

THE BLACK SASH ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1979

SOME FACTORS RELATING TO "SQUATTER" SETTLEMENTS IN DURBAN WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO MALUKAZI AND CLERMONT.

FOCUS

In presenting this paper to the annual conference of the Black Sash, I wish to place it within the context of the activities of the organisation, particularly those pertaining to nos. (ii) and (iii) of its aims and objects as stated in its constitution, viz.:

- "To strive to secure the recognition and protection by law of human rights and liberties," and
- "The political education and enlightenment of citizens of the Republic of South Africa and other persons."

In striving to fulfill these and other objectives the Black Sash has involved itself in responding to the plight of people living in "squatter" settlements. This paper, therefore, will focus on:

- * two "squatter" areas - Malukazi and Clermont - close to Durban, that require a response from the community beyond their confines, including members of the Black Sash.
- * an examination of some of the responses that have been and can be made to these "squatter" settlements.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE GREATER DURBAN AREA

The Durban metropolitan region is the second largest in South Africa. Transcending the administrative boundaries of KwaZulu and Natal, it has all the characteristics of a dual economy -

- a) a 'formal' sector, based on manufacturing industries, tourism, commerce and harbour activities.
- b) an 'informal' sector, operating on the periphery of the urban centre, which provides shelter and employment to large numbers of the total population.

A significant feature of the population in Durban relates to income. Although all Black groups in Durban comprise 78% of its population, they only earn about one quarter of the total income.

Population estimates indicate that the total population of Durban is in the region of 1½ million to 2 million, with the African population being the region of 1 million or more. While these figures would be disputed officially, when one considers that official township housing capacity is about 450 000 and that estimates of spontaneous settlement populations on the urban periphery are between 350 000 and 800 000 these population figures are seen to be realistic.

The range of accommodation utilized by the African population in the Durban metropolitan region includes the following:

- a) Township housing (for families) e.g. at KwaMashu, Umlazi.
- b) Hostel accommodation (sexually segregated) e.g. KwaDabeka near Clermont.
- c) Domestic servant rooms in the backyards of suburban houses (some 30 000 in the urban region).
- d) 'Unauthorized' rented rooms e.g. in Clermont.
- e) 'Authorized' boarding houses provided by private landlords e.g. Clermont.
- f) Spontaneous family dwellings e.g. Malukazi.
- g) Lodgings (both 'legal' and 'illegal') in townships and spontaneous houses (Haarhoff, 1978)

With some general background on Durban let us look more specifically at two areas characterized by spontaneous settlement - Malukazi and Clermont

MALUKAZI

Malukazi - an area which lies south of the urban centre on the road to Umbumbulu and contiguous with Umlazi Township. This area forms part of the now proclaimed unit 22 of Umlazi Township separated by a tared section of the Umbumbulu road from the already developed unit 21 of the Township. Malukazi is well within the boundary of the greater Durban Area where the same transport routes serve both Malukazi and one area of Umlazi Township (see map).

An estimate of the number of people living at Malukazi in June 1977 lies between 13 152 and 15 200. (Stopforth, 1978). However, with the resettlement of people from Bekithemba (a spontaneous settlement demolished in February 1978) at Malukazi and the continued growth, estimates are now placed at 25 000 or more.

Recent research highlights a "dramatic characteristic" of the population at Malukazi - the equitable masculinity ratio of 0,99 (49,8 per cent males and 50,2 per cent females).

"The essential point to be made as an inference from the age/sex structure of the population settled at Malukazi is that there is no feature which suggests this to be a transient population". (Stopforth, 1978)

This and other characteristics leads Stopforth to conclude that:

1. The settlement at Malukazi does not conform to a pattern of in - migration from rural localities to the city where the inmates of the settlement squat in the hope of starting a new life.
2. The people of Malukazi cannot be said to be at the beginning of the process of urban settlement.
3. Malukazi cannot be described as a "slum of despair" - in fact, it is

not a slum at all; what it lacks is services, especially water points. At present one official water point serves the water needs of this vast population.

4. Malukazi is not a primary problem settlement to be eradicated from the urban fringe.

In describing various processes of relocation Gerhard Maré refers to relocation as resistance, which has particular significance in understanding the origins of a large proportion of the population at Malukazi.

Maré writes that:

"not all population movements of Africans are due, directly, to state action; but some can be seen as direct or indirect resistance to forced allocation and relocation or political oppression". Consider that approximately 20 per cent of household heads coming to Malukazi from town and ten per cent of all household heads were previously resident in men's hostels in Durban.

In addition, 50 per cent of household heads have moved from the city in search of shelter (probably to enjoy a more settled family life) (Stopforth, 1970). Thus Malukazi is to a significant extent comprised of workers united with their families, who are thereby resisting the "haunting bleakness" (Wilson, 1972) of single-sex hostels for migrant workers and the state apparatus that does not permit a family to live together.

Official plans for Malukazi are to relocate the entire population at Umbumbulu, some kilometres further inland, so as to extend the official township of Umlazi. A great deal of insecurity pervades the lives of the Malukazi residents, who are aware that their present accommodation is not permanent and yet have no idea of the exact date nor even, of an approximate date for the proposed relocation exercise.

Many serious problems affect the daily lives of the people at Malukazi. These include the following:

1. to extend, improve, or build a dwelling at Malukazi is now forbidden;

with only one official water point, a great deal of time goes into fetching and carrying water. In addition, natural water springs are utilized in some parts and there is a constant search for new water sources;

3. there are no community meeting places, no schools, no clinic facilities no adequate children's day-care services - in short, Malukazi lacks every basic necessary facility.

Before examining responses to Malukazi let us look at Clermont.

CLERMONT

Clermont - an area situated close to the industrial complex around Pinetown has an estimated population of 90 000 persons. It contains 2 840 privately owned and constructed dwellings with a "squatter"

population of approximately 60 000 people.

Clermont is unique in one respect - Africans may purchase land on a freehold basis. Thus spontaneous dwellings in Clermont are built on private land with the land-owner's consent for which payment is made.

Officially, these spontaneous structures do not conform the building regulations and the policy is to systematically rid the area of these structures. The township manager has indicated that since 1974 his department had destroyed 5 000 'shanties' (SM9.11.70) and that he plans to demolish a further 5 000 while "what happens to the 20 000 residents is not his concern" (DM 13.11.78)

Recent demolitions resulted in a good deal of official response, including a directive from the offices of the Deputy Minister of Plural Relations Dr. W.L. Vosloo, to halt demolitions in Clermont (S.TRIB. 19.11.78) At the same time a number of committees have been established through the initiative of the churches and private enterprise to examine the overall situation at Clermont.

Clearly, the problems at Clermont are serious indeed.

The people are divided in their interests. Freehold land tenure permits exorbitant rentals and exploitation where in one case, for example, a landowner collects approximately R10 per month from 400 spontaneous dwellers, thereby collecting R4 000 per month or R48 000 per year in rental. Often, the landowner, having made sufficient money to build a large house on his property requests the officials to remove the "squatters" from his land so that he can "develop" his property. This being in accordance with official policy, the bulldozer moves in and the machinery of bureaucracy further fulfills its intended purpose.

There is a great deal of information on these two areas, which for the sake of brevity, I have not included in this paper. A perusal of the attached reference sheet will assist you to identify sources of further information.

RESPONSES

While we are faced with a situation that requires practical responses, I have become increasingly aware of the need to examine in great depth the context within which the "squatter problem" is situated. It is here that I believe the response to "squatter" areas must begin, for it leads us "to look at the present 'squatter problem' against the background of the history of proletarianization in South Africa - a history that has led to specific economic, political and ideological measures by the state to aid the process of accumulation and also to 'maintain and create the conditions for social harmony'" (Maré, 1979)

In suggesting this approach I wish to emphasize that it is a suggestion as a starting point. Strange, it may seem, to suggest a 'starting point', when already much ground has been covered in responding to the needs of people living in spontaneous settlements.

Nevertheless, I believe, that we exist in a world where the stark realities of the crisis in our land blind our ability to examine critically some of the 'solutions' which are offered and suggested.

In examining available literature related to housing and spontaneous settlements in Third World countries and specifically in South Africa the following responses are suggested:

- a) the recognition of the existence of spontaneous settlements and the provision of legal tenure, financial resources and basic services.
- b) the provision of a variety of housing types such as standardized 51/6 township houses as well as site-and-service schemes and squatter upgrading schemes.
- c) the recognition of the 'informal' sector and the role it plays in the provision of shelter and employment.

In embarking upon an exploration of the "squatter problem" from the 'roots', as it were, one would inevitably be led to a critical examination of these responses. I do not wish to suggest that these responses are not desirable, only to support the view that the Black Sash, in terms of its stated aims and objects, must inevitably support "solutions and remedies which aim to remove the basis of conflict and crisis." ('Control', 1979)

Jacqueline Williams

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Haarhoff, Errol. "Housing is where people are, and will be.... Some problems, Challenges and options for the Durban Metropolitan Region" An address given at a photographic exhibition - "Housing is where psople are...." on 21 November 1978 (unpublished)

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Note : Numerous other references on "squatters," housing, "squatter" upgrading, the 'informal' sector etc., are available. I will gladly pass these on if anyone would like them.

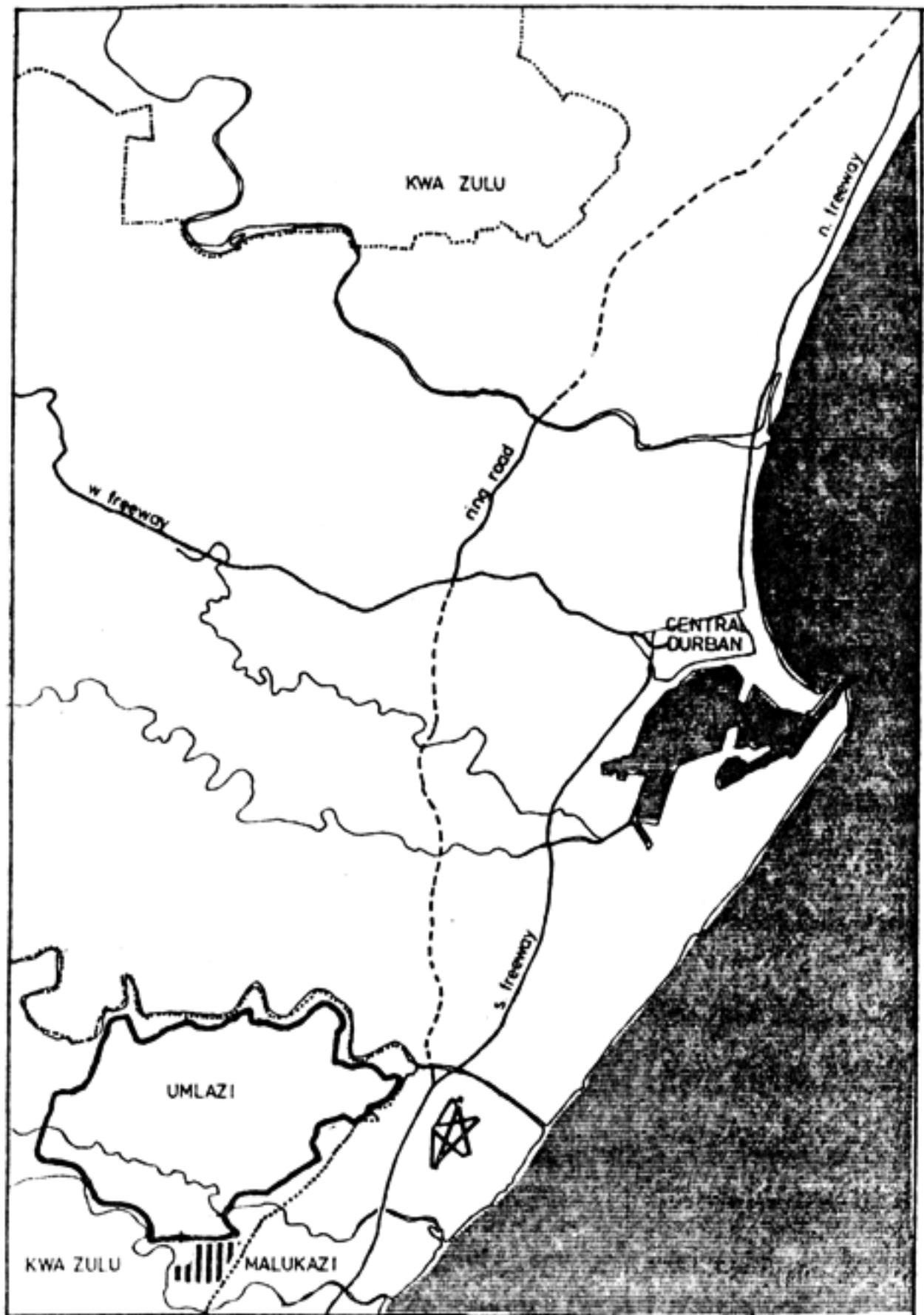
JACQUELINE WILLIAMS.

Profile of the Characteristics of the Population settled at
Malukazi.

- Balanced sex structure, masculinity ratio equal to 0,99.
- Only 3,4 per cent of households contain one person - out of an estimated population of 14 116, only 350 men "live in single status", other than unmarried men living in families.
- Female heads of household are in a minority at eighteen per cent.
- The primary context of settlement is the family household.
- The institution of marriage unites eighty-five per cent of conjugal relationships.
- There is a high rate of participation in urban institutions.
- Eighty-seven per cent of children between the ages of seven to nineteen years attend school.
- Children attend urban schools, mostly in Umlazi Township.
- There is little illiteracy among adults and substantial proportions of the adult population have nine years of education and more (Standard Six and above).
- Unemployment among men and women is low.
- Only 6,5 per cent of men rely solely on the informal sector for employment.
- Sixty per cent of women are employed, and nearly forty per cent of all women are employed in the formal sector; the balance derive an income from informal employment.
- Malukazi provides Durban with 5 715 workers in the formal sector of employment.
- Both men and women are distributed over a range of formal employment from professional status through to unskilled manual occupations.
- Informal employment is characterised by landlords, sellers of liquor and sellers of foodstuffs.
- Sixty-three per cent of those in formal employment work in town (Durban) and the southern industrial area of Durban, the balance in the areas of Isipingo, Umlazi, Prospecton, etc.
- Of all individuals in Malukazi 14,7 per cent were born in town and a further 40,7 per cent near town.
- Thirty-four per cent of all people in Malukazi lived in town prior to moving there and a further forty-two per cent were living in local peri-urban areas.

- Only 23,4 per cent of people came to Malukazi from the rural area.
- Fifty-two per cent of heads of household in Malukazi came there directly from town.
- At the present time, fifty-seven per cent of all residents at Malukazi have spent all their lives in town.

The data presented in this chapter confirms the view that the population in Malukazi is an urban participant one locked into the major institutions which provide for urban survival.



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