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Forced Resettlement and the Political Economy of South Africa

Bill Freund

Apart perhaps from the direct confrontations that take place between capital and labour, the most significant social process in recent South African history has been the continued and massive population removals. The South African government has at times insisted that such removals were fundamentally voluntary in character. Since the often bitterly resisted removals of the 1950s from both urban and rural areas, however, force has at least potentially been at issue and often directly applied. Consequently it seems appropriate to refer to a policy of *forced* resettlement.

In their recent important analysis of South African conditions, John Saul and Stephen Gelb described the population removal programme as the 'ugliest of all aspects of apartheid'. This justifiable assertion follows on sporadic, often journalistic, coverage of removal that goes back to Cosmas Desmond's remarkable book, *The Discarded People*. Desmond's account was largely narrative and concerned with the unpleasantnesses of removal itself and its immediate consequences. Saul and Gelb, by contrast, only devote a short if valuable amount of space to discussing forced resettlement. Between these two poles there is a need for a generalised and analytical assessment which places the programme in a political and historical context and this is the aim of the following discussion.

Resettlement policies need also to be considered together with urban segregation and with the rise of the so-called Homelands which have in general been considered separately in the literature. Assessment of forced resettlement must be aligned to the radical analysis of South African society more generally. In particular this analysis has tried to re-assess apartheid in its various manifestations as related to an historical and distinctive South African process of capital accumulation. While the South African state has never represented a single capitalist interest in any simple sense, it has been convincingly argued that it allowed for and has furthered the continued reproduction of 'racial capitalism'. South African 'racial capitalism' has unique features but it will in places be argued that it can also be illuminated through reference to comparable industrialising societies such as Brazil and the Philippines on the one hand and to strategies characteristic of advanced, and apparently 'normal', non-racial capitalist countries such as the USA.

The Scope of Forced Removals

There are essentially two types of resettlement, urban and rural, which fit a primary delineation. Forced urban resettlement resulted from legislation consequent upon the Group Areas Act (1950, with later amendments) that created racially defined zones for the existing and foreseeable city population. This well-studied legislation directly hit South Africans labelled as Asian or Coloured. According to one set of figures, it set into motion the removal by 1976 of 305,739 Coloureds, 155,230 Asians and a mere 5,898 whites.

African urban removals, typified by the destruction of squatter and freehold settlements such as Sophiatown giving way to the construction of Soweto as the dormitory for Johannesburg's African population in the 1950s, has been a closely allied development. Urban removals of this type have sometimes been described as a form of slum clearance. This is not entirely untrue but it represents more accurately a principal means by which the South African state deals with an impoverished, potentially militant sector of the working class.

The destruction of black communities in big cities was very apparent to interested observers and a focus of press coverage as soon as it began to occur. This was not true in the countryside where most of the removal process has actually occurred. Here it has received far less publicity and took place far from the gaze of sympathetic reporters and researchers. When Cosmas Desmond's account appeared in 1971, it startled most of its readers. The raw material for assessing rural forced removal is now available in the recent six-volume report of the 'Surplus People Project', released in 1983.

During World War II, Prime Minister Jan Smuts in a famous speech suggested that 'segregation has fallen on evil days . . . Segregation tried to stop it [the movement of Africans from countryside to town]. It has, however, not stopped it in the least. The process has been accelerated. You might as well try to sweep the ocean back with a broom.' Remarkably, the scale of state-organised forced resettlement has begun to do just that. In 1960, only some 40 per cent of the African population was resident in the 'homelands'. By 1980, these dispersed territories, amounting to but 13 per cent of the land area of South Africa, held some 54 per cent of the African population. To 'achieve' this (in a context of rapid industrialisation!), according to the careful extrapolations from census material derived by the economist Charles Simkins, required a net exodus of some three-quarter million people from the urban areas and some one-and-a-quarter million from the white-owned farms of South Africa. The burden of resettlement has fallen disproportionately on minors and other dependents. Cheryl Walker of the Surplus People Project team has proposed an even higher figure, between two and three million people. These figures exclude intra-urban forced removals which certainly bring the total to at least 15 per cent of the present population of South Africa — and removals continue.

Before turning to an analysis, it is necessary to break down further into a variety of categories the process of resettlement towards the 'homelands' (following the schema of G. Maré and M.S. Badat). First, there are those 'endorsed out' of South African cities, whom the state views as surplus or unnecessary residents. A minority of Africans, perhaps 10-15 per cent of the South African population, have been born in towns, are dependent on those with such a claim or have resided long enough in urban areas to acquire the right to live there permanently

(Africans with 'Section Ten' rights under Sections 10(1) a, b and c of the 1945 Urban Areas Act). Contract workers have been practically unable to join their ranks since the tightening of legislation in 1968. The arbitrariness of such a mammoth bureaucracy concerned with managing endorsements often condemns even those who have a claim to Section Ten rights. While there appears to be a continuing increase in the number of legally acknowledged working adults, and certainly of working African males, in South African cities, the goal of state policy is to push out divorcees, widows and children and, to that end, it runs endless arbitrary searches and checks on the African urban population. Often the pass courts then endorse individuals out of the area as part of the 'sentence' although it is still difficult to prevent them from speedily returning. In the Langa (Cape Town) magistrate's court, Martin West recently observed no less than 38 cases handled in 90 minutes, the coarse police dragnet having seized up minors, the obviously physically handicapped and Coloureds with the legal right to reside in Cape Town. These fish, after a humiliating experience, are released from the nets as are those who can produce relevant work and residence related passes. The rest are intended for reshipment to the eastern Cape 'homelands' — Ciskei and Transkei. Between 1971 and 1979, no less than 3,579,055 Africans were brought to trial or had their cases investigated under the pass laws. Other urban residents simply succumb to ever greater inducement and pressure from the state and leave 'voluntarily'.

Rural forced removals themselves can be considered in the context of several rubrics. The largest represents the response of the state to the decline of pre-capitalist and semi-capitalist social and economic relations through much of the South African countryside, where they have given way to mechanised, corporate agribusiness with far less need for African labour. As the rural white population falls, this often leaves large areas inhabited solely by African tenants and residents of 'white' farms. Thus removal of such populations is both political and economic in intent. During the 1960s traditional landlord-tenant agreements began to be severely restricted. The last loopholes with reference to Natal, the province with the strongest tenancy tradition, were eliminated through legislation in 1980. Pressures on ex-tenants were coupled with those on squatters, who historically performed desired services for white farmers. Their precarious access to land now constitutes, in the words of a president of the Natal Agricultural Union, 'sanctuary' for hundreds of thousands 'not really needed by the agricultural industry'. Some 300-400,000 Africans in these categories were pushed into the 'homelands' in the 1960s and a perhaps diminishing number during the 1970s.

During the 1970s, removals from the type of land holding known as 'black spots' became more and more extensive. 'Black spots' are, as the name implies, islands of black tenure in supposedly white zones. They have in general belonged to the more prosperous strata of African peasantry who have been able, when it was legal before the land division of 1913, to purchase freehold property, often through companies of ex-wage workers or the agency of the missions. Some 97,000 black spot victims were pushed out of their homes in the 1960s and into the 'homelands' with a considerable increase during the subsequent decade. According to the Association for Rural Advancement (Pietermaritzburg), the difficult task of estimating remaining 'black spots' scheduled for future removal has yielded perhaps 189 farms inhabited by some 230,000 people in Natal alone.

The 'homelands' present a problem to the South African state's plans for coherent political or economic planning because they are scattered through many isolated geographic units in the eastern half of the country. One response has been consolidation, and this has occasioned a massive spate of removals. Even once consolidated, the 'homelands' often continue to contain a heterogeneous population mix, unsuitable for the ethnic politics that this kind of social engineering is orientated to foster. Thus, population transfers on a considerable scale have been made, expelling for example Venda from Bophuthatswana and Gazankulu homelands in the Transvaal with reciprocal removals from the Venda homeland. This reshuffling of people has been particularly dramatic in the rural Transvaal but one might note here also the flight of perhaps 30,000 Sotho-speakers from the Transkei on the eve of 'independence' there.

In some parts of South Africa, the 'homelands' abut right onto industrial and urban areas. This is notably true of two of the four big cities, Pretoria, the administrative capital and a large centre of heavy industry and Durban, the principal industrial port. Urban removals here have led not to endorsement of Africans out to distant domiciles but to the creation of huge commuter zones within Bantustan territory (Bophuthatswana and Kwa Zulu) just over the 'border' and, in the case of Durban, the transfer of African locations to Kwa Zulu jurisdiction. Numbers of 'homeland' commuters were estimated at 290,000 in 1970, up to 718,900 in 1979. Removals on a large scale have swept small town African locations. Much of the African populations of such Transvaal towns as Pietersburg, Rustenberg, Potgietersrus, Ellisras, Naboomspruit, Vaalwater, Louis Trichardt and Nylstroom have been transported a long distance away into Venda, Bophuthatswana, Lebowa and Gazankulu, requiring two hours' travel and more to work. There are equivalent towns to these in the Cape and Natal.

Within the Bantustans, there goes on yet another form of important (and under-researched) kind of removal known as agricultural betterment. Betterment schemes are intended to redistribute property rights and access to rural resources, the 'planned redivision' of the land. Substantial numbers of people have also been forced from their homes for strategic and infrastructural reasons, such as the construction of missile test ranges or the clearance of 'unreliable' populations from the international borders of South Africa. Thousands of Natal Africans are being obliged currently to vacate the region of the new port of Richards Bay. Others have been pushed out for the sake of big dam projects such as those of Woodstock and the Upper Tugela. A whole category of expulsions that is difficult to explore but clearly deserves mention is the use of resettlement as a form of political punishment, a means of dealing with dissent. The exile of Winnie Mandela to the Orange Free State town of Brandfort where she is confined to living, is a well-known example.

In trying to comprehend the complexity and scale of removals, it is particularly important to recognise that they do not follow a pre-determined and predictable blueprint. Potential victims cannot entirely count on the next move of the state. Government removal plans, such as those proposing the resettlement of more than one million Africans in the interests of 'homeland' consolidation in 1976, constantly fluctuate or appear in contradictory form in different official publications. The South African state is rife with social architects and engineers whose exigencies are constantly changing. Thus removal is really a constant threat and a process, not simply a once and for all event.

Forced Resettlement, Economic and Social Retooling

What is the significance of forced resettlement in South Africa and why has it occurred? What, other than an apparently perverse racism, accounts for the systematic segregation of cities and land and the creation of African homelands out of the old labour reserves? The most obvious answer is narrowly political. Potentially hostile foreigners must be impressed with the extent to which South Africa offers a full autonomous development for each race in their own sphere. Thus partition was necessary. In 1973 former prime minister B.J. Vorster intimated in a newspaper interview that, 'if I were to wake up one morning and find myself a Black Man, the only difference would be geographical.' Whether they are being sincere or not, sympathisers with the regime and its spokesmen justify separate development in terms of the creation of national states for all.

It is possible to argue with the legitimacy and chances of viability for such units as well as over the fairness of the distribution of resources in quantity and quality between racial or 'national' groups. Patently whites get very much of the lion's share. However this is largely beside the point as one starts to understand that partition, viable or unviable, is itself not the real aim. In South Africa nobody has ever intended 'development' to be really 'separate'.

Separate development needs to be placed squarely in the course of South African history. The intensification of segregation was pursued with unprecedented system and direction during the first half of this century. Far from being a throwback to archaic colonial society, it went together with the early industrialisation of South Africa and the effective welding of state power in such a way as to further the accumulation of capital. The fundamental land and labour policies of the various Union governments from 1910 revolved upon the harnessing of a cheap black labour force, holding residual access to the means of production in the countryside but obliged to work for a wage either in industry, the mines, in domestic service or for the white farmer by a variety of control mechanisms. Segregation was an ideology which justified this dual economy as it was often termed and won over to the support of capital a critical segment of the workforce that could feel themselves (admittedly following massive struggles of their own) as relatively full partners in a racially-identified white-only democracy. Simultaneously it involved harsh forms of control over an oppressed, impoverished and repressed black labour force.

Forced resettlement has had as its main purpose putting teeth into a further elaboration of segregation mechanisms since the 1950s. To some extent the Afrikaner Nationalist ideology does contain an additional element of exclusivism, part of the intensely defensive posture which, arising in reaction to British imperialism, claims national hegemony but can embrace only one-tenth of the South African people. Thus in 1973 the Afrikaanse Studentebond resolved that 'all the black women and children in the white areas must be shipped back to the homelands and only the men should be left in the white areas for as long as we need them'.

However separate development has more to do with the changing needs of capital in South Africa on the one hand and the need to react politically to the growing resistance of blacks — notably in the explosions of 1959-60 and 1976 — linked to an often unfavourable international conjuncture on the other, if we seek to follow *how it actually is developing* and the forms it takes. Cosmas Desmond has got it precisely right in perceiving resettlement as 'a complex, comprehensive

and effective way of exercising political control, arising from the present form of South African capitalism as a whole.' What resettlement does then is to reproduce the South African social formation as a whole and, at its very heart, to reproduce certain forms of control over labour.

Broadly speaking, in the first half of this century the principal goal of South African 'native policy' was to force the worker out of the fields and pastures and onto the mines, farms and factories that provided the mechanisms of accumulation. Master and servant legislation, pass laws, the division of the land and the raising of obstructions to the growth of the once significant African cash crop peasantry all formed elements in the attainment of this goal. Then the tide began to flow irredeemably the other way. The ability of the reserved African lands to serve as havens for the reproduction of the African population crumbled all round and the stream of Africans flowing into the towns, implicitly claiming new rights and making new social demands, grew into a river.

Resettlement has been a weapon to fight this flood and prevent its consequences. The boom of the 1960s coincided with the capacity of the reserves to support African workers reaching new lows. The large majority of the reserve population now depended for subsistence purposes on remittances from town and increasingly on the meagre social benefits, including pensions, that began to be doled out to Africans. At the same time, the needs of capital in mine, factory and farm was increasingly for semi-skilled and skilled workers only; cutbacks actually went hand in hand with the expansion of productive capacity. Black unemployment rose and continues to rise rapidly. Estimates from the late 1970s suggest that it has reached 1½-2 million, the same as in the Federal Republic of Germany with more than twice the South African total population. For many years, South African gold mines relied on Africans from other territories to work at the poor wages offered; now, admittedly with higher wages from the 1970s, Marion Lacey reports that 'to be a mine worker in the Transkei today you are considered to be a privileged person.' In a striking analogy, Simkins has suggested that Johannesburg (or more appropriately, Cape Town) would look much like Rio de Janeiro soon if influx control were lifted now as people migrate to job opportunities and high wages.

Historically it may be that African unemployment and its effect on wages was a key condition for the growth of South African secondary industry. In recent years, there has emerged a population genuinely 'surplus' from the perspective of South African capital which must try as best it can to compete with trends in the most developed and labour-efficient economies — Japan, Western Europe and the USA. Thus population removals are important in organising the 'location and relocation of the unemployed' bringing what the Europeans once called the dangerous classes with their crime and violence out of the ken of the segregated neighbourhoods of the bourgeoisie.

It is instructive to continue for a moment Simkins' line of thinking and to consider the process of urbanisation in Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian bourgeoisie do not, in fact, look with equanimity on the *favelas*, the slums that overlook their flat buildings from the slopes. *Favelados* are feared and hated and state policy is to destroy their unsightly and inconveniently central communities and to expel the population to distant and hopefully more controllable quarters, sometimes in bleak state housing projects. This aim became more realisable after 1964 when a

military regime, orientated both to authoritarian methods of dealing with dissent and to bolstering efficient accumulation, came to power thus bearing a structural resemblance to the South African state across the South Atlantic.

The Brazilian analogy is most transparent in the South African city. However misery, unemployment, dependence and minimal survival welfare services can also be transported to the countryside and, if possible, to a different governmental authority, as in the Bantustans. In Britain deteriorating needs for most labour categories has been accompanied by increasingly harsh anti-immigration legislation. In the USA, as economic conditions deteriorated in 1982-83, Congress considered legislation aimed, according to *Mother Jones* magazine, at 'sanctions against employers who hire illegal aliens, an ID system for immigrant workers, a ceiling of 425,000 new immigrants annually' and specific provision to favour more politically desirable or amenable individuals, to name only the most noxious comparable elements.

However it would be a profound error to see forced resettlement purely as a means of removing those *undesired* in the labour market just as *favelados* in Rio are quite wrongly classified as 'marginal'. Most of those removed will continue to seek South African jobs and are indeed *expected* to do just that. As South African capitalism develops, it requires some workers (increasingly including Africans) who have considerable skill and freedom of movement and others who do not; in recent years, both are being considered and differentiated to the extent that appears politically expedient. Migrant workers continue to be particularly desirable for capital due to their cheapness, their dependence and difficulty to organise. Problems with the state in securing the right to live where one works places one in a particularly vulnerable position towards capital.

The South African 'migrant' worker of today typically returns year after year to the same job; his visit annually to his 'homeland' in between contracts is more of an essential respite than an opportunity to plough cash back into a non-capitalist household economy still ticking over. Authorities use every chance to get 'illegal' workers to re-register as migrant contractors, even household domestics. The newest proposed controls legislation, discussed and deferred in 1983, the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill, amounted to a new declaration of war on 'illegals' with further limits on the rights of the undocumented to remain in town, hefty employer fines for hiring 'illegals' and perhaps a curfew. For certain categories of employer, notably in agriculture, forced resettlement creates a pliable pool of particularly malleable labour. This is especially true when it is possible to sign up workers on lists available for farm work only or when resettlement places workers in remote areas where the victims cannot find the means to search for alternative employment.

In more sophisticated economic sectors, an ideal solution is the commuter-worker, who is now a central figure in the workforce of Pretoria, Durban and numerous small cities. Cape Town, at a great distance from any 'homeland' can rely partly on a Coloured working class with permanent residence rights at the Cape (although a large African population is quietly and contradictorily admitted to be permanently essential there from time to time). Only on the Witwatersrand itself does Bantustan commuting offer little solution for the labour requirements of business in the biggest centres. Those African workers with Section Ten rights thus have a particular importance there. In Pretoria and Durban, Lacey has

claimed, commuter-workers have been consistently *favoured* over those with Section Ten rights.

Central to the entire process has been the rise of the independent Bantustans. In response to the independence movements elsewhere in Africa and the political crisis at the end of the 1950s, the Nationalist regime embarked on a strategy of political devolution to the consolidated 'African homelands', as they began to be known. In the wake of the urban revolts in 1976 and the successful ascendancy to power of FRELIMO in Mozambique and the MPLA in Angola, the Transkei region agreed to accept the South African gift of 'independence'. The Transkei is the most sizeable, consolidated and populous of the 'homelands'. Three others have followed in its wake: Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei.

In the outside world, Bantustan 'independence' has been greeted as a fake. Elaborate studies have challenged South African government sources on the question of the viability of the putative national economies of the Bantustans. This is justifiable insofar as it goes but it is gradually being recognised by both radicals and liberals that the Bantustan regimes are taking on a real significance notwithstanding. In practice one can, following Roger Southall, acknowledge that 'the Homelands, however inadequate they may be in satisfying the aspirations of the broad mass of blacks, may be assuming a momentum and dynamism of their own which could serve to stabilise and perpetuate white domination in South Africa.' In all the Bantustans, an elaborate security structure has been created with nascent armies, special security branches and repressive legislation. This, together with examples of wealth and corruption on the part of a small political elite, has been well-documented.

Of great importance as well, though, has been the extension in the Bantustan administrations of South African social services. Health and education facilities are being farmed out to them. Some are becoming able to control the distribution of pension and social security benefits. There is a highly significant tendency for Bantustan regimes to become involved in the job procurement and labour contract process with the attendant possibilities for coercion, control and shakedown in this era of mass unemployment. The process is best attested in Ciskei. In most Bantustans, ill-defined groups of youths are used to terrify opposition to the dominant clique. Such thuggery exists within Kwa Zulu's Inkatha and has parallels in the less well-known Inyandza organisation of ka Ngwane and Intsika ye Sizwe in Ciskei. Bantustan patronage is a necessity for producing favours of any sort such as access to land in the commuter zones.

Control over a burgeoning service sector and the state machinery has been essential to the rise of a new ruling element within the Bantustans. Agricultural betterment programmes are intended to squeeze part of the Bantustan peasantry off the land entirely and to create a small prosperous black class of agriculturalists, inevitably those with access to state office. This is the upshot of irrigation schemes and those projects prepared under the auspices of agricultural development corporations. The victims of betterment programmes are almost always denied significant land access or the right to keep livestock in their new homes. Joanne Yawitch has traced a process through which youth has been frozen out of new land allocations and the elderly pushed to accept tiny pensions as an alternative to land rights in Lebowa. On the Bantustan peripheries of Durban and Pretoria, the new bourgeoisie has preferred urban landlordism to

agricultural improvement. Here it is possible to own land in freehold.

The abruptness and drain on services of forced resettlement is resented by many Bantustan authorities. They deny collaboration with population dumpings. Yet the controls over population on an unprecedented scale tempt them. There are two small areas on the fringe respectively of Lesotho (Basotho Qwa Qwa) and Swaziland (Ka Ngwane) which are being turned into dumping grounds on a massive scale for people described as speaking Southern Sotho and Swazi. They are so tiny and unviable that one can only assume that South Africa intends to convince Lesotho and Swaziland, whose sovereignty is recognised by the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations Organisation, to do a deal and annex them. In 1982, the Swazi king indeed agreed to accept Ka Ngwane, by then more populous than his entire country, together with a strip from Kwa Zulu giving to him a sea-coast, in exactly this way. His death appears to have halted the controversial transfer for now while Lesotho expansion awaits better times and a more malleable regime than that of chief Leabua Jonathan.

The Fate of the Resettled

The actual process of relocation has rarely brought government invitations to the press or scholars. Indeed it often occurs in deliberate secrecy. It has frequently involved episodes of confrontation and occasionally of violence. In a recent study protesting forced resettlement of Navajo from land declared to be Hopi in Arizona (a kind of American Hopistan), a team reported that:

... the result of over 25 studies around the world indicate without exception that the compulsory relocation of low-income rural populations with strong ties to their lands and homes is a traumatic experience. For the majority of those who have been moved, the profound shock of compulsory relocation is much like the bereavement caused by the death of a parent, spouse or a child.

From the slums of Rio, Perlman records a removed *favelado* as saying, 'everyone who had a little sickness got worse and died'.

In South Africa, the actual removal process has frequently been traumatic. The first stage of removal is generally to tents or temporary shacks that may turn into permanent arrangements. Actually the new sites are almost invariably poorly provided with the most basic amenities — clinics and access to doctors, schools, electricity, good water supply, etc. The process towards construction of a physical and social infrastructure is a slow one.

Perhaps at least as significant is the social trauma involved in removals. Cherryl Walker has stressed that forced removal can be related closely to a process of social breakdown, demoralisation, disorganisation, family and community fragmentation. Part of the whole history of black forced resettlement that needs to be emphasised is that it is often a process through which people have passed before, that it represents a *continual* threat whereby the state exerts naked force over the poor and dependent.

It is probably true that the worst resettlement conditions prevailed in the 1960s in such locales as Limehill in Kwa Zulu and Sada in Ciskei. The Zulu called Limehill 'Mshayazafe' (beat him until he dies) according to Desmond. Resettlement is, however, a differentiating process. It tends to reflect and to intensify existing inequalities within the black labour market. In Dimbaza, once

one of the most notorious resettlement camps, a real dumping ground marked by disease and death, or in Mdantsane, which serves as the African township for the Cape border city of East London, there are now amenities and access to jobs. Many settlers are voluntary and housed in better conditions than before. In such places life has most likely more to offer for the man kicked off a white farm to which he was tied and now able to obtain a contract to work in a city. For the African middle class in Durban or Pretoria or the Coloured middle class in Cape Town, the quality of new housing and the right to freehold property sometimes makes the pressure to move to the Bantustan or racial Group Area more of a carrot than a stick. While continuing to raise a searchlight to appalling conditions such as those found by Desmond and which can still be found, it is worthy of notice that there are different levels of stress and suffering involved, that resettlement often underscores growing black stratification and that forced resettlement is partly accompanied by inducements.

Resettlement projects in the Bantustans involve the people in essentially *urban* settings, however deficient they may be in the necessities of urban life. Researchers report consistently that forced resettlement involves the dispossession of those with herds and that retained access of any sort to land for agricultural use is exceptional. The result is a process of forced urbanisation on a remarkable scale. In the middle of the 1950s, the Nqutu district of Natal was scheduled by the segregation planners of the Tomlinson Commission to carry optimally perhaps 13,000 Zulu cultivator-pastoralists. According to Maré, the population in reality was 46,000 by 1960 and now runs to an estimated 200,000. The Witzieshoek district of 141 square miles in the Orange Free State (Basotho Qwa Qwa) was already overcrowded with an agricultural population of 20,000 in 1970; in 1978 it held some 120,000 people and estimates today exceed twice that figure. Ka Ngwane, the Swazi 'homeland' covers a ludicrous 818 square miles. Into this space were crowded some 117,000 people by 1970 and 214,000 by 1977. It is hardly surprising that the first evidence of cholera in recent years in South Africa occurred here in 1980.

Commuter agglomerations are also a substantial category. The Bophuthatswana area northwest of Pretoria contains far in excess of 500,000 people. Umlazi, Inanda and Kwa Mashu around Durban are certainly as extensive. In both areas, squatters predominate over those living in state-built housing. Inanda has been the scene of site-and-service squatter schemes from 1980 eminently suitable to a regime with a limited purse for the construction of public housing to serve the poor. This too has been an area where cholera made an appearance. Mdantsane, within the Ciskei, serves East London's employers and housed at least 120,000 people by the middle 1970s.

Simkins has tried to document and quantify these changes. In 1960, he estimates that some 1.2 per cent only of the 'homeland' population lived in urban communities. Out of a much increased total, this proportion rose to 17.1 per cent by 1980. Yet this apparently gigantic growth is actually an underestimate: another 41.6 per cent reside in virtually agriculture-less 'closer settlements'. Thus the whole resettlement programme, it is extremely important to note, has not taken Africans from white-owned cities and farms to return them to a rural setting, however limited in viability. They have been expelled to bleak and isolated but essentially urban and proletarian settlements where no farming or stock herding is possible. Half the 'homeland' population is now effectively urban.

The worst elements of black urban life have passed into these settlements. They experience particularly acute poverty, faction fighting and dependence on various criminal activities for survival. In this setting, those with work are obliged to spend much of their time and money commuting sometimes great distances. Where, as is usual, the state is now the landlord, rents, often for the first time, are a very substantial expense.

The economic possibilities that present themselves in the new settlements are usually very limited. Investment in the 'homelands' and subsidized border growth points has been relatively small in terms of the growth of the South African economy as a whole. These categories perhaps each account for 75,000 new jobs over 20 years, according to Lacey. Few residents, let alone the newly resettled, are able to sustain themselves from the local economy. Hirsch & Green estimate for Ciskei an unemployment figure in the neighbourhood of 35 per cent.

Consequently, forced resettlement, far from confining a growing proportion of the black population to their 'own' national territories or bringing forth the emergence of coherent national states, has created new armies of migrants, both contracted workers and 'illegals' heading for the cities and particularly liable to exploitation. This process has been most carefully observed for the city of Cape Town. National Party policy from 1948 stressed that the Western Cape was not 'naturally' the home of any Bantu-speaking Africans and that economic development should rest upon the Cape Coloured working population. Yet in reality social and economic pressures have long brought Africans to the Cape. From less than 2,000 in 1911 (1 per cent of the population), the African community expanded to 31,000 in 1946 (8 per cent) and 73,000 in 1959 (12 per cent). In 1954, state planners drew the Eiselen line through the province, west of which African community life was to be destroyed and the African population entirely eliminated when no longer necessary in the 'Coloured Labour Preference' zone. Ever since, the application of influx controls in Cape Town has been especially severe although Africans have continued to come to live there. According to Piet Koornhof the Minister of Co-operation and Development (formerly Bantu Administration, then Plural Relations!) more than 40 per cent of the Cape Town Africans, now estimated at just under 200,000 people, are living illegally and are subject therefore to extreme harassment. Each year thousands are deported eastwards but few make their stay in the Ciskei or Transkei a long one. Innes & O'Meara estimated that 83 per cent of Transkei labour is employed outside the Transkei.

One consequence at Cape Town has been the expansion of squatter settlements housing both 'illegals' and those unable to live otherwise with their families. Andrew Silk, an American reporter, has produced an important account of one known as Modderdam. More well-known is Crossroads, known at first in Xhosa as Mgababa, the place free of regulations. After an intense and internationally-publicised struggle, Crossroads residents legally at the Cape in 1978 were permitted to remain although Modderdam and other sites had been destroyed. More recently struggles have focused on the Nyanga squatters' site in 1981, leading to massive deportations to Transkei. The scattered workers no doubt soon find a way back to the Cape. The state is trying to work out a new master-plan for Cape Town Africans centred on massive resettlements planned for coming years.

Cape Town's squatter problem is not confined to Africans. While the regime devotes resources and minute attention to the segregation-orientated removals of so-called Coloureds from white areas, poverty and apartheid restrictions have created a housing shortage for at least 300,000 people. John Western estimates that perhaps one-quarter of the Coloured people in greater Cape Town live as squatters in shanties, a problem so severe that it has forced the state to give it priority over resettlement from 'proclaimed' white areas. Despite the obviously parlous nature of the situation in Cape Town, scholars studying the Durban metropolitan area consider it worse off, 'the most serious African housing problem in South Africa' — a problem now technically wished upon Kwa Zulu through its incorporation of the African townships of Kwa Mashu and, more recently, Umlazi. In both cities, the analogy with the *favelas* of Rio is already quite apt for the present.

The resettlement has intensified the basic economic problems of the black working class. It has been admittedly turned to the advantage of a small minority but it has made the large majority more vulnerable and confronted more brutally by the state than ever before while the problems of the most economically disadvantaged and unemployable are exported from the gaze of the whites. To this aim the South African government has spent and continues to spend very considerable sums. Indeed the fiscal constraints are perhaps the principal limitation for removals not proceeding even further and faster.

Resistance

Forced resettlement is closely linked, not only with the developmental needs of various sectors of South African capital but with political decisions within the Nationalist regime as to how dissent can be channelled onto safe paths. It is a policy meant to harmonise the sophisticated demands of 20th century capital while trying to keep under raps a working class that by and large is unincorporated and profoundly resentful of the entire system. South Africa is not on the whole a backward state; the devices its rulers choose for self-preservation and reproduction are not dissimilar to those in the most advanced capitalist states when faced with an equivalent, apparently weak antagonistic class. Thus forced resettlement brings strongly to mind the 'villagisation' and 'forced urbanisation' that the USA wished on Vietnam in the late 1960s while the 'homeland' strategy (part of South Africa's so-called total strategy) is reminiscent of 'Vietnamisation'. Although there continue to be disputes within ruling class circles over these matters, a striking tendency among American academics has been to dissociate the need for political participation and democracy from the 'modernisation' of such rapidly 'developing' countries as South Africa, as Colin Leys has pointed out.

In Vietnam, of course such strategies failed miserably. What about South Africa? If one accepts much of the literature on forced resettlement, one is forcibly struck by the extent to which the resettled appear traumatised, unable to reorganise community life or to create effective structures of resistance. At the same time, instruments of force and of patronage passed on to the Bantustan authorities are wielded to effect and becoming more and more significant.

The whole structure of forced resettlement is aimed at, and clearly does, threaten to drive a wedge through the oppressed by giving a minority a stake in the system and through pressing forward with ethnic identification as the essence of

nationality and nationalism in South Africa. A black researcher has written that 'enough stress cannot be laid on the serious damage being done by the mobilisation of people on an ethnic basis and the fostering of ethnic divisions.' He is particularly referring to tensions between ethnically differentiated and differentially privileged Africans within the Transvaal 'homelands'. There is as well the gulf between the minority with Section Ten rights and the majority of contract workers, so skilfully played upon by the state in undermining the urban insurgency of 1976. Resistance to resettlement itself has been long, at times impressive, but largely ineffective except perhaps in ameliorating aspects of the circumstances of removal.

The build-up of repression within the Bantustans suggests, however, that the political elite there has failed generally to secure much popular acceptance. By contrast with the pre-Bantustan system, it is of the essence that Africans come to believe in the new structures for them to work. Because of this international legitimation or delegitimation of the devolution process is of considerable significance.

Moreover, despite the general literature cited above, there is some reason to think that the resettled do show a capacity to resist and are indeed that much more militant potentially because they are that much less incorporated into older social networks that cradle within given power relationships. This potential for resistance depends almost entirely on the strategic weight among the resettled of those who are actually working effectively, as opposed to their dependents. Scattered reports of resistance have begun to be reported that range from bus boycotts over fares to ANC activity aimed at instruments of Bantustan power such as the 1981 attack on the Sibasa police station in Venda.

The toughest struggles so far have occurred in Ciskei. Here the Sebe regime has intervened actively against the South African Allied Workers' Union militants who live in, and sometimes work in, Mdantsane. SAAWU, in step with the independent black trade union movement, has been able to advance despite depressed economic conditions. For the Ciskei regime, it is an unwelcome rival and 'Communist party front'. According to 'President' Lennox Sebe, the Bantustan state *is* a trade union and any other kind has been made illegal! Workers have been attacked and killed in Ciskei while intense confrontations with students at Fort Hare have revealed how Ciskei authorities have now taken charge of repression. Most of the strength of this resistance depends on the situation of the resettled as industrial workers.

In the poor Coloured settlements of the Cape Flats, Cape Town, the last years have seen unprecedented defiance of state authorities in violent outbreaks (1976-1980). Despite the harsh anti-social conditions that prevail, it is striking that resistance seems more possible than it ever did in the old Coloured neighbourhoods such as District Six. It is difficult not to connect forced resettlement and the creation of government-owned housing projects on a massive scale with intensified resistance and the rise of radical community organisations concerned with a broad range of issues. On the one hand, with resettlement, the class divide among Coloureds becomes notably sharper, isolating the poor from moderate leaders. On the other, there is the evidence from Modderdam of a potential alliance between Coloured and African squatters. Cape Coloured willingness to work with the ANC today is much greater than at any time in the past.

A number of writers have suggested that the weight of forced resettlement in Cape Town potentially brings about precisely the opposite of its intention; it awakens powerful and less controllable forms of resistance to the state. Can this also occur in the 'homelands'? A South African revolution could be ignited another time not among the youth of Soweto but among the resettled and dumped working class of the dozens of bleak new tin towns dotting the Bantustan horizons. Given the political importance of the Bantustan strategy and the economic importance of resettlement in labour policy, such places are rapidly becoming less marginal and more pivotal to South African society. It may be there in particular that future developments are hammered out in struggle.

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