

# SECURITY MANAGEMENT UPGRADING IN THE BLACK TOWNSHIPS

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## INTRODUCTION

Recently, much research has been devoted to analysing state strategies and institutions, particularly the National Security Management System (NSMS), the structures of the Joint Management Centres (JMCs), theories of low-intensity warfare, and the militarisation of South African society (see Philip, 1987; Merrifield, 1987; Grundy, 1988; Swilling, 1987, 1988; Swilling and Philips, 1988; and Borraine, 1987, 1988).

While useful, many of these analyses have remained located at the level of state structures or policy statements. In other words, they take state strategies at face value, and do not attempt to probe the large gap between intention and implementation of strategies.

State strategies are, more often than not, diverse, contradictory and incoherent responses to pressures from below, rather than a result of uniform national manipulation and the unfolding logic of state planners. Just as the 'total strategy' of the early 1980s was often neither total nor strategic, current state strategies cannot be reduced to a single 'masterplan', but are constantly being shaped by the struggles of the oppressed classes and their organisations, and by struggles between different institutions within the South African state.

State strategies have objective limitations. In particular, both the uprisings in the black townships between 1984-86, and the state's NSMS response, have to be located within the context of the crisis in the urban areas over the past 15 years. The JMCs might be effective in gathering information about activists and co-ordinating security strategies; they are less effective when dealing with the structural contradictions in the urban areas.

There are important political and strategic implications to be drawn from these points. If analyses of state strategies do not go beyond an outline of the structures of the state and the ideological discourse of state policy

planners, then there is a strong tendency to regard the state as all-powerful, particularly in the current climate of repression. This leaves political momentum within the domain of the state, and reduces the ability of the popular classes to organise and resist.

At the same time, avoiding a pessimistic scenario should not lead us to the opposite extreme. The repressive measures of the last two years are not the actions of a 'panic-stricken' state, as has been argued in some quarters. Current state strategies are not simply cosmetic or inconsequential. They do affect the terrain on which the forces of the opposition organise, the issues around which organisation is built, and the nature of class and political alliances.

## WHAT ARE CURRENT STATE STRATEGIES IN THE TOWNSHIPS?

There are currently a total of 34 black townships in South Africa that have been designated 'oilspots' by officials of the Joint Management Centres (JMCs), and a further 200 townships in line for certain improvements. The term 'oilspot' refers to 'strategic bases' from which the security forces believe they can 'regain control' over the black population. The township of Alexandra near Sandton is possibly the best known example of this, and was recently described as a 'model for the success of the state of emergency and the JMC' by the (then) Deputy Minister of Law and Order, Roelf Meyer. Other townships earmarked for specific upgrading programmes include Bonteheuwel and Crossroads (W Cape), New Brighton and KwaZakhele (E Cape), Soweto and Mamelodi (Transvaal), and townships outside Durban and Pietermaritzburg that fall under the Kwa-Zulu administration.

The emphasis of state strategists on trying to improve some of the material conditions under which oppressed people live is a direct response to the nationwide popular uprising of the last few years. It is also part of the general ideology of 'low intensity warfare' and 'national security' that has informed state strategies over the past two decades.

These theories are borrowed directly from the military experiences of former colonial powers such as Britain in Malaya and France in Algeria, as well as more recent American imperialist adventures in Vietnam, Brazil and El Salvador (Merrifield, 1987).

They are premised on a counter-insurgency strategy that recognises that the 'war' cannot be won by force alone, and that a series of calculated political and economic reforms are needed if the population (or at least part of it) is to be won over. Thus, Gen J Dutton of the SADF argued in 1977 that the role of the military 'could no longer be confined exclusively to the employment of armed force. It is broadened to include contributory

roles in virtually every other sphere of strategic action, and specifically in the psychological, economic and political spheres'.

The doctrine of 'total strategy', that became part of the National Party government's rhetoric after 1977, was meant to be an integrated response to the political and economic crises that faced the state during the 1970s. In accordance with 'total strategy', structural 'reforms' were attempted in the field of labour, the parliamentary constitution, the administration of black urban residents, industrial and regional policies, and the economy. This period also saw the restructuring of the South African state, with the introduction of an executive presidency and the rise to power of non-parliamentary bodies such as the State Security Council, where security officials from the police and military play a key role. This restructuring was based on two key assumptions of total strategy: the need to co-ordinate national planning at all levels of government, and the centralisation of the security forces (Philip, 1987:7).

In a key paper in 1977, J A Lombard, now Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank, outlined the specific relationship between the welfare and security roles of the state (Merrifield, 1987:4). On the one hand, he argued for privatisation, decentralisation and deracialisation of the social welfare functions as a means by which other 'racial groups' could be drawn into a system of democratic participation. On the other hand, he argued for the centralisation of security on a continued racially exclusive basis.

These perceptions reflect the basis of the state's current approach to the position of the urban African population. For the state, the 'organic' crisis of the 1970s, particularly after the uprisings of 1976/77, was experienced as an urban crisis. The traditional urban policies of Stallard and Verwoerd regarded African urbanisation as a 'temporary phenomenon', and had sought to maintain this position through rigid economic and political controls. This resulted in urban Africans of all classes being confined to overcrowded townships, and subjected to inadequate housing, inferior education, limited social services and amenities, high transport costs, and a system of local administration that governed without consent.

These state urban policies led to the politicisation of local government, education, housing, transport and the provision of goods and services in the African townships. This in turn resulted in the emergence of both spontaneous and organised forms of resistance within the townships around these issues (such as stayaways, boycotts, attacks on local government institutions), and the creation of different forms of organisation (student, youth, civic and women's groups).

The initial proposals for a new black urban dispensation were contained in the Riekert Commission (RC), which reported in 1979. The RC advocated that urban Africans (or 'insiders') be recognised both legislatively and administratively as permanent urban residents, and should

be granted the right to move and work anywhere within the urban areas, subject to the availability of 'suitable' housing and employment (Hindson, 1987:80-100). This implied a move from influx control to what the RC called 'controlled urbanisation'.

The RC also promoted increased powers for black local authorities. The new councils were designed to facilitate the upgrading of the townships, through the development of a system of self-financing through rates and taxes. However, African political rights were still linked to 'homeland independence'.

At the same time, the RC called for strict measures to prevent rural workers or 'outsiders' coming in to the urban areas through the creation of 'assembly centres' in the bantustans, and action against urban squatting. These measures were contained in the proposed Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill of 1982.

In general terms, the Riekert proposals for a new urban policy failed. As Hindson has shown, the reform policies of the Riekert Commission were based on traditional apartheid assumptions, namely, that urban Africans would continue to exercise their political rights solely in the 'homelands', and would continue to be confined to racially-segregated townships with self-financing local authorities (Hindson, 1987:78-88).

These assumptions did not take into account the economic non-viability of the bantustans. The reality of black urbanisation was that the rural poor moved into the cities, despite controls, because the alternative was starvation. In addition, the Riekert proposals failed to realise that much of the black urbanisation had occurred within the bantustans themselves, near the white-designated urban areas, and that millions of cross-border commuters were dependent on employment in these areas. These two factors meant that state urban policies of the 1980s were unable to separate the 'insiders' from the 'outsiders'.

Within the urban areas themselves, the Riekert proposals contained further contradictions. The massive shortage of urban black housing and the declining rate of black employment in the 1980s, meant that these elements could not be used as measures to determine mobility.

State urban policies continued to be met with widescale resistance. This ranged from the struggles of squatters to remain in the urban areas, and the linking of urban dwellers to migrants through unionisation, court judgements, court-monitoring work and international pressure. Within the urban administration itself, many white officials, wary of any alterations to the system of urban controls, refused to implement the new measures.

However, Riekert's main failure lay in the inability of the proposals to solve two key inter-related contradictions: the unpopularity of the unrepresentative black local authorities, and the fiscal crisis of these bodies. In order to try and win popular support, the councils began to

implement certain upgrade programmes from 1979. To pay for these, the councillors, often regarded as economically and political corrupt by township residents, raised the township rent and service charges, in some cases by over 200%.

These increases coincided with rising urban unemployment and falling real incomes that characterised the early 1980s (Cassim, 1987:540-45). These general economic trends were heightened substantially by the government's austerity measures of August 1984, designed to reduce the growth rate of the money supply and thereby inflation. Interest rates for producers and consumers were increased by 26% and 32% respectively, causing a wave of bankruptcies among small businesses and ensuing retrenchments. Workers, faced with assaults on their economic ability to survive, began to fight back. This can be seen in the Vaal uprisings in September 1984, and the massive stayaway in the Transvaal in November 1984. The Riekert proposals were finally destroyed in the national township revolt of 1984-1986 as councils and councillors were attacked, rent increases boycotted, and many townships organised into street committees.

## **NSMS UPGRADING IN THE BLACK TOWNSHIPS: A CASE STUDY OF MAMELODI**

Mamelodi, a black township of about 350 000 people which lies 17 km outside Pretoria, is one of the African townships currently on the receiving end of an 'upgrading' programme. In November 1985, 13 Mamelodi residents were killed by the police during a rent-march. At the funerals following the 'Mamelodi massacre', a call was made on residents to boycott rent and join the street committees.

Within a few months, a network of 'organs of people's power' stretched through 35 sections, under the leadership of the Mamelodi Civic Association (MCA). In the first half of 1986, with the Mamelodi Town Council (MTC) severely weakened through revenue shortages and political opposition, the civic association began to assume increasing hegemony over the day to day events in Mamelodi.

During this time, Mamelodi residents attended meetings of the street and section committees, participating in wide-ranging discussions from conditions in Mamelodi to national political issues. Residents boycotted the Mamelodi police-station, and began to bring disputes to 'people's courts'. They participated in numerous stayaways from work, and conducted a consumer boycott of white shops in Pretoria. In the schools, students boycotted classes and introduced rudimentary concepts of 'people's education'.

Many of these 'alternative structures' were the first targets of the state crackdown on June 12, 1986, when a nationwide state of emergency was

declared. The period of repression in Mamelodi was followed by a JMC-initiated strategy of upgrading the conditions in Mamelodi that security officials believed had led to the resistance in the first place. These were identified as a lack of land, housing, infrastructure, services and facilities. Part of this strategy has also been to try and bolster the political and financial position of the town council by ending the rent boycott.

Underlying the various state social welfare and upgrading programmes is a policy of 'eliminating' activists (in the words of a member of the state security council), and crushing democratic organisations. For example in Mamelodi, well-known activist Dr Ribiero and his wife were assassinated in December 1986 by unknown gunmen. In June this year, the Mamelodi civic chairperson, Peter Maluleka, was abducted from his home by unknown men. Police later admitted that he had been detained. In another mysterious case last month, the civic secretary, Stanza Bopape, 'escaped' from detention, according to the police. He has not been seen since, and his family has expressed fears for his life. In September 1988, almost all of the activists in the Pretoria were re-detained.

There is a permanent army base in Mamelodi, one of 14 such bases in the country. The actions of all the various security forces and their auxiliary units are co-ordinated by a Joint Operations Centre (JOC), the security or 'hard war' section of the Mamelodi mini-JMC. The JOC attempts to gather information about all social, religious, business, sporting and political organisations in Mamelodi, and keeps track of where activists live.

The 'welfare' or 'soft war' committee of the mini-JMC is co-ordinating a massive programme of upgrading of infrastructure and the provision of services (electricity, water, sewerage disposal, paving of roads, parks, schools, post-offices). It co-ordinates the actions of government departments and actively bolsters the position of the Mamelodi Town Council through a propaganda campaign.

In the last two years, over R20-m has been spent on infrastructure and nearly R100-m on housing in Mamelodi. Plans for the next 12 years include a further infrastructure upgrading programme of R100-m, and a housing programme of nearly R300-m.

The finance for such a programme is being provided by a number of different sources. Resources are still being allocated by the central treasury. For example, a number of government departments, co-ordinated by the JMC, are allocating funds for the construction of the new facilities (schools, post offices, parks and pools). The security forces themselves also draw from their own budget to finance various propaganda schemes (eg distribution of food parcels, pamphlets, youth summer camps). The Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA), which receives most of its budget from the Department of Community Development and Planning,

allocates subsidies to most of the black local authorities, in order to make up the shortfall in their budgets because of the continuing rent boycotts.

However, the central state has made it clear that it will not continue to be responsible for the provision of goods and services in black townships. Instead, the responsibility now falls to the 'individual, the employer and the private sector'. Thus, while for the past two years the various Provincial Administrations have 'carried' most of the black local authorities, they have all announced a cut in the amount available for bridging funds for 1989/90 (SAIRR, 1988:43). Similarly, the Department of Development Planning reduced its allocation for urgent upgrading projects in 1987/88. Instead, the RSCs are meant to take over this function (mainly in the provision of infrastructure and not housing). In its first operational year, the Pretoria Regional Services Council gave Mamelodi the largest single allocation (R20-m for electricity upgrading), despite the fact that the white municipalities command the overwhelming number of votes on the RSC.

The 20 000 new houses in Mamelodi, which will double the size of the township, are being provided by, *inter alia*, the South African Housing Trust (SAHT), the Family Housing Association (FHA) of the Urban Foundation, and a number of private construction firms. In addition, there are plans for the construction of new shopping centres and industrial parks, and family housing for the 18 000 migrant labourers in Mamelodi.

## IMPLICATIONS OF STATE STRATEGIES IN THE BLACK URBAN AREAS.

The current NSMS strategies in the townships (known as WHAM or 'winning hearts and minds') differ in some ways from the previous policies of 'total strategy'. As Swilling and Philips (1988:25) have argued:

The fundamental difference between 'total strategy'... and the WHAM programme that has been implemented since 1986, is that the latter is no longer concerned primarily with restructuring the access points of civil society. Instead, the emphasis is on recasting the foundations of civil society, so that political access points can at some future date be restructured in a way that does not threaten the system as a whole.

Current state urban policies are based on the recognition of the fact that real grievances exist in the townships, and that they have to be met in order to 'ensure there is no fertile soil in which the seeds of revolution can germinate' (Wandrag, 1985). This is to be done through a process of 'upgrading' and infrastructural improvements.

There is also recognition of the failure of the policy of 'self-financing' of local government, and of the need to effect a partial redistribution of

resources from the white areas to the black areas. The principal mechanisms of this are seen to be the regional services councils (RSCs).

The political rights of African people in the urban areas are given a (devious) form of recognition, with the proposal that municipal representation (through the town councils) will become political representation on regional and national bodies. At the same time, new forms of direct urban control are being proposed through the various new bills on slums, squatting and group areas.

While it is too soon to establish what sort of an effect this combination of repression and upgrading will have in the long term, there are a number of preliminary points that can be made:

- Effect of the state of emergency and the national security management system.

The state of emergency and the implementation of a NSMS in Mamelodi has unquestionably affected opposition and resistance to state policies. The Mamelodi Joint Operations Centre co-ordinates a systematic and effective campaign against activists and community leaders, and has intimidated many residents against becoming involved with the civic association. The JOC has been able to assemble substantial information on activists in Mamelodi, and can move swiftly to counter oppositional activities through its centralised security networks. Through the JOC, control has been regained over the day to day administrative functions of the township. The Mamelodi mini-JMC has been able to identify problems quickly, and put forward a (relatively) coherent programme of upgrading.

This does not mean to say that the NSMS upgrading programmes are being implemented as intended. Apart from the question of whether the 'oilspot' technique can be successfully extended to other townships, it is apparent that while the JMCs can often identify problems, they cannot always 'deliver' the goods and services required, for a variety of reasons. These include tensions between the JMCs and various government departments that resent security interference in their functions; the inefficiency and corruptness of many of the black local authorities that the JMCs are required to work through; and a general lack of resources available for township upgrading (to be examined in more detail below).

The major weakness of the NSMS strategy is its deliberate coupling of repression with the upgrading programmes. The major difference between the NSMS upgrading strategies of 1987/88, and the 'total strategy reforms' of the early 1980s is the current perception of the need for systematic repression in order to bolster reform. Swilling quotes Willie Breytenbach of Stellenbosch University as saying that 'where once there could be no security without reform, now there can be no reform without security'. Actions by the security forces in Mamelodi are seen as 'necessary' components of the upgrading/reform strategies.



On the one hand, this means that unlike the 'reform' period of the early 1980s, the current upgrading programmes afford fewer opportunities for oppositional forces to organise. On the other hand, most residents interviewed remain cynical of the upgrading programmes because they are seen to be connected with the actions of the security forces in the township. As the editors of the *South African Review* 4 point out, this exposes one of the contradictions within the state's reform policy:

The stability necessary for reform is impossible without repression, while repressive measures deepen the crisis to which reform is a response (1987:xiv).

One qualification can be made. Among some members of the petty-bourgeoisie in Mamelodi there has been a more ambiguous reaction to the state of emergency. For example, certain Mamelodi businessmen claim that prior to June 1986, their business rivals took advantage of the period of 'ungovernability' and hired gangs of youths to burn down houses and shops 'in the name of the struggle', and that 'tsotsi comrades' were able to rob residents without the 'real comrades' being able to stop this. One businessman, although sympathetic to the aims of the Mamelodi Civic Association, described the period before June 1986:

So the thing was moving, I could say it was like a powerful river. Well, water is essential for life, but at the same time it can be very destructive. It helped along the way, but it created a lot of destruction.

While agreeing that the street committees had achieved many political ends, and that the role of the security forces was a repressive one, this particular interviewee was at the same time secretly relieved when 'law and order' was re-established.

● Mamelodi Town Council.

The state of emergency and the NSMS has also strengthened the position of the Mamelodi Town Council. Councillors are protected physically by the municipal police and the security forces, and have been provided with a co-ordinated political and economic backup system in the form of the mini-JMC, very different from the days of the clashes with the Administration Board over land shortages and rent increases. The ability of the Mamelodi mini-JMC to gather information about conditions in Mamelodi, place this information within the framework of the NSMS, identify areas where action needs to be taken, and then prod both government departments and the town council to respond, is probably the main strength of the structure.

Through government departments, the Transvaal Provincial Administration, and the Pretoria RSC, substantial revenue is being raised outside of Mamelodi and channeled to the MTC. This process is being complemented by the work of the Urban Foundation's Family Housing

Association, the South African Housing Trust and private investment. The council still faces a partial rent boycott, and has been unable to make much progress in collecting arrears. However, because of external sources of revenue, the MTC is no longer in as vulnerable a position as at the period following the November 1983 black local authority elections.

The MTC is also in a position to disburse patronage in the form of houses, sites, jobs and business contracts. The council can switch off electricity to people's houses and threaten to evict them; it can also block access to halls for the purposes of holding meetings.

Mamelodi residents face visible evidence of the upgrading programmes taking place, including the completed Moretele Park, and the MTC receives good media coverage for any promises of further schemes. Completed housing projects, such as Mamelodi Gardens, are not only used by the MTC to show off their supposed effectivity and power, but have also provided the council with a residential pocket of potentially conservative supporters.

There is little evidence (so far) that the black local authorities have actually been able to increase their support base. One of the main reasons is that while in some cases they have been able to deliver certain goods and services, they are still widely perceived to be under 'white' control. In most cases, this is obviously still the case. The recent Remuneration of Town Clerks Act has meant a centralisation of the control function of town clerks under the provincial administrations, with town clerks (most of whom are former white officials of the old administration boards) being nominated by the provincial administrator rather than the black local authority.

In addition, an official of the Transvaal Provincial Administration admitted recently that they have to 'frequently intervene' in the running of the black local authorities 'to preserve the system of local government from corrupt town councillors'.

Despite the acceptance of an NSMS strategy based on the need for certain redistribution of financial resources from white to black areas, the black local authorities are still supposed to be self-financing. While additional funds are being channeled from government departments and the regional services councils for the purposes of upgrading or the construction of new infrastructure, the councils still rely on payments for the consumption of existing services in order to continue providing those services. This remains one of their central weaknesses. The continued pressure from the TPA on councils to raise the rent and service charges, and evict those not paying rent or unable to repay arrears, means that councillors have little chance of winning widespread support.

Even if certain townships such as Mamelodi succeed in installing improved infrastructure, the town councils would then be faced with the task of maintaining the services with minimal funds.

Black local authorities continue to be caught, in the words of a former 'mayor' of Mamelodi in 1984, 'between a rock and a hard place'. When the Diepmeadow Council in Soweto refused to act to break the rent boycott, they were replaced by David Thebehali, long discredited former 'mayor' of Soweto. More recently, other Soweto councils who agreed to support the mid-winter 'switch-off' of electricity in sections of Soweto where the rent boycott was still strong have encountered massive hostility and anger from residents. When the new bills to control squatting and slums are passed, the black local authorities will have to enforce the stringent provisions.

● Resources for upgrading - are they enough?

The upgrading programmes in the townships are clearly selective, based on security and not welfare considerations. There is no real effort to solve the urban crisis, merely to contain it through a policy of divide and rule. However, the question still remains: to what extent will the state be able to raise the necessary funds, even if it is for a limited upgrading programme?

In Mamelodi, in addition to the 'sale of houses' campaign, a number of additional steps have been taken to erase the existing housing backlog and conditions of overcrowding. Crucial to this has been the extra land that has been made available, which has nearly doubled the size of the township. In the PWV area as a whole, a total of 81 000ha has been made available for township development.

If the MTC is able to transform all the announcements made regarding housing in Mamelodi over the past three years into reality, it will mean the construction of a total of about 20 000 new houses. Housing construction of this nature would more than double the size of Mamelodi, and could conceivably provide accommodation for about 120 000 people, assuming six people per house.

This means that the MTC needs to raise R320-m over the next 15 years for housing, assuming all the houses are SAHT-type constructor-built houses, costing an average of R19 000 each. This averages out at R21-m per year, to be borrowed from the SAHT or raised by private investors. This amount does not include the capital needed for the provision of bulk infrastructure and services that will be supplied with the houses, nor does it include the capital needed for the provision of new facilities (parks, shopping centres, business areas, etc).

For most residents in Mamelodi, the prices of the housing units provided so far are still beyond their financial means. By 1986, Pretoria was one of the most expensive cities in South Africa for African people to live in, with an estimated minimum household effective level (HEL) of R587.12 per month. In contrast, the average monthly wage in Pretoria for all sectors (excluding domestic service) was R522, approximately 13% below the effective minimum wage. This unfavourable ratio between the income of

wage and salary earners and the cost of living does not on its own demonstrate the full extent of poverty in African townships.

In Pretoria, the percentage of the workforce employed dropped from 66.0% in 1975, to 60.6% in 1980, to 48.8% in 1985. This meant that by 1985, 51.2% of the potential African labour force in Pretoria was unemployed. This meant that already low wages had to be shared among half the workforce who had no wages at all.

In 1980, 23.3% and 35.8% of all households were below the HSL and HEL respectively. Within five years, this percentage had increased to 26.4% and 36.9%, which means that by 1985, over one third of all African households in Pretoria were living below the minimum effective level of income, and over a quarter of all households were living below the minimum subsistence level.

Figures for the PWV area as a whole have shown that 72% of township residents cannot afford a conventionally delivered house; 47% cannot afford a minimum unit; and 34% cannot afford the houses currently being provided, even with a first-time home-owner's subsidy.

The inability of most African households to afford to pay for housing exposes the weakness in the state's attempt to solve the housing crisis through privatisation and deregulation. For the past number of years, sections of capital have been investing in the black upper-income housing market (R30 000 - R50 000), which has proved profitable so far. However, there are signs that the black upper-income housing market has become saturated, and there are few indications that housing companies will be willing to become involved in the construction of low-cost, low profit housing projects. The clearest indication of this came in July 1988 when Anglo American's housing division, LTA, announced that they would no longer be investing in low-cost housing because of its unprofitability. Likewise, financial institutions such as building societies continue to be reluctant to lend to low-income groups.

Low-cost housing projects by non-profit companies such as the South African Housing Trust have not been able to achieve significant results so far. One of the main reasons cited for this is the continual rise in the cost of building materials, due to the near monopoly of control over the supply of materials in the country. (SAIRR, 1988:4).

This raises the question of the continued need for state subsidisation of black housing. The current (conservative) official estimate of the housing shortage in South Africa is 1 128 000. However, Urban Foundation sources indicate that there are a total of 7-m people in the urban areas and 3-m in the rural areas without adequate shelter. According to Escom, more than 18-m people in the country do not have electricity (SAIRR, 1988:21). Only eight of 260 formal African townships outside the bantustans are electrified, with 25% entirely without electricity at all.

At a recent conference on housing finance, Dr Jan Lombard, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank, predicted that 2 million houses needed to be built nationally in the next twelve years, or an average of 210 000 annually, to overcome the housing backlog. (Only 36 000 houses have been built in the last 3 years). Lombard calculated that a minimum of R3.1-bn per annum would be needed to finance this programme. In addition, he argued that an amount of savings several times the size of the initial expenditure of R3.1-bn would be required to produce the materials necessary for the construction and civil engineering industries.

The only way this could be done, according to Lombard, was to 'fundamentally change the structure of the South African economy'. The 'solution' he advocated consisted of raising productive capacity, keeping wages low, reducing the rate of inflation, and increasing taxes on consumption. Yet one of the features of the state's reform programme of the past ten years has been its inability to solve the key contradictions within the South African economy, including raising the level of productivity. Nor is it likely to do so in the near future. Moreover, the government's monetarist assault on the standard of living of the working class during the early 1980s was one of the main underlying causes of the township uprisings of 1984-86.

In addition, as Glaser has pointed out (Glaser, 1988), the state is faced with an uneasy tension between the policies of the 'free market' and privatisation of goods and services on the one hand, and the continued need for the state to continue its interventionary role in order to upgrade the townships on the grounds of security on the other.

State housing policies are likely to change in the future. The new anti-squatting bill accepts the inevitability of further influx into the urban areas, but provides for tightened controls, including the ability to declare squatter areas as 'transit camps'. Officials such as Croeser argue that government subsidies on housing should be phased out altogether ('because they cause people to live beyond their means'), and that the levels and standards of goods and services provided should be reduced. In effect, the apartheid townships of the future (where land can be found for them), will probably consist of isolated pockets of middle and upper-class homes on the outskirts of vast areas of regimented squatter-shacks on basically-serviced stands.

● The 'black middle class'.

Unlike the rhetoric of 'total strategy' of the early 1980s, the current township upgrading schemes have not been directed solely at elements of the black petty-bourgeoisie. While the creation of various elite suburbs within black townships (eg Mamelodi Gardens) has afforded some middle-class blacks the opportunity to 'escape' from the geographical constraints of the working class, this has not been the central purpose of

the NSMS-inspired upgrading schemes. The provision of services, the improvement of general infrastructure, home ownership and differentiated housing projects, are of (theoretical) benefit to all township residents.

There are, however, specific ways in which the upgrading and housing development schemes have offered significant avenues of advancement to members of the black petty-bourgeoisie. White-owned building companies, encouraged by the Urban Foundation's Family Housing Association and the South African Housing Trust, have reserved specific stands for black builders to purchase and develop. For example, a black businessman was given the contract to build the R5-m shopping centre planned for Mamelodi East. A further three shopping complexes are planned. Mamelodi also has an 2 950 sq m industrial park and stands available for small-scale manufacturers.

The extension of freehold rights and the construction of high-income housing has begun to create a housing market. There is evidence that some of the buyers of houses in Mamelodi Gardens are in fact businessmen based in the 'homelands' or in other Transvaal townships, buying property for investment purposes.

The town council itself is a base for potential accumulation. Seven out of the twelve current councillors have extensive business interests, including a share of the lucrative mini-bus industry. Bennett Ndlazi, "mayor" of Mamelodi, recently became the first black person to be appointed to the Liquor Board.

The continued growth of a small but significant black petty-bourgeoisie does not necessarily mean that this class will be 'co-opted' through current upgrading schemes. Evidence collected so far shows that in many cases just the opposite has occurred. Neither should the creation of avenues of advancement for black builders and sub-contractors be over-emphasised. In interviews, many black builders in Mamelodi complained that white-owned construction companies, despite the stated commitment to 'black advancement', refused in practice to allow any significant competition. On the other hand, groupings such as the SAHT say that small black builders delay construction programmes because they cannot deliver houses quickly enough.

It is important not to reduce state strategies to the level of their ideological discourse, or cast a conceptual analysis in the language of the state. To limit an assessment of particular classes within the black townships to the success or otherwise of various intended co-option strategies of the state and sections of capital is to ignore the more general re-structuring of the socio-economic basis of society that has been taking place, of which various upgrading schemes are just a part.

For example, one aspect of this that can be noted is increasing class-differentiation within the African townships, which in turn has a

bearing on class-alliances and political strategies of oppositional groups. Figures quoted above showed that there were an increasing number of African households in Pretoria whose incomes fell below subsistence levels between 1980 and 1985. Yet during the same period, the number of households earning R12 000+ (the top income category) rose from 15.4% to 25.1%.

Overall figures show that between 1980 and 1985, while 75% of the African population in Pretoria became poorer, the top 25% became considerably richer and, therefore, in a position to take advantage of some of the fruits of upgrading.

● Political implications of upgrading.

Even if the state possessed the necessary financial means to erase the housing backlog and supply infrastructure and services to the townships, this would not automatically result in political quiescence among black South Africans. In 'oilspot' townships such as Mamelodi, where resources have begun to be provided, there is no indication that this has altered or will alter political demands. The 'model' townships in the Vaal Triangle were among some of the first areas to take part in the September 1984 uprisings.

A central weakness of the NSMS strategy is that it is unable to put forward a national political solution. There were some Mamelodi residents interviewed (a minority) who felt that they may vote in the municipal elections, because of the work of the town council. However, almost all of them stated that they saw this as a separate issue from the question of their national political representatives, who they identified as those leaders in jail or in exile.

Despite the state of emergency, support for certain mass actions has remained fairly constant. For example, most residents stayed away from work on 21 November 1986 (anniversary of 'Mamelodi massacre'), May Day 1987, and 16 June 1988. Community organisations such as the Mamelodi Civic Association and the Mamelodi Youth Organisation have continued to function, albeit at a fairly low level.

While the MTC occupies a strong position relative to two years ago, it also now has many promises and expectations to fulfill. This in the end could be its downfall. As one resident said:

after Mamelodi Gardens, everyone thought there would be something for the ordinary man who doesn't work for the government. And the people thought, let's play a waiting game for a year or two and see. All that has happened is that a few show houses have opened... So this thing has started off again, it's boiling somewhere with the people, they are dissatisfied with the thing. Right now with the state of emergency, we cannot just go and stand in the street and tell

the people again, look, to hell with everything... But somewhere deep down, it's starting all over again... If all those grievances are not entertained very soon, the people might go back to the stage of saying 'fok alles, we have suffered, we have lost people, people have been killed, people have been detained, so we'll mess the whole thing up again'. Because the people have learned to be no more afraid.

● Is WHAM really about winning hearts and minds?

A number of points have been made to demonstrate the weaknesses of current state strategy, namely: the state does not have enough resources to upgrade every township, privatization is an unlikely solution to the urban crisis, and upgrading does not necessarily 'buy' political support. However, a number of qualifications should be made.

Firstly, the point about the general lack of resources available to the state is true, but then it is not the state's intention to upgrade all areas on a mass scale. The NSMS strategy is deliberately selective, designed to favour certain areas at the expense of others, a differential policy that seeks to create fissures and cracks, making political alliances within townships, and between different townships and even regions, more difficult.

Secondly, current state strategy should not be judged in terms of whether it can be implemented immediately. The question is not whether upgrading programmes within various 'oilspots' can be reproduced sufficiently on a national scale now (they cannot), but whether under a state of emergency over the next 10-20 years, sufficient resources can be generated to co-opt a significant minority of black people into state institutions.

Thirdly, WHAM strategy is not really about 'winning hearts and minds', but rather containment, control and neutralisation. Security officials, despite their rhetoric, do not really believe they can 'buy-off' large sections of the black population. They are more concerned with using a selective upgrading approach to assist in the repression of oppositional groups and activists, and the co-option of conservative elites, rather than a 'mass conversion' of the black population.

Fourthly, although the growing class differentiation between the black petty-bourgeoisie and black workers was noted above, a more significant aspect is the increasing division between established black townships and informal settlement areas on the fringes of the urban areas. Selective upgrading has specific implications in terms of the state's policy shift away from traditional influx control to controls within urban areas. Rather than trying to keep an African population out of the white-designated urban areas, the state is currently attempting to maintain control through a combination of a selective allocation of resources to bolster conservative elites and vigilantes forces, and repression of democratic community



organisations. In this sense, the 'success' of state urban strategies can be seen not so much in the 'oilspot' upgrading of existing townships such as Alexandra and Mamelodi, but in the divide and control tactics used in squatter settlements such as Crossroads and Khayelitsha in the Western Cape.

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