

FACT PAPER ON THE HOUSING CRISIS IN SOWETO WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE INCREASE IN RENTALS AND THE WEST RAND ADMINISTRATION BOARD.

In 1977 increased rentals were gazetted for houses in the West Rand Administration Area. Because of the level of public protest the introduction of the increase was delayed and it is now being phased in gradually at four monthly intervals. It seems likely that regular graduated increases will become a fact of life in the future. The causes of the alienation and human misery which are already resulting and which can only increase in the future cannot be divorced from the total inadequacy of the West Rand Board as an administrative body, or from the whole question of the financing of Administration Boards.

When the Bantu Affairs Administration Act No. 45 of 1971 was introduced the accompanying memorandum stated "It is intended that a Board shall in respect of its financial matters be independent and that it shall not be necessary to approach the Treasury for Funds".

This means that each Board must raise the money it needs itself. A Board is vested with the rights, powers, functions and duties of a local authority in terms of all legislation relating to Africans. This means that, in addition to all the normal functions of a local authority such as the Johannesburg City Council in relation to the white, so-called Coloured and Asian residents of Johannesburg, the Board also administers the influx control, housing and labour Regulations. This point cannot be stressed too strongly. The Board raises its money from the black people under its control and uses that money to administer the complex and expensive pass law system which is totally rejected by the people who have to pay for it.

The West Rand Board has never functioned adequately. The figures in this paper show that long before the disturbances of 1976/77 the Board was not providing housing to meet the needs of the people nor were the services such as refuse collection, maintenance of existing houses, making and repair of roads, erection or upkeep of recreational facilities etc., in any way meeting the needs of the community. The 'fabric' of Soweto had deteriorated markedly before the events of the 16th June 1976. However the rigid implementation of the pass laws has continued and expenditure on this has evidently been maintained at the expense of all other aspects of the Board's obligations.

The West Rand Board raises its money as follows: The figures given are from the Chairman's budget speech for the 1977/78 financial year.

From Consolidated Labour Fees :	R 8 753 000	
From House and Site Rents :	20 420 682	(estimated on proposed new rent)
From Sale of Beer :	15 281 000	
From Sale of Liquor :	13 600 000	
From Sundry Sources :	1 897 400	
	<hr/>	
	R59 952 082	

The Consolidated Labour fees are paid by employers and can amount to R2.50 per month per black employee. The figure also presumably includes the R. per month paid by legally registered self-employed black people. Apart from the small amount from sundry sources the rest is paid by black people. As blacks are not permitted to have freehold title to land in so-called white areas the Board cannot draw on rates to increase its income. 48% of the Board's income is drawn from the sale of beer and liquor.

The income for 1976/77 of R59 952 082 represents a drop in income from previous years as shown in the following table (figures taken from Hansard questions on 4th and 8th February 1977)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL WRAB INCOME</u>	<u>INCOME FROM RENTS.</u>
1974 - 1975	R 60 493 411	R11 170 196
1975 - 1976	68 925 240	14 341 177

The drop in estimated income for the current financial year is mainly caused by the destruction of beer and liquor outlets during the disturbances. The progressive increase of income from rents is due to increases in site rentals as there has been no significant increase in the number of houses built for letting as illustrated by figures included later in this paper.

37.7% of the Board's income is spent on salaries, wages and allowances.

The Board budgeted for a deficit of R9 163 000 which they aimed to reduce to R579 000 by the increase in site rents.

HOUSING. According to the West Rand Administration Board the waiting list for houses in Soweto on 31st December 1976 was 10 739 families with another 10 000 families whose male head was not born in Johannesburg.

According to the Regulations Governing Urban Bantu Residential Areas published in Govt Notice No. R 1058 of 14th July 1967 only the following may be allowed to rent or purchase a house :-

A man who qualifies to be in the area in terms of Section 10(1)(a) or Section 10(1)(b) of the Urban Areas Act. who is over 21 years of age, whose wife has a permit to be in the area and who has dependents.

Section 10(1)(a) applies to a person who has lived continuously in one area since the time of his birth.

Section 10(1)(b) applies to people who have lived lawfully and continuously in one area for 15 years or who have worked continuously in one area for one employer for ten years.

The figures quoted therefore mean that the waiting list consists of 10 739 families where the male head is 10(1)(b). It is not clear to me what regulations give the Administration Board the power to separate the two lists but this division accounts for the fact that, both in Parliament and the press, the black housing shortage for the Johannesburg/Roodepoort area is sometimes given as plus/minus 10 000.

However even the total figure

