahan said Rondebosch made a major contribution to the city's rates base and that developing the common would be like "cutting their throat" "Its nothing to do with race or class - its purely economics," he said

But Mr Bregman said the councillors could rest easy

"Under no circumstances will we be developing Rondebosch Common

"A number of tracts of land including a number of commons and golf courses were included in the first rough land inventory draft from council, who is a partner in our company, but we're only looking at land that is feasible and affordable"

Rondebosch Common, which is a national monument, was invaded by protesters in March 1997 by members of the Masincedane and Kwezilomso housing scheme, who were frustrated at not being able to secure land on which to build their homes

The group of 315 people had planned to occupy the common until land had been found for them but the matter was resolved

The status of the Rondebosch Common, which is home to more than 230 species of sand plain fynbos, cannot be altered without the approval of the National Monuments Council and the Cape Town City Council

Council offers deals to tackle R380m arrears

Write-offs, interest sweeteners for payments

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

The City of Tygerberg has set up a committee to deal with the problem of residents' arrears which now total more than R380-million.

The money is owed to the council for rates, water, refuse, sewerage, electricity and rent

As an incentive, for every R1 a resident pays on arrears, the council will write off R1 from interest accrued on

the account

Chief executive officer Dave Wilken said the council had decided that all those in arrears, who started paying their present accounts and made arrangements to pay off their arrears, would not be handed over to collecting attorneys

The portions of the arrears debt to be agreed upon would be based on the maximum amount that the individual could afford

Mr Wilken said that if the resident

honoured the agreement, no further interest would be levied on arrears

Those who did not stick to the agreement would find their accounts handed over to debt collectors, which could mean more costs for the individual, Mr Wilken said

The council was installing a computer system to manage all debt agreements

It was the residents' responsibility to approach the council and set up an arrangement to repay arrears

ARG 11/10/99

Building starts on city's first 'non-racial' houses

BUNTY WEST

CT 27/10/99

(124)

"WE are going to build houses on whatever space is available and we will not tolerate delays because of racial prejudices"

These stern words by the mayor of Cape Town, Nomaindia Mfeketo, yesterday preceded the sod-turning for the first 300 homes being built in Cape Town by the newly formed Cape Town Community Housing Company (CTCHC)

Mfeketo was responding to the city's "Nimbys" ("not in my backyard") who continually tried to retard the process of housing delivery, by protesting about the building of low-cost houses in their areas

She warned protesters that the city was committed to housing delivery and integrating the city through the non-racial housing lists

Lucky recipients of the first 300 houses will be in their homes by Christmas — their subsidies were approved yesterday

The CTCHC partnership between the city council and the housing company will ensure that residents who want their own homes, and who qualify for a government subsidy, will now begin to receive them

People who had hoped to own homes were encouraged to join a savings scheme and, after a showing commitment by depositing regular amounts into accounts

at one of four approved banks, their names went on to the waiting list

Aided by the grant (a maximum of R18 400) and a R5 000 subsidy from the Cape Town council, prospective owners chose from homes varying in size from 40m² to 64m²

The first phase of the project started at Hanover Park, where 93 homes will be erected at the corner of Greenturf and Lonedown Roads

All the houses will be larger than the prescribed 27m², provided solely through the maximum subsidy

Nearly 70% of the new owners selected the 64m² house, 20% the 52m², and 10% chose the 40m² house

Also included in the first phase are 100 homes in Gugulethu and 101 in Mitchells Plain

Trees will be planted at the sites, some parts will be paved and a park, with children's playground and seating, will be built before residents move in

Yesterday's ceremony was attended by the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town Njongonkulu Ndungane (who is also the chairman of the CTCHC), the mayor, Saleem Mowzer (chairman of the executive committee), city manager Andrew Boraine, and ward councillors

Representatives of the developers, MS, were also present

R11m housing boost for Cape

AR4 29/10/99

YUNUS KEMP
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

The provincial government has rallied to the call of two small Western Cape communities plagued by homelessness and squatting, by providing more than R11 million for housing development

Klapmuts, a village between Cape Town and Stellenbosch, was recently granted subsidised housing worth R6,8-million funded by the province's Housing Development Board, and construction on the 402 allocated houses is nearing completion

Low income families in Monte Bertha, a suburb of Porterville in the Swartland, received R 4,7 million funding from the board, and construction on the 282 housing units will be completed by the end of the year

The Klapmuts project is aimed at housing 2 000 of the village's 4 000 inhabitants

ANC councillors in housing scam

(124) mtg 5-11/99

Sanco and the ANC are facing up in Port Alfred over allegations that councillors are enriching themselves through low-cost housing schemes, writes Peter Dickson

The Eastern Cape government has launched an executive investigation into allegations that several African National Congress town councillors in Port Alfred abused their positions to enrich themselves through business interests in a massive low cost housing scheme in the town's Nelson Mandela Township (Nemato).

Alliance partner the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) which first accused the councillors last week of having a pecuniary interest in the year long construction of 1 000 low-cost homes in Nemato, has already been interdicted by court from threatening the mayor and ANC councillors.

And the council which claims the housing project's steering committee could make its own rules as it "operated outside the formalities of the council", says Sanco has "scant regard for the law" in that it is now allegedly threatening municipal staff, and resolved at a meeting last week that it no longer wishes to see



Enriching scheme: Sanco has accused ANC councillors in Port Alfred of having a pecuniary interest in the construction of 1 000 low-cost homes in the Nemato township PHOTOGRAPH HENNER FRANKENFELD

"service rendering" vehicles in Nemato.

Bisho is so concerned that it has sent back to his roots respected former provincial legislature speaker and new MEC for Housing and Local Government Gugile Nkwinti — who led South Africa's first township consumer boycott of white businesses in Port Alfred in 1984 while then the area's foremost

United Democratic Front leader — as its chosen troubleshooter.

Tension between Sanco and the ANC erupted in a series of letters last week from Sanco branch chair Eric Mgangatho to council chief executive Angus Schlemmer, alleging that ANC councillor Dan Mbumba had been a partner in Bradfield Construction, which sub-contracted to

Grinaker Housing to build the low cost homes between March 1998 and June this year.

Mgangatho also alleged that local ANC chair and housing project steering committee chair Thobile Gqolodashe and ANC councillor Vukile Balusa had been partners in a concrete-block manufacturing business that sold blocks to Grinaker Housing for the project. The construction company (at an average cost of R2 per block) had used about 800 000 blocks.

But Schlemmer says that in terms of a Reconstruction and Development Programme type social compact agreement between Grinaker and the council the steering committee could regulate its own procedures since it operated outside the formalities of the council.

He said this week that "no funds were managed by the council" and that Grinaker accessed funds directly from the housing board.

Schlemmer stressing that Sanco's Douglas Mgangatho had been a steering committee member since the start and party to all decisions, says Balusa was not yet a councillor when the committee was established but "became a councillor in March 1998" — the month in which construction began — and his business interests, if any are not known.

Schlemmer says Gqolodashe had relinquished the steering committee chair after becoming involved in manufacturing and supplying bricks to the project. His successor, however, was Mbumba, "apparently a partner in a firm called Nemato Builders", but Schlemmer says Mbumba recused himself when Grinaker was authorised to build houses in the coastal town's Mimosa area.

Nkwinti, who has begun his investigation, could not be reached for comment this week but Schlemmer welcomes Bisho's move, saying it is "still the prerogative of any lawfully appointed investigating body to investigate the affairs of the steering committee".

Anger over housing scheme

(124)
ET 10/11/99
STAFF WRITER

TABLE VIEW residents will lose 3,3ha of open space land which Blaauwberg council wants to sell for R1 to three of its councillors

The men are directors of the Housing Association of Blaauwberg, a Section 21 company which has been set up by the council to provide homes for low income earners

The land, which will have to be rezoned before the housing company can build on it, has been earmarked to accommodate 230 low cost units on the site

"Three years ago one of our ratepayers tried to buy 350m² of the land which adjoins his property, because it was an eyesore which he wanted to improve. He was told by council the going price was R25 000, yet the Housing Company will receive that and 3ha more for R1," said an irate resident during a ratepayer's meeting on Monday evening.

During the meeting, residents were given a breakdown of what is planned on the site by Chris Potgleter, one of the three councillors involved in the housing association.

He explained to the large crowd that 72 of the houses would be just 27,5m² in size, the rest ranging in size from 41 to 56m².

But, in keeping with the area, the finishes would be superior and the cost of building them would be around R1 300 a square metre.

He said there was a shortage of homes being built for families who earned between R1 500 and R3 500 a month, as they fell outside the government subsidy scheme.

The units would be rented, and income earned from the rentals would help pay for new homes to be built.

Rental charges would be between R800 and R1 600pm.

But Andy Birkinshaw, the chairperson of the Table View Residents Association, said the rentals could not be sustained.

"If people are only earning R1 500pm how can you expect them to pay R800 rent and pay for their services on top of that, what about food and transport?"

"It will end up with them having to choose between forking out for rent or services. Either way the ratepayers will end up paying through increased tariffs," he said.

The only positive aspect of Monday night's meeting was that every one of the 256 people present was totally against the development, Birkinshaw said.

This is not the first time that council has attempted to push low cost housing into a residential area without proper consultation.

In October last year residents in Sandrift/Tygerhof were told that a low cost development was going up on land in their area.

When the story broke, the residents were both angry and confused.

Potgleter promised then that this state of affairs would never be allowed to happen again.

"I give you my solemn undertaking that I will do my level best to guard against a similar situation arising," he said.

Now, say residents, the same process is happening again in Table View. "Where are his promises now?" asked a resident.

1 000 families to get free homes

STCCM) 14/11/99
TOM HOOD

A THOUSAND Franschhoek squatter families are to get fully subsidised houses that would normally cost over R35 000 each in a deal supported by property developers and the local council

The cash will come from a R400-million development planned for the Boland town which includes an upmarket retirement village, health resort, international hotel and a golf estate designed and run by Gleneagles, a top Scottish golf resort

The municipality has agreed to provide land on the Mooiwater farm, and the first showhouses will be built for the local community before Christmas, said Willem Steenkamp, representing the developers and municipality

The project should house everyone living in the town's squatter camps and backyard shacks, he said

Income from the sale of municipal land for an upmarket golf estate of 120 houses and a retirement village of 70 houses will cross-subsidise the 1 010 low-cost houses, which will also qualify for government and provincial subsidies

A team from Gleneagles will design and manage an 18-hole international championship course with high standards, said Steenkamp. The project is aimed at the top end of the housing market and units will cost about R1,5-million each

The V & A Waterfront Company and New Housing Company have signed a memorandum of understanding with the municipality

Five houses to be built in six-day blitz

Homeless in Khayelitsha encouraged by DIY project aimed 'at building hope as well as homes'

(124) **AKG 16/11/99**

YVONUS KEMP
STAFF REPORTER

A housing scheme that encourages potential home-owners to help build their own homes says it is going to build five houses in six days in Khayelitsha.

The project will also serve as a celebration for it having built 300 houses across South Africa.

The Habitat for Humanity South Africa, an affiliate of Habitat International, has already built houses in Alexandria township and Orange Farm in Gauteng as well as Bhekini wande and Piesang River in KwaZulu Natal.

It now wants to make the dream of owning a home come true for some of the many people who live in shacks throughout the Western Cape's impoverished townships.

The scheme together with the SIM Housing Initiative started a joint venture in the sprawling Harare informal settlement in Khayelitsha called Habitat Khulani (which is the Xhosa command "to grow") and building of five 16 8m² houses began yesterday.

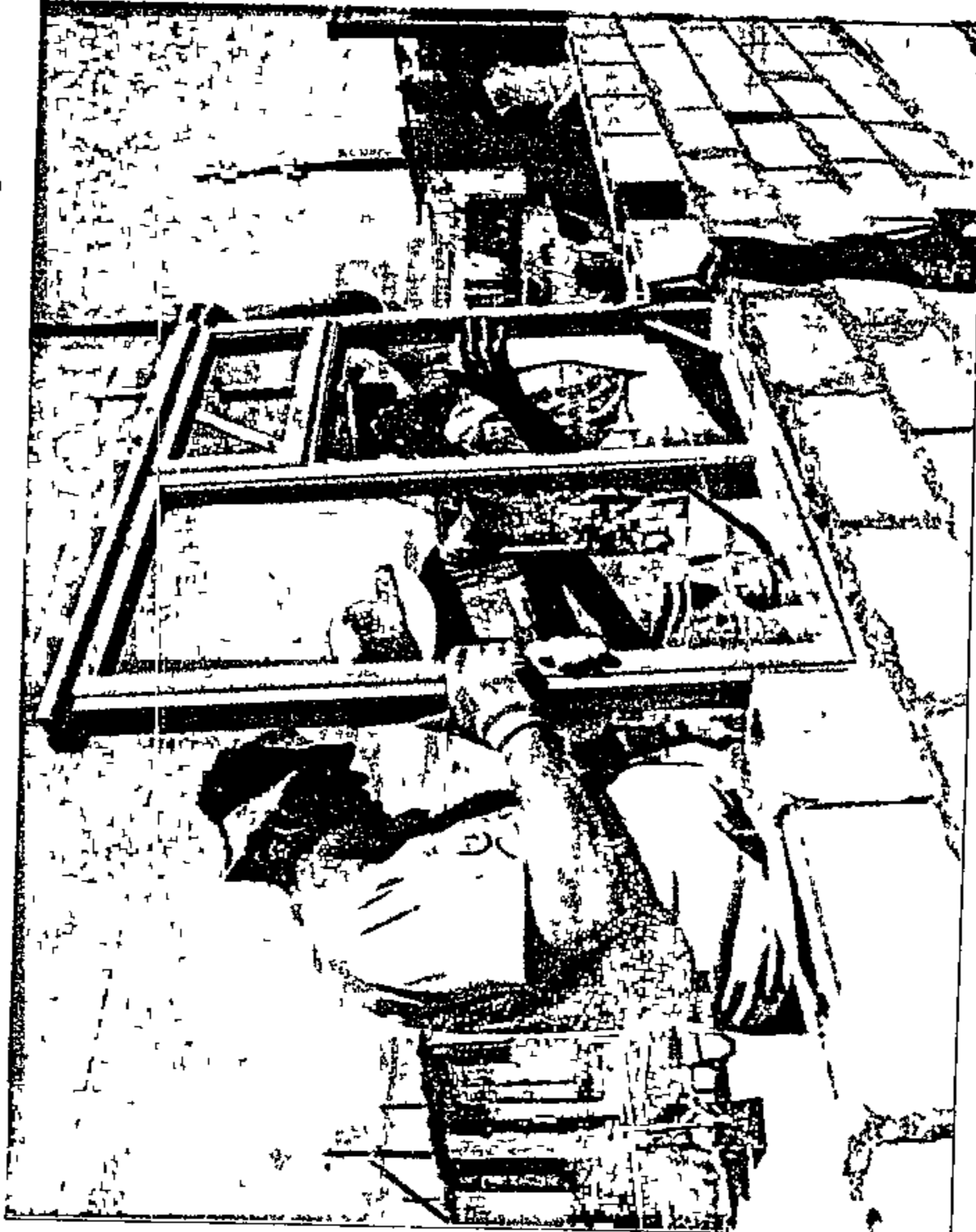
The project dubbed the five-in-six blitz build aims to finish the houses by the weekend and plans to hand over the keys to five families on November 21.

SIM is an outreach programme of the Claremont Methodist Church, and Habitat for Humanity is a network of projects dedicated to eliminating sub-standard housing in South Africa.

The Khulani project in Khayelitsha has built 13 houses since being established last year but has some way to go before all of Harare's 4 300 get permanent lodgings.

The project intends building 100 houses in the area next year and also hopes to launch a builders training initiative that would equip local labourers with building skills.

Mbulelo Ncedana, the provincial co-ordinator for Habitat for Humanity



Good fit: volunteers Roger Klein, Edmund Pouter and Paul Swan fit a window frame into one of the houses in Khayelitsha

Families with volunteers from the community and elsewhere helped in the construction of their own homes and thus reduced costs and established a sense of pride and ownership among home owners.

"We call it sweat equity. Family members help or usually ask relatives to help build the house."

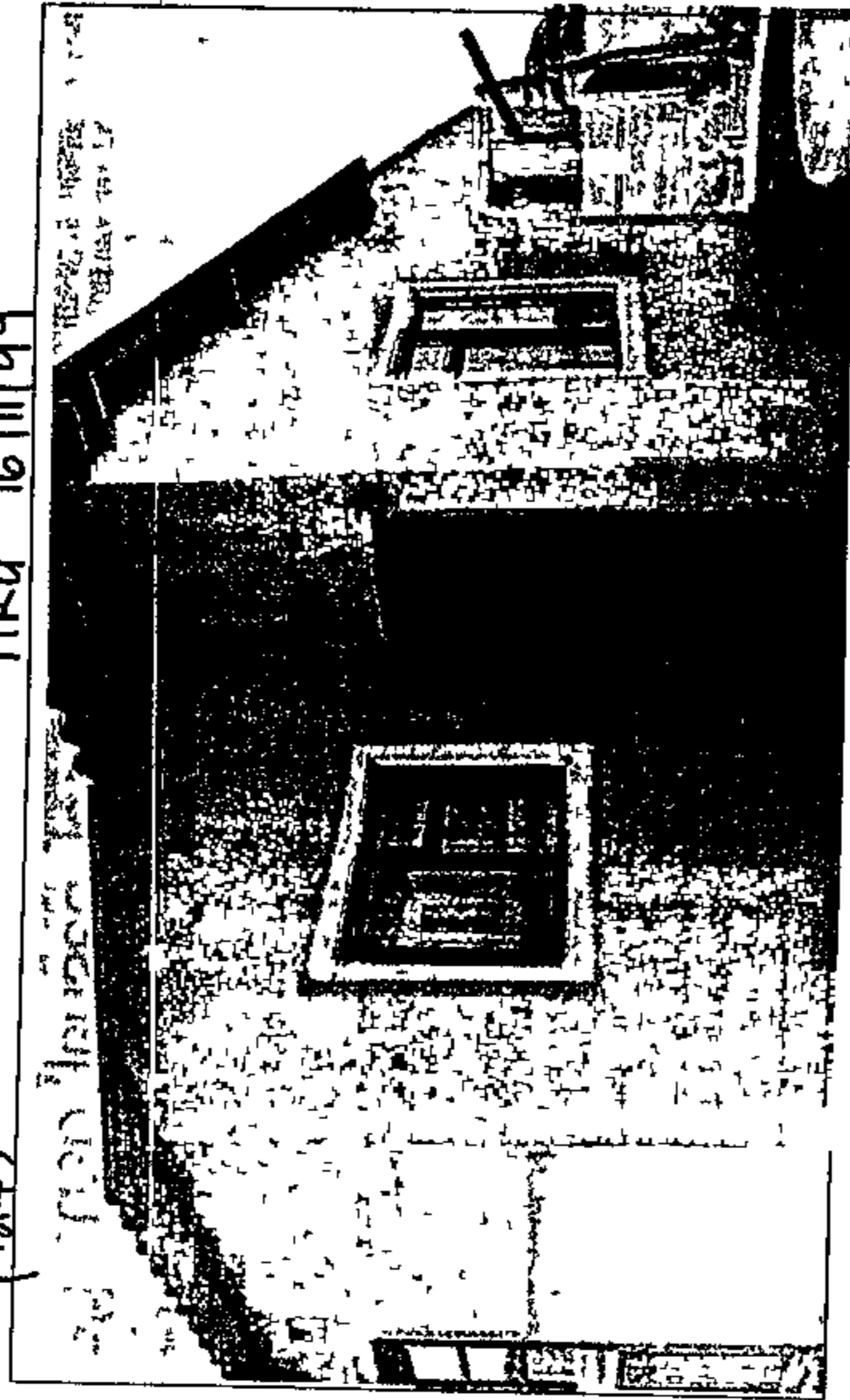
"We also hire local builders with the necessary know-how to do the project."

Donne Jones, a member of the

ty and ward councillor for Harare said the project offered simple, decent and affordable houses for the poor.

"This event is a great example of the different ways in which all South Africans can come together to help make a change in this country," said Mr Ncedana.

This is not just about building houses but also about strengthening and linking communities. We're trying to build hope as well as homes," he said.



Home is: one of the houses completed earlier this year by the Habitat for Humanity building scheme caption

"recycled" and ploughed back into the scheme's "House-for-a-House" project, so that more houses could be built.

The houses cost about R23 000 and monthly payments must be no more than 25% of the buyer's monthly income.

No interest is charged on the bond, although it is adjusted for inflation, and the term is between seven and 10 years.

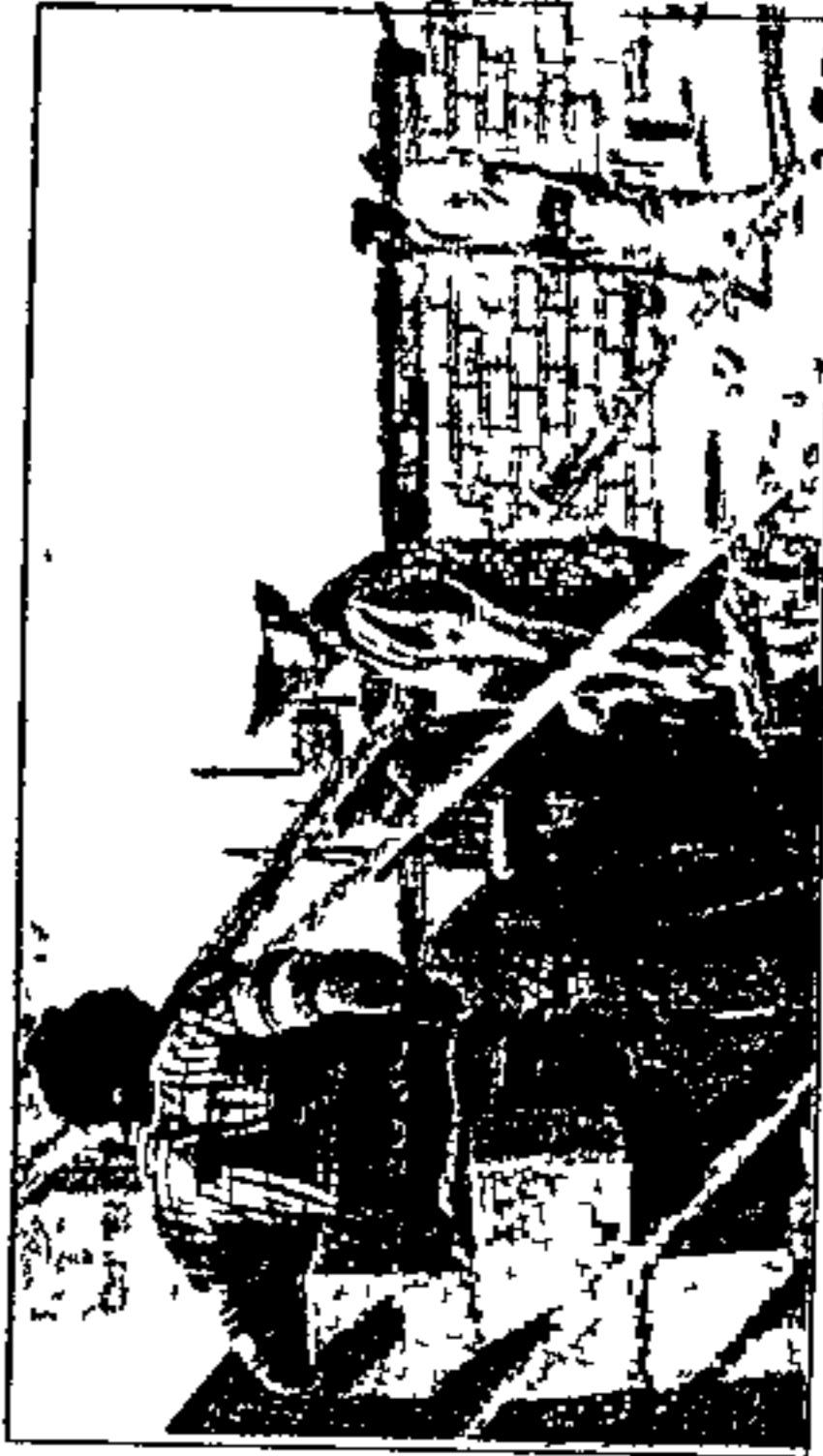
"Every two weeks we hold a homeowner education project and whoever attends three or more meetings can apply for a house."

"We then send a selection committee to the prospective home owner to work out a budget with them, and also to teach them about the principles of home ownership," said Ms Jones.

Manganduzo Longwana, who will move into one of the six blitz houses with her family, said they had been

living in a shack in Harare since 1991. Yesterday afternoon, she said, "I am extremely happy, especially with now finally we will have a house."

Christmas round the corner. "We've been moving from shack to shack and now finally we will have a house."



Building blocks: volunteer Edmund Pouter helps Harare residents build a house

living in a shack in Harare since 1991. Yesterday afternoon, she said, "I am extremely happy, especially with now finally we will have a house."

Trash may shed light on lifestyles

BUNTY WEST
METRO WRITER

FOR Capetonians, the expression "you are what you eat" is certainly true, if the contents of the humble rubbish bin are taken into account, as a family's whole lifestyle can be read in the trash

The more affluent the suburb, the more rubbish is accumulated — and its quality is better

According to Cape Town City's director of water and waste, Kendell Kaveney, from an inspection of people's rubbish one can determine how they live, their standard of cleanliness, their food and alcohol preferences and even their reading habits

Capetonians are spoilt when it comes to rubbish collection. Dustmen work 365 days a year — even on Christmas Day

They work on a "task and finish" basis, and out of season often complete their rounds by 3pm. In the summer, especially in December, the men can still be found collecting at 7pm

While the city's Atlantic coast beaches accumulate at least five tons of litter daily during the festive season, it is a mere drop in the ocean to the amount collected from the suburbs, where 1 370 tons is amassed each day

Cape Town is one of the few cities in South Africa which bales much of its rubbish and packs it off on a train. A huge landfill site at Vissershok near Malmesbury is the destination and about half of the city's rubbish ends up there at a cost of R100 per ton. The function is overseen by the Cape Metropolitan Council

The other two landfill sites that Cape Town uses are at Swartklip (Strandfontein) and Coastal Park (Muizenberg)

Because of the influx of between 200 000 and 300 000 visitors to the city over the holidays, 150 extra staff

will be taken on this year between now and January. Some of them will be employed to clean the beaches, while others will be used for street sweeping

Two new mechanical additions to the cleansing armoury will be employed this year at Camps Bay and Strandfontein. The machines deep cleanse the beach to about 400mm, and return the squeaky clean sand to the bay. They will be used two or three times a week

Cape Town council will launch its annual beach campaign next month to make people aware of the need to keep the city's natural resources clean. It will be accompanied by a law enforcement blitz to stop dumping on the beaches

Over New Year all staff will be on duty, but the one problem they will not be able to control is the Cape Doctor, which makes rubbish collection and containment a nightmare

"I have seen cardboard boxes, complete newspapers and other relatively heavy items flying past my window, and I work on the 18th floor," said Kaveney

The wind tends to dump rubbish in several areas of the city including, Buitengracht Street, Adderley Street and against the wire fencing on the Foreshore

But homeowners can do their bit to cut down on the rubbish they accumulate by following a recycling regime. Paper, plastic and tins should be separated from wet rubbish like tea leaves and vegetable matter

About 25% of paper — a source of income for schools and charities — is recycled, but with a bit of education this figure could be brought up to 90%

● Two primary schools, in Bergvliet and Edgemead, make a profit of R60 000 each annually from the collection of paper. The money is used by the schools to fund other projects

Big guns owe millions

Businesses and sports clubs named in secret list of council's biggest rates debtors

ST(CM) 28/11/99 (124)

TOM HOOD

A SECRET list of the City of Cape Town's top 100 debtors shows that businesses, government institutions and sports organisations owed R67-million or 20 percent of the R334-million that remained unpaid for rates and water on October 31.

After threats of court action, some businesses are paying as much as R50 000 a month to wipe out their debts, according to the list of debtors prepared for the city's finance committee.

But many bills are being disputed by firms, which have accused the council of serious errors and incompetence.

Rates, water, services, rents and housing payment arrears rocketed 40 percent in a year to R790-million. Of this amount, R104-million was owed in rents and housing repayments.

"There are outstanding arrears across the board and we are starting a massive campaign to recoup them," said Saleem Mowzer, chairman of the city's executive committee. "We will make sure that big business and government institutions pay up. Arrears are often blamed on poor people in council houses, but they go right across the city."

Final letters of demand were being sent to everyone, including businesses, sports bodies and educational institutions. If they failed to pay or make arrangements, legal steps would be taken.

"We could have built thousands of houses if people paid for the council services they received," Mowzer said.

Heading the list of "top 100 arrears" is Transnet Pension Fund, which owns the land occupied by the V & A Waterfront and on which R10,5-million is owing in rates.

Derick van der Merwe, financial director of the V & A Waterfront company, said the council's valuation was being disputed because many buildings had been demolished and replaced. The Waterfront's R1,5-million monthly rates were up to date.

Transnet shown as owing R5-million in rates is disputing the valuation of the docks.

Faircape Homes was landed with a R1,4-million water account for a Hazeldene housing project. Faircape managing director Mike Vietri said the homes had been occupied for four years but the water meters had not been read and the council had sent the bill to the developers. "I called in at the water department months ago, but nothing has happened."

Sport clubs owe more than R16-million in rates. They include the WP Rugby Union (R9,6-million) and WP Cricket Club (R4,5-million), both of which are claiming rates relief. Mowbray Golf Club, which owed R410 000, found a payment for water had been incorrectly credited to rates. The club agreed to pay R125 264,79 and the balance over 12 months.

The council claims government institutions owe R6,4-million in rates and R896 000 for water, most of which is for schools.

Managements of blocks of flats are also being pursued for unpaid rates. They include the bodies corporate of Twin Towers, Sea Point (R554 000), Welgelegen, Cape Town (R585 000), The Studios, Cape Town (R440 000), Five Howe Street, Observatory (R266 000), Swift Park Three, Cape Town (R235 000), and Albion Place (R217 000) and Grosvenor Square in Rondebosch (R206 000). Monwood Properties, with R426 000 due for rates and R328 000 for water at an industrial site at Philippi, wanted the valuation reduced after the site was invaded by squatters.

Only six individuals made it to the city's top 100. They were V Z Peter, Kenilworth (R115 000 for water which was disconnected), D O Dawood, Rylands Estate (R128 000 rates and water), M N Saban Schaapkraal (R162 000 for water), C K Abdooroff Philippi (R99 000 rates), M Stock, Philippi (R89 000 rates) and P Naidu, Philippi (R263 000 rates and water).

Rent trimmed for poorest of the poor

(124) ARG 3/12/99

PETER GOUSEN
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The South Peninsula Municipality has become the country's leader in innovative housing policies - introducing big discounts on rentals for the very poor after last week's launch of a micro-loans scheme for the upgrading of homes.

This week, the council approved a scheme to help the extremely poor pay the rent for their council homes

The scheme, to be run for a year on an experimental basis, is likely to serve as a model for other local authorities which are battling with millions of rands in arrear housing rentals across the country

Rentals in council housing average R135 a month

In terms of the scheme, tenants earning R300 a month or less will pay 5% of their income as rent, those earning between R301 and R500 a month 8% and those with an income of R600 will pay 9%

This means that a household with an income of R200 a month will pay R10 a month rent and where the income is R600, the rent will be R54

Acutely poor households will

have to make a formal application for this assistance and provide proof of unemployment, low income, reduced income or medical certificates if they are unable to work

If the new rents are paid regularly, the council will freeze the interest on any rental arrears and no action will be taken to recover the debt until the household's circumstances change

The chairman of the council's

The scheme is to run for a year on an experimental basis

housing committee, Joseph Johnson, said the municipality believed that helping extremely poor people was the task of the state, but it could not wait until a scheme for state aid was introduced

His committee and the council understood the plight of the very poor and were determined to do something to help

Last week, provincial housing

minister Cecil Herandien put the seal of approval on the council's micro-loans scheme which will enable a house owner with a state-subsidised house to borrow a maximum of R5 000 for improvements to the basic 27m² house, which comes with no internal walls, ceilings or hot water

Mr Herandien, speaking at the official launch of the micro-loan scheme, said that with building costs rising, the present state housing subsidy of a maximum of R18 700 would be too little even build the basic 27m² house

Up to now it had been impossible for the homeowner of a state-subsidised house to obtain a bond and the council's loan scheme could serve as a model for the rest of the country

So far, the municipality, with the backing of a number of institutions including the National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency, Absa Bank, Agishana Credit, Protea Finance and Sumex Housing, has geared up its original R2-million from its dedicated housing funds to R12-million

A further R6-million is also a possibility

From Cardboard City to concrete

Fifteen squatter families leave shacks on the Foreshore for homes in Mitchell's Plain

(124) AKF 4/12/99

TASUMA VILJOEN

The long-delayed move of residents from the notorious Cardboard City settlement on the Foreshore to proper housing has begun.

Fifteen families have already moved to Montrose Park in Mitchell's Plain from their shacks under the Western Boulevard flyover and more are to follow.

Muggers who terrify pedestrians on the Foreshore have long been suspected of hiding out among the shacks.

The squatters' move follows years of negotiations. The move was stopped last year when residents of Mitchell's Plain objected to having "squatters" for neighbours. More negotiations resolved the dispute.

Joel Mkunquana, acting city housing director said 15 of the 80 families had moved into homes in Montrose Park. The homes were built with government housing subsidies of R17 500 each.

Mr Mkunquana said Cape Town had encountered many problems trying to house the families.

Some of them did not meet the subsidy requirements laid down by the Housing Development Board and many did not have any form of identification. But the municipality had gone the extra mile to help them get the documentation they needed.

Mr Mkunquana said the municipality was pleased with the progress of the move. The development at Montrose was incomplete but families were moved as soon as their houses were finished.

He said the city would make other arrangements for those who did not qualify for the subsidy.

A new home owner, who asked not to be named, said that although his house was small he was thankful he had running water and private toilet facilities. He was also able to send his daughter to school and was grateful his children did not have to grow up on the streets.

Another new home owner Farouk Fortune, said he was delighted that his family had a permanent roof over their heads after living in Cardboard City for seven years. He said living in the shack settlement was dangerous because all kinds of criminal elements used the area.

The area around the squatter camp was considered very dangerous to tourists. Residents were continually being blamed for mugging tourists and breaking into motor vehicles in and around the Waterfront.

The municipality erected a fence around the camp last year in an attempt to end attacks on pedestrians and tourists. Sixteen shacks were demolished when it was claimed that criminals were using the area as a hideout.



NEW START a child plays in Montrose Park in front of houses built for the former bridge people who used to live under the Western Boulevard flyover

Picture LEONLESTRADE

Debtors pay up after rates blitz

TOM HOOD

THOUSANDS of debtors flocked to Cape Town's Civic Centre last week to pay off millions of rands owed for rates, water, electricity and rent after a blitz on debtors

A record R13-million was paid into the city's coffers on Thursday, well above the R5-million daily average

Queues started before 7am, forcing cashiers to open at 7am to cope with the rush

At Mitchells Plain 2 000 people called in one day to arrange to pay off arrears. Offices will also open at Langa, Guguletu, Brown's Farm and Athlone to

help people arrange to pay off what they owe

This followed the council's biggest blitz on defaulters to recover arrears that had piled up over years to a massive R790-million at the end of last month. "We sent out 14 000 final demand notices a few days ago, shortly after sending out 38 000," said Philip van Ryneveld, executive director of corporate finance

"We have increased our teams to cut off water and electricity. If people do not respond to the final demands, council is committed to following all the steps required by council policies and the law. This could result in the defaulter's property being sold in execution."

ST (Cm) 5/12/99 (124)

Housing cash dries up in Western Cape

(124) ARG 7/12/99
Homeless turned away as grant applications soar

TROYE LUND
POLITICAL REPORTER

The Western Cape provincial government has already blown its housing budget for the next financial year

Every cent has been committed to existing housing projects, and the Provincial Housing and Development Board is not accepting any new housing applications until present contractual obligations ease off

In the meantime, homeless people clutching application forms for a subsidised home are being turned away in droves, and figures show homelessness is soaring in the province

In 1994 there were about 250 000 homeless people in the province

There are now 230 000 without homes in greater Cape Town alone

Added to this is the provincial government's recent realisation that most of the housing budget since 1994 has not addressed housing needs in the metropolitan area, where the need has become critical

While the provincial government tries to find ways of speeding up the slow pace of development of the existing 146 housing projects, the pile of applications accepted before June this year is seeking a combined total of R800-million. This is more than double the province's R351-million annual housing budget

Approval for these applications is only expected to begin coming through in two or three years

The Development Action Group

Housing crisis **BRIEFING**

- R1,4-billion was budgeted for houses from 1994 until 2000. All of this has been allocated for approved subsidies
- So far 130 000 subsidies have been approved. About 56% of these homes have been built
- The Western Cape's contribution to the one million homes the national Government promised in the first five years of its rule was 114 000

(DAG), a non-government organisation helping homeless communities start housing projects, wants to know where this leaves the applicants who are now being turned away

"This is devastating for communities that are all fired up to organise themselves and to supplement subsidies with the savings schemes they have organised," said DAG director Norah Walker

"Housing projects without approved subsidies will lose momentum as members vacillate between projects in search of the shortest route to securing a house," she predicted

While the national housing budget is expected to remain the same next year, the Western Cape's budget hangs in the balance

This is because 1996 census figures show the province has fewer people than expected earning less than R3 500 a month - the limit to qualify for a housing subsidy

Ms Walker said: "Total national government expenditure on housing constitutes only 1,8% of total national expenditure. This is far short of the 5% required by the white paper on housing"

Added to the housing dilemma is the fact that housing funds since 1994 have been allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and local councils in the metropolitan areas have only recently got to the point of being able to submit applications

Provincial housing director Charlotte Lamohr explained "Smaller outlying towns with less complicated applications got in the queue and got approval for housing projects first. The local councils in the metro areas, which took a long time to get their act together, are only beginning to submit applications for housing projects now"

Ms Lamohr said it was expected that once the housing board started approving applications again, it would prioritise and approve urgent applications first

Hermanus water project wins poverty-relief award

MICHAEL MORRIS
SPECIAL WRITER

Fifteen government projects have earned R700 000 in a new scheme awarding innovation in showing the way to alleviating poverty.

The Greater Hermanus Water Conservation Programme is one of 10 projects to receive R60 000 from the scheme, the Impumelelo Innovations Award Programme

Others in the country – five of which won R20 000 each – range from youth and anti-crime initiatives to solid waste management and hydroponic farming projects

The prize money is to be spent on showing other departments and project developers how to find practicable and imaginative solutions to poverty

Impumelelo, under the directorship of Rhoda Kadala, functions in partnership with the Ford Foundation, the Human Sciences Research Council, the Open Society Foundation and the Dutch government

It focuses on boosting and encouraging innovation in government departments, the agencies chiefly responsible for delivery in the campaign against poverty

The programme is modelled on a similar scheme in the United States

A total 176 programmes were

entered, and the winners were

- The Greater Hermanus Water Conservation Programme
 - The Integrated Livestock and Crop Farming Project in Middelburg
 - The Durban Solid Waste Waste Collection programme
 - The Working for Water Programme
 - The Mapila Hydroponics Community Co-operative
 - The Stepping Stones – Reclaiming Youth at Risk in Port Elizabeth
 - The PMB-Umsunduzi Anti-Crime Network in KwaZulu-Natal
 - The Missionvale Community Housing Initiative in Port Elizabeth
 - The Durban Metro Housing Canaan/Quarry Heights Relocation Project
 - The Lubisi Dam Development Project in the Eastern Cape
- The five R20 000 winners were
- Salvagers Waste Management in the Odi Moretele Region, North West Province
 - Outreach Services in Kimberley, Northern Cape.
 - Mosvold Sanitation, Nutrition and Health Worker Education Project in Ingwavuma, Northern Zululand
 - Pascap after-School Initiative in Southfield, Cape Town
 - The Road to Sithebe Komkulu in the Eastern Cape

ARG 10/12/199

(124) (297)