Tightening the noose: African women and influx control in South Africa 1950 - 1980
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Carnegie Conference Paper No. 82
Introduction

In this paper I examine the history of the extension of influx controls to African women. The first part traces through the legislative measures introduced over a period of more than twenty years to facilitate this process. It is argued that during the course of this process, an attempt was made to separate on an increasingly permanent basis, those women in urban areas with the right to live and work there, and those women in rural areas, who, through administrative and legislative practice have become unable to move out of the bantustans. This has had the effect of causing widespread impoverishment in these bantustan areas.

In the second part of the paper I look at some of the reasons for this geographical and legal division of the female African working class. Here I look at such issues as those of the reproductive role of women within capitalist societies, the political needs of the policy of apartheid, and the development of large scale structural unemployment in South Africa in the last thirty years.

Finally I look in detail at the employment and unemployment of Soweto women. I have chosen to do this, rather than look at female rural poverty for the following reason. The devastating conditions faced by women in rural areas is so bad, that often urban poverty, equally serious is forgotten. This plays into government attempts to present the urban working class as having a 'privileged' status. In actual fact, as this case study shows, these women are involved in a hard battle for daily survival. The combination of their sex, race and class has meant that their lives are a constant fight against debt, starvation and exhaustion. For whilst these women are indeed freed from many of the problems relating directly to influx control, the sexual division of labour in society as whole, urban unemployment, and such factors as skyrocketing living costs have meant that their lives are a constant struggle.

In these terms then, I would argue that it is a false distinction to counterpose an urban privileged group with the rural dispossessed. Rather, influx control acts as a means of political domination and control in that it does split the working class and prevent people from moving to urban areas. This does not however negate the fact that the
South African working class as a whole is subject to an intense degree of exploitation and oppression, although this assumes different forms and levels of intensity.

1. The Extension of Influx Control to African Women

In 1952 African women were for the first time brought under the influx control system. This does not mean that in previous years there had been no attempts to control the mobility and urbanisation of African women. Rather, these early attempts were often localised and ineffective. (1) However, through such measures as the 1930 amendment to the Urban Areas Act (2), provisions were made to bring women more closely under influx control regulations. This amendment also tied the urban status of women closely to their ability to prove they had male relatives who were settled urban residents. (3) In 1937, legislation tied the urban status of African women to yet another requirement - that of having adequate accommodation. (4)

These measures were not strictly implemented, and throughout the 1930's and 1940's there was a huge increase in the numbers of African women coming into urban areas to live and work. (5) In the face of this mass influx of people and the resultant rapid population growth, an acute housing shortage developed, resulting in the formation of squatter movements such as that led by James Mpanza.

So, by the time the National Party acceded to power in 1948, the urban African population had increased vastly. In response to this situation and to its commitment to its supporters to both retain white power and control the African population, the new government embarked on a programme of restructuring. Central to this programme was the notion that Africans should only be allowed in 'white' areas in order to serve the needs of whites. (7) Included in the legislation implemented to carry this out, was the attempt to create out of the reserves, self-governing areas, where Africans could exercise political rights.

As Hindson, has pointed out however, the policy of apartheid is not simply to be understood as a means to control an African surplus population, but must also be seen in terms of the attempt to secure the conditions for the maintenance and reproduction of the urban labour force. (8) He argues that the analyses of apartheid by writers such as Wolpe and Legassick:
"entirely neglect(s) the phenomenon of the formation of an African proletariat and the significant differences between the position of permanent and temporary workers in the industrial division of labour, in the conditions of reproduction and in their relation to the social reproductive apparatuses of the state." (9)

I would agree with Hindson that any understanding of apartheid has to take into account that the policy is directed towards, on the one hand, the control of the surplus population (and its location in the bantustans), and on the other the maintenance and reproduction of the urban labour force. The extension of passes to African women nationally, and their incorporation into the influx control system had the effect of dividing the female African population into one group with rights to live and work in urban areas, and into another confined to the bantustans and structurally and legally deprived of access to work and residence in urban areas.

As I shall show, from as early as 1964 this division was rigidly enforced in both law and administrative practice. The division of the African working class into a small group with the privilege of living and working in urban areas, and a large group of 'surplus' people confined to the bantustans, is at present a key element of the government's 'reform' strategy. It is being pursued more actively on a general level than in the past as proposed legislation such as the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill shows. In the light of this, a look at the process through which the numbers of women able to be in urban areas has been reduced over time is extremely useful.

The Incorporation of Women into the Influx Control System

The Native Laws Amendment Act (10) and the Abolition of Passes (and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, were the two key pieces of legislation facilitating the incorporation of women into the influx control system.

Their combined impact was firstly to make women subject to the Urban Areas Act in the same way as men. Secondly, the euphemistically named Abolition of Passes Act, in fact provided for all Africans over the age of 16, including women to carry a reference book with them at all times. The Native Laws Amendment Act also changed the Urban Areas Act in such a way as to make it more difficult for Africans coming into urban areas from rural districts to be there legally. This
amendment stated that "No black shall remain for more than 72 hours in a prescribed area unless he produces proof in the manner prescribed that" (12) he or she qualifies under section 10(1)(a)(b) or (c) of the act, or has been given a permit to remain in the area for purposes of work. (13)

As Hindson points out, with this inclusion of a 72-hour restriction into the act, the right of africans to remain permanently in urban areas was withdrawn. Instead some Africans had a qualified right to do so in terms of Section 10(1)(a)(b) or (c) of the Urban Areas Act, with those having these qualifications being exempt from the 72 hour provision.

Hindson explains very clearly the implications of and reasons for this, and it is worth quoting him at length:

"The real basis of the amendments in the Urban Areas Act in 1952 lay in the war-time restructuring of the industrial division of labour and in the growth of a surplus population of the reserve army of African industrial labour. Section 10 was a means not only of politically emasculating the urban African proletariat but also of securing its conditions of reproduction. Cheap labour power was giving way to differentiated labour power and the re-construction and extension of influx control barriers under the Urban Areas Act was a means of securing the reproduction of differentiated forms of labour power in the cities in the face of the incoming tide of surplus population from the rural areas. Along with the control measures which underpinned it, the amendment of section 10 transformed the means by which the state could structure and manage the active and reserve armies of African industrial labour." (14)

The division between those who could and those who could not be in urban areas coupled with the restriction on the length for which those without permission could be in urban areas thus became a crucial means of dividing different sections of the working class from each other.

This planned incorporation of african women into the influx control system aroused massive resistance. The anti-pass campaign of the Federation of South African Women and the Congress Alliance, as well as spontaneous outbursts of resistance, were widely and militantly supported. Although this did not have the effect of halting implement-
ation of the legislation, it did nevertheless delay it for some years. But by 1959, the resistance was crushed and by March of that year, in Johannesburg, the last area to be brought under the regulations, distribution of passes was almost complete.

The implementation of the legislation had the immediate effect of instituting an embargo on the further entry of African women from rural areas to towns for the purpose of finding work. This embargo was implemented on the date that the 1952 legislation was applied in a particular local authority area. (15) This date varied - the Western Cape was the first area to implement the regulations, and Johannesburg was last of all. After this date women had to qualify in terms of Section 10 of the Urban Areas act to be in an urban area.

In the same year, Government Notice 59 of 1959 (16) made it compulsory for women to have their service contracts registered at the pass office. This requirement made the position of women coming into towns from rural areas in order to find jobs difficult. They might be able to find a job for themselves, but if they did not have prior permission from officials, to be in the area, they would not be able to have their service contracts registered.

The labour bureau system was yet another institution restricting women's mobility and access to employment. The network of labour bureaux was first established on a voluntary basis in 1949, and then made compulsory from 1952. (17) Women were exempt from having to register at the regional and local labour bureaux, but had to do so if they wanted to work legally. (A consequence of this voluntary registration as a workseeker has been that many African women who are unemployed are not listed as such. This has the effect of masking the extent of African female unemployment. Unemployed men from rural areas must register by law as workseekers, whilst those with urban qualifications generally do so in order to claim UIF benefits.)

In practice, the legislation worked in the following way: a woman from an urban area wanting to obtain employment had to first qualify under Section 10(1)(a)(b) or (c) of the Urban Areas Act. Once she found work she would then have to have her service contract registered and have details of her employment, (employers name and address, length of employment etc) written into her reference book. This would have to be signed regularly by her employer.
Women from rural areas wanting to work in urban areas were in a more difficult position. In order to work legally in urban areas they would have to register as workseekers at the labour bureau in their home area and wait for a requisition for workers to come through to the labour bureau. Once work was available they could migrate to urban areas on a contract worker basis and with a Section 10(1)(d) qualification written into their reference books. In terms of this section of the Urban Areas Act, permission to do so was subject to availability of accommodation. (18)

In practice however, the local rural labour bureaux did not recruit women to work in urban areas. This was because the reserve of female labour in urban areas was for the most part seen to be large enough to serve urban labour needs, without women from rural areas having to migrate.

So, rural women who did not find work through the labour bureaux had to live and work illegally if they came to urban areas. The strictness with which this administrative embargo has been implemented has varied, and on occasions has been relaxed. For example, when Sandton and Randburg were first declared municipalities during the 1970's there was not enough local labour to provide domestics to white families. So, at that time recruitment of women from bantustans to work in these magisterial districts was allowed. In 1979 however this recruitment was stopped. At present recruitment of women from rural areas to work as domestics in the Sandton/Randburg area is once again being allowed. Only women who have worked in the area before are being recruited. In the face of a new labour shortage in the area, small numbers of rural women are being allowed to come to towns to work. However, it is certain that as soon as the labour shortage is over, recruitment will once again be stopped. (19)

This became the most common way for rural women to move to urban areas. It meant that urban qualifications for women were almost entirely dependent on their relationship to a man. ('almost entirely' because dependents of section 10(1)(a), and to an extent, 10(1)(b) women could claim 10(1)(c) rights on this basis. This however is a tiny grouping within the urban population. In most cases it is the relationship to a man that is most important. Single women with no relatives in urban areas cannot benefit at all from this 'loophole'.

This was not allowed to remain so for long. In 1964 amendments were
made to the Urban Areas Act and the Bantu Labour Act. These had significant implications for the position of women.

Under the Bantu Laws Amendment Act of that year, Section 10(1)(c) was altered to state that the wife, unmarried daughter, or son under 18 years could live with their qualified husbands or guardians, provided that he/she "after lawful entry into such prescribed area ordinarily resides with that Black in such area." (20)

The administrative interpretation and implementation of the two phrases, 'after lawful entry', and 'ordinarily resides' have made the position of African women wanting to come to urban areas to live with their families untenable for many years now.

Officials have applied this by requiring that women prove by means of documents that they are 'ordinarily resident' in the urban areas. The most common form of proof required is that a woman produce a lodgers permit belonging to her husband on which her name has been entered before she is given a 10(1)(c) stamp in her reference book. (21)

However, possession of a 10(1)(c) stamp is itself often a prerequisite for a lodger's permit. In many cases the addition of a woman's name to a lodger's permit is refused by officials, for it is in their power to use their discretion to ascertain whether or not they should grant this. In practice officials are likely to refuse lodger's permits to women unless they can prove that they have section 10(1)(b) rights in another area, or else, more recently, that they have access to a house bought under the 99-year leasehold system. (22)

Proof of 'lawful entry' into an urban area has also on occasions been demanded before women are given their 10(1)(c) stamp.

The question of 'lawful entry' is a vexed one. In the Transvaal Supreme Court there has been at least one judgement which has ruled that there is no such thing as 'unlawful entry' into a prescribed area by a black South African. This is because the restriction in the legislation is on people remaining in an urban area for longer than 72 hours. (23)
The demand for proof that a woman is 'ordinarily resident' in an urban area is more commonly used as a means to block the attainment of rights than is the issue of 'lawful entry'. The net effect of both however, has been to stop almost all legal movement of women from rural areas into urban areas since 1964.

This situation lasted until 1950, when the appellate division of the Supreme Court, in the case of Mr V Komani vs the Cape Peninsula Administration Board, the right was established of wives and children to live with their husbands and fathers without having to endure the bureaucratic problems outlined above. (24)

However, this right has not been uniformly applied or given since then. In many administration board areas officials have claimed that the judgement applies only to Mr Komani and his family, and cannot be used as a precedent to establish what should happen in the case of other individuals. (25)

In the same year as the embargo was implemented (1964), the Bantu Labour Act was also amended to make it even harder for women from bantustan areas to work in an urban area. It extended the qualifications necessary before such permission was given.

The need to able to prove to the labour officer that she had 'satisfactory accomodation' was one such condition. A cursory reading of the section shows how stringent the conditions are.

"...An unqualified woman who wishes to take up employment in an urban area...must have the prior consent of her guardian if she is under 21 years of age, a certificate of approval from the commissioner of her home district, a permit from the urban labour office and a certificate from the municipality that housing is available for her. The permission to work must be endorsed in her reference book and her contract of service must be registered." (26)

But it is so rare for women to be admitted to metropolitan areas, that in practice this is almost meaningless. In Johannesburg for example, no women are ever given permission to enter the prescribed area in order to find work.

From the above we can see that women's rights to be in an urban area, unless they qualify under section 10 (1) (a) or (b) of the
Urban Areas Act, are generally severely restricted. (27) In saying this it must be recognised that section 10(1)(c) is a limited qualification in that women and children can only acquire it provided they have a (male) relative who has section 10 rights in a particular prescribed area. In some cases, over time, people may acquire qualifications in their own right, (ie.'graduate' to a section 10(1)(b) stamp.) But should a man die, or leave an area, his section 10(1)(c) dependents will also lose their rights to be in a specific prescribed area. (28)

Thus, the legal status and position of African women is defined in terms of, and dependent on their relationship to a man. This denies women the independent right to live where and how they want. It also means that women who come in from rural areas cannot leave or divorce their husbands. For should they do so, they run the risk, not only of losing their accommodation, but of losing their rights to be in an urban area altogether. (29)

The other important factor limiting the ability of women to live in an urban area is the issue of accommodation. Historically, state housing (apart from hostels) has only been available to families. (30) Furthermore it has not been available to women in their own right unless they are divorced or deserted wives or widows with children. (31).

In the early years of Nationalist rule many houses were built in urban areas to accommodate Africans who had settled on the urban peripheries. But, this was not an ongoing process. In 1968, with renewed attempts to limit and reverse the urbanisation of the African population, further restrictions were placed on the ability of Africans to live in urban areas as families.

In 1968 state allocation of family housing was restricted to men who qualified under Section 10(1)(a) and (b) of the Urban Areas Act and whose wives also qualified to be in urban areas. The government also drastically cut spending on family housing. Local authorities could only build township housing if 1) they could persuade the Department of Bantu Administration and Development it was essential, 2) houses could not be provided in an adjacent bantustan. In 1968 30 year leasehold for urban families was withdrawn. (32)
The ban on the provision of family accommodation was enforced for ten years. During this time the urban housing crisis grew to unmanageable proportions. The impact of this was to both limit urbanisation, and exacerbate the overcrowding and discomfort the urban population was forced to endure. In 1978 this was changed. From this year African women could buy houses in their own right, and can now rent them if they can prove they have dependents to support.

But during this period the backlog of houses grew so large that people began to live in 'illegal' accommodation - backyard shacks, as lodgers, but without being listed on lodger's permits, and as squatters. In the long-term this means these people cannot get section 10(1)(b) rights through the 15 year legal residence section of the act. It also means their children are often unable to prove they have always lived in an urban area, and so may not get their urban qualifications when the time comes for them to be registered. (One of the requirements to prove that children be allowed in urban areas is that they be listed on their parents lodgers permits.)

In addition, despite a relaxation on the conditions under which women can get houses, in practice the situation of most has not improved. The new state housing policy emphasises buying houses, and self-help housing rather than the provision of state-owned rented accommodation. This militates against many women responsible for their families, because they cannot afford this.

As families have found it harder to find places to live, many have been pressurised into moving to the bantustans where they can build houses. This means that people lose their urban rights immediately they are residents of a bantustan.

Lastly, despite the Komani judgement, accommodation is still being used to make it more difficult to get 10(1)(c) qualifications.

"A woman can be denied a 10(1)(c) right if her husband is not occupying family accommodation. For example she cannot claim it if he is occupying a hostel because she cannot ordinarily reside with him there. Nor will it be given if he resides on his employers premises or in unauthorised accommodation in a shanty or in a Kliptown backyard." (33)
Now, in the wake of the success of the Rhikoto appeal, even this has been tightened up. (The Rhikoto judgement granted contract workers the right to have section 10(1)(b) qualifications stamped in their passes if they had worked for one employer for ten years, or lived in approved accommodation for fifteen years.)

One implication of this, was that once a contract worker had his 10(1)(b) qualification his family could come to an urban area and live with him on the basis of their right to a 10(1)(c) qualification. In response to this a law was passed in parliament on the 26th August 1983 which only allows a person with a 10(1)(b) qualification to have his family living with him if he has a house of his own (i.e. he must either be a registered tenant of a rented house, or the house must be built by, or for him.) This means that a lodger's permit will no longer be adequate proof for a 10(1)(b) person to present in order to have his family come to an urban area to live with him. (34)

These limitations on the size of the urban African population (and especially on women), both through a tightening up on influx control and housing regulations, as well as through the physical removal of large groups of people from urban areas is continuing, and if legislations such as the Orderly Movement Bill is enacted, will speed up.

In the case of African women, it is one that, in the government's terms has been successful. According to Simkins, 54% of the African population as a whole, and 57% of all African women now live in the bantustan areas of South Africa.(35) This is in stark contrast to the 46,7% of African women in the bantustans in 1950, and the 44% in 1960. By 1970 this proportion had risen to 52%. (36) Apartheid, then, has indeed succeeded in limiting the size of the female African population resident in urban areas.

Influx control regulations and the embargo on the entry of African women to urban areas has given rise to a contradictory situation. On the one hand, there is a small group of African women in urban areas (23% of all African women) (37). These women are at present being incorporated into wage labour at a rapid rate. Between 1973 and 1981 alone, the numbers of African women employed in wage labour almost doubled. In 1981 African women accounted for 58,4% of the
There has been a huge increase in the numbers of African women employed in the commercial, service and industrial sectors. In addition, there is some evidence that they are beginning to work in sectors that are historically an African male preserve.

On the other hand, there are 57% of African women who are trapped inside the bantustans through the workings of the influx control system. At one stage many of them might have left home and gone to work illegally in urban areas, however as urban unemployment has risen and controls over illegal people have become stricter this option has become less viable. In particular the increase in the fine on employers who employ illegal workers to R500 dissuaded many employers from giving these women work. So, increasingly they are forced to survive as best they can in the drought stricken bantustans. Farm labour, manual labour on government development and infrastructural schemes, and for the few, employment in the bantustan industries are all they have to look forward to. For the majority, however, unemployment is the norm.

Between the two extremes of those women living and working legally in urban areas and those trapped in the bantustans, there are other groups of women in situations not so starkly defined. For example, women living in commuter townships, although bantustan citizens, can still commute daily to work in white areas. Women in squatter communities on the other hand, may often have the right to work in urban areas, but unemployment and lack of accommodation forces them into situations where their access to work becomes increasingly tenuous.

The above description of the evolution of the policy of influx control with regard to African women has shown that the government has tried over the years to make sure that entry into urban areas for African women is almost impossible. In the process of so doing, a group of female permanent urban residents has been created who constitute a reserve army of labour for industry. The rest of this paper concentrates largely on this grouping of women. But before their position can be considered, their broader context - in particular the significance of the physical location of African women in terms of apartheid policy, as well as their location in the capitalist sexual division of labour need to be briefly considered.
Apartheid and African Women

Apartheid, as policy on the one hand embodying the political control and limitation of the size of the urban African proletariat, and on the other, fostering the development of the bantustans, demands that the reproduction of labour power, as well as the physical reproduction of the African working class take place as far as possible in the bantustans.

In the early days of South African capitalism this was intended to maintain the basis of the cheap labour power provided by the migrant labour system. (i.e. it was assumed that subsistence production in the reserves subsidised the migrant wages which were intended to cover the costs of reproduction of the single worker only). In this sense it was important that the families of migrants did not move to urban areas - a factor which would have meant not only that the basis of cheap labour power was undercut, but also that the costs of reproduction of the African working class, including the provision of social services would have to take place in urban areas.

Hence the discouragement of the movement of African women to urban areas. However as the reserve economy disintegrated, the basis of cheap labour power fell away. As it became harder to survive in rural areas women flocked to towns - both to join their men and to make a living for themselves. As pointed out earlier, by the early 50's more than half the African female population was resident in urban areas. (42)

In pushing these women back into the bantustans, the apartheid state was not necessarily seeking to re-establish the basis of cheap labour power. It was however seeking to remove the political threat that a large urban proletariat posed for the continued stability of the state. It was also seeking to reduce the costs to the state of providing social services and welfare facilities for this population. In this, women were of key importance. If they were based in rural areas, the physical growth of the urban African population and the consequent political threat would be reduced.

Secondly, the post-war period saw the growth of massive and structural unemployment in South Africa. The structural location of African women in economic sectors that were on the one hand declining (43), and on the other subject to rapid mechanisation (44) meant that a surplus population of women was developing at a rapid rate. The influx control
system described above was intended to split this large reserve army into different sections with differential access to work and residence.

So, the majority of African women were destined to remain in the rural areas with scant access to work (except agricultural employment), whilst the minority of African women allowed to be in urban areas would constitute a reserve army of labour for specific sectors of employment — especially the service, sales and domestic sectors. This returns one to the dichotomous situation already described — that of the mass of African women in the bantustans in a situation of near permanent unemployment (especially given the current drought and recession), whilst the rate of female labour force participation in urban areas rises steadily.

This broad comparison of the structural position of rural women versus that of their urban sisters can however mask some important complexities. In the case of women particularly, the realities of their place in the capitalist sexual division of labour, defines in important ways their structural situation. In these terms then, it can be argued that the position of urban African working class women is not that of a privileged elite, but rather should be understood in terms of their being the topmost section of the African female reserve army of labour. In these terms then, we cannot talk glibly about 'urban privilege' but have to understand the content of the lives of different groups of women in South Africa. In particular there is a need for clarity on the question of the sexual division of labour.

**African women and the sexual division of labour**

The primary economic role of African women, like that of women elsewhere in the capitalist world tends to be defined primarily in terms of a responsibility for various kinds of reproductive labour. This includes the work of caring for their homes and families, in both urban and rural areas (the reproduction of labour power), as well as doing the same work for the families of the dominant classes (domestic service).

The initial involvement of African women in wage labour was in domestic work. This sector has always been the major sector of African female employment.(45). In recent years domestic service has begun to
decline as a sector of employment, but as pointed out, more and more women are finding employment in areas where the work is essentially reproductive labour. The massive increase in female African involvement in the sales and service sector is one such example. Many of the women employed here are the cleaners, tea-makers and cooks. (46) Their jobs are at the bottom of the occupational ladder, and tend to be lowest paid, often with the worst working conditions. (47)

The assumptions governing the employment of women anywhere in the capitalist world are prevalent in these sectors. Employers often see women's economic involvement as secondary to the reproductive labour they do at home. In these terms it becomes no more than a stop-gap between having children. Consequently women's wages are lower than those of men, on the assumption that they are secondary partners in a nuclear marriage and dependent on their husband's earnings for survival.

This means not only low wages, but also a readiness to fire women with little notice, because high urban female unemployment (48) means that there is a large reserve anxious for jobs. It also means women are not assured of their jobs back when they take maternity leave. The burden of working a double day – having to look after a family and keep a job leaves many women in a state of perennial stress.

In this, the position of urban African women is similar, although legally less protected than women elsewhere in the capitalist world. For although these urban women may be free of the problems that influx control embargoes pose for rural women, they are nevertheless subject to the often crushing burdens that the sexual division of labour means. These urban women only have the potential to work – yet, the conditions under which they labour, the nature of their work, the ease with which they are hired and fired, their low wages and the double day render the 'privileged' status of these women hollow.

The rest of this paper will look at the nature of the employment of urban African women, and also at the question of unemployment. In so doing, it is hoped to demonstrate that the question of poverty is an issue faced by urban as well as rural women. That, although it is unquestionably true that rural women are at the very bottom of the pile in terms of oppression, exploitation and poverty, their
urban sisters are also engaged in a grining struggle for survival.

Employment, Unemployment and Poverty - a Soweto Case Study
The material used here is drawn from a study conducted in working class areas in Soweto in early 1983. (49) The sample consisted of 45 women interviewed at home, in the evenings and over weekends.

Out of the total sample, only fourteen women were employed in wage labour. Predictably twelve of these fourteen women were between the ages of 25 and 49. On closer examination, it was seen that only two of the working women were over the age of 40, and one over the age of 50.

Twenty four women, over half the sample were married. Only six of them were employed. Five out of eight single women were earning a wage, whilst only one out of eight widows, and two out of five divorced women were employed. The high proportion of single women working reflects both a tendency that has been noted by other writers for urban working women to prefer single status (50), as well as their relative economic independence because they are working.

The largest sector of employment for these fourteen working women was the service sector. Five women were employed in this sector. Four were employed as salesladies, three were factory workers - two in the garment industry, and one making jewellery. The last two women were both clerical workers.

The wages of these women tended to be low. Seven of them earned between R76 and R150 a month. Three women earned between R151 and R200, and another four women earned over R200 a month. Of these four, three earned an average of about R200 to R225, and only one woman earned over R300 a month.

Most of these women had been in the same job for a fairly long period. Four had held the same job for more than seven years. Yet another four had worked in the same place for between four and seven years. Three informants had had the same job for between one and three years, and two had only worked for between six months and one year. Only one woman had been in employment for less than six months.
The above brief profiles bear out much of what was said earlier about the position of women in the capitalist sexual division of labour. Their low wage occupational categories reveal the vulnerability of these women to employers. In addition, all except two of these working women also had children to care for.

Statistics aside, it is in the words of the women themselves, that the clearest picture of the content of their lives is drawn: Thandi for example had found work again after a long period of unemployment:

"I worked at a shop in the Carlton Centre and I left because I had a tiff with my manager over not being present for work one day. The reason was my youngest son fell ill and I was forced to take him to the clinic and could therefore not be able to get to work. I then got employed at Sandton where I earn R150 a month. My dissatisfaction is that I cannot do many things because of the meagre salary."

One day away from work was enough for Thandi to be fired. Her experience is not unusual. Many of the women who were interviewed told of similar reasons for losing their jobs. The ease with which women are fired is an indication of their vulnerability as a grouping within the reserve army of labour. Employers are well aware that at any time there are far more women looking for work than there is work available.

Elizabeth, unlike Thandi feels she is no position to risk her job for anything:

"I now work at an old age home and have been working here as a general worker for eight years. I do like working here because I can manage to help my husband in house arrangements. I earn R90 after working for these people for eight years.

I go to work by train. A fare is R2.20 a week. At times the transport is so full we happen not to get seats. It was to be a question of standing from where one gets on the train to the station where I alight. By the time when I reach work I feel tired and have a problem of my feet aching. The big boss doesn't care. If you happen to sit and rest for 20 minutes and you happen to be noticed by any of the big bosses you will be fired. If the transport is late your money will be deducted
even if it is not your fault. If late, a 5 plus R2 deduction is applied depending on your salary. The bad news about the job is that I am badly paid and I have worked for a long period but there is no progress in as far as money is concerned. (52)

From this description, Elizabeth clearly works under highly repressive conditions. She cannot rest for a minute or she will be fired. Yet, she does not regard these as major problems, but only says that her low wages are a disadvantage. Clearly for women like Elizabeth, choice in terms of job possibilities and actually finding other work is highly limited. This both structures their perceptions of present jobs and defines in important ways the conditions women will accept without complaint. Elizabeth is also fairly old. She is 55. The only woman in the entire sample over the age of 45 who was still working. Her age then, is a great disadvantage - women her age can be easily fired and replaced by younger, stronger and more energetic women.

The unwillingness to risk a job by complaining - especially about low wages was echoed by Nomusa who works at a Soweto supermarket earning R35 a week. She has no holidays at all - her only time off is public holidays and Sundays when the shop is shut. She says:

"Food prices are quite a problem because of the meagre salary I get. I find it quite a battle to survive fully on that money. I am supposed to send money to my parents every month for food and uniforms for my children who are in Giyani. But I cannot risk my job by demanding any more pay." (53)

This fear of losing a job was a common one amongst all the working women. In relation to this their experience of unions was interesting. The two garment workers were both members of the Garment Workers Union (a closed shop Tucsa union). They knew about the union but did not attend any meetings, and apart from knowledge of the pension fund had only a vague idea of what a union's work was. Thandi, for example said:

"I know of the union, because at the Carlton Centre I was in Lucy Mvubelo's union. we were told to bring our complaints to the union, but they never really helped." (54)

Another woman said she was scared of the union:

"We do have a union at work, but I am not a member because I fright for it. Whenever I have a problem I go to the manager and he will attend to my case in a satisfactory way and everything will be solved accordingly." (55)
Only one woman had actually been involved in a union and saw unions helping workers to fight for their rights was one woman who had been a member of the Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Ccawusa) until she was retrenched. (56)

Many of the women interviewed felt scared to complain in case they lost their jobs. Others were in a structurally vulnerable position. Esther, who described her previous job as "good, because I used to work under happy conditions", described her present job in the following terms:

"Right now I haven't got an all right job. I couldn't get a job same as what I used to have before. I am now working at Jeppesown at a catering company. I earn about R50 a week. I got the job through somebody's call and then I was to be interviewed. I am not registered because it is a temporary job. As far as I am concerned I have no benefits here because I am temporarily employed." (57)

Esther had already been employed for more than six months. Clearly her designation as a temporary employee only meant that her position was insecure, that she had no benefits and that her employers were employing her illegally. Two other women interviewed during the course of the survey had also had these 'temporary jobs'. Both of them were fired on the spot and both had experienced extreme difficulty in finding other jobs because they did not have 'service cards' and proof of previous employment.

Single women more than any others were trapped in their existing jobs because of the fear that unemployment could prove completely devastating in a situation where they are often the sole breadwinner. Nobesuthu is in this position. She complains about her job, but the thought of changing it or doing anything that could result in her being fired is completely out of the question:

"I work at a confectioners earning R150 a month. I got registered in 1973 and have been working there ever since. My transport is too costly because I am forced to take a taxi to the station and get a train to work. The work is strenuous and I spend 85% of the day standing. The salary is far too low for the work we do. But I don't think of leaving the job because this will be the end for me and my family." (58)

Nobestuthu is her family's sole breadwinner - obviously a massive responsibility is hers.
Of the 31 women not involved in wage labour, fifteen had an alternative source of income from their informal sector involvement, and seventeen had no independent source of income at all. Ten of the unemployed women were married, and eight of them were involved in informal sector activities; two unemployed women were divorced, one of whom was involved in the informal sector; three out of the total of eight widows were unemployed and four of them were involved in the informal sector. Two single women were involved in informal sector activities, but only one described herself as being unemployed.

As in the case of the women in wage labour, educational qualifications seemed to have very little to do with employment. Four unemployed women had completed standards 7, 8, 9, and 10 respectively – their relatively high educational qualifications not affecting their joblessness in any way.

Four out of these 31 women were either pensioners, or described themselves as being too sick to work. Those women who had no independent sources of income at all, relied on extended family networks and/or their husbands' wages to support themselves and their households. Generally, any relative or co-resident who was working contributed in one way or another to the costs of running the household.

The reasons given for leaving their last jobs were analysed. The majority of women, 42% (13 people) gave ill-health, and/or old age as the reason for having left employment. These women had all left 'voluntarily', and as will be discussed, the pressures on women to leave work as soon as they develop any ailment are extreme. Four women had left their previous jobs because they were dissatisfied with wages and working conditions. Five of them had left because they were fired, and another five had either been retrenched or had lost their jobs because the firms they worked for had closed down, gone into liquidation or moved to another town. Two women were unemployed because they had problems with their passes and so could not find legal employment. The last two women did not give any reasons as to why they left their jobs.
It was from the unemployed, rather than the employed women, that the clearest descriptions of working conditions in different jobs were obtained. One reason for this might well be that the unemployed women are freer to say what they feel about previous jobs, than women who are still working. For, as was pointed out, they are scared to say or do anything that would jeopardise their positions. In addition, they have to make the best of situations that are exhausting and stressful, and tend often to stress the good rather than the bad aspects of their work. Unemployed women, on the other hand are free of these constraints. We will thus relate some of the work experiences of women who were unemployed at the time of the survey.

Lizzy for example worked for fifteen years as a cleaner at a company that manufactured contraceptives. When the company was sold to new management she was told she was redundant and retrenched. She lost the job in 1981 and was able to claim UIF benefits for six months. 

"Then from 1981 I found work for 7 months at Linden at a flat. Unfortunately my son passed away and whilst I was arranging a funeral plan to bury my son, my madam shouted and wanted to know as to how long do blacks take to bury their dead. She further said I was continually ill. She paid me R33 a month. Every time I went to the clinic the madam would subtract 50c or R1 from my salary. She did not allocate money for transport. It was the real exploitation I suffered that made me not keen on begging for the job." (59)

Lizzy's experience of losing a job after a long period and only being able to find low-paid work in sectors like domestic service is a common story. Like her many other women are forced to endure brutal treatment at the hands of unsympathetic employers.

An extremely high proportion of the unemployed women had left their last jobs because of ill-health. It is interesting to note that in many cases their sicknesses were directly related to the nature of their jobs. Yet, in South Africa this is recognised by neither employers or government. In many cases the people affected don't draw this relationship directly.

The following story told by a night shift worker is typical of many:

"I am unemployed. I was working at Anglo American from 1976 up to 1980 as a cleaner. We used to
clean offices at night, starting at 7pm to 2.30am. I used to wait until 3.30am for my transport because at 2.30am there is no transport available and at times it is dangerous to foot from work to the bus stop for taxis. I would land up in the wrong hands of people I don't know. After work we would sit around in the building until travelling back home. The whole day is only for resting with all the noise from people around and school children. At times I ended not sleeping at all. Even the hot weather is quite a disturbance. This business of not having enough sleep resulted in different kinds of illnesses, especially high blood pressure. Now I am not healthy and not working. I had to leave that job through all the bad effects." (60)

Ultimately however, it was this woman's choice to leave her job. The There was no recognition by the company of the effects the job had on her health and no compensation for it. This is a common experience for many women as the following example shows:

"It is now close to five years that I have been out of work. I was declared redundant through illness, and though not seriously ill I had to leave work. In fact my boss suggested that I leave work because he had a younger more energetic person to replace me with." (61)

At the time she lost her job this woman was 47 years old. Management decisions often make the working lives of African women relatively short.

Other women also told stories of how work-related illnesses had caused them to lose their jobs:

"Because of illness I could not continue with my work. My feet normally swell after a long time of standing. I therefore could not cope up with all the work. Many of the jobs demanded I stand all the time." (62)

and,

"I am unemployed since the year 1979 until the present day. It was due to illness. I cannot tell exactly what is wrong with me because I feel the pains all over my body and my feet get swollen when I happen to stand for long hours working. I have been to so many doctors, even Baragwanath, but in vain. (63)

This woman is now 42 years old. In other words, at the age of 38 she became to all intents and purposes unemployable. Her account of the job she would like is indicative of where she sees herself located in the ranks of the unemployed. She says:
"I am looking for work. I would like to work under the West Rand Board collecting rubbish in the streets... it is hard to get a job because there are so many people who are unemployed and no work in factories." (64)

Some of the interviewees had left their last jobs because of dissatisfaction with wages. Two of these women had been earning so little that it was not worth their while to work at all. Matshidiso is one of these women:

"I was working at a drycleaners for four years. I happened to leave because of the salary. I used to earn R5 a week. I was an ironer of the clothes which had been cleaned in the factory. Now I am unemployed." (65)

Problems with passes and other documents were another reason given by women for their continued state of unemployment. The issue of 'temporary' workers came up again in the case of Sara. Her story reiterates the insecure and tenuous nature of part time and temporary work. For it offers no protection to employees both whilst they are working, and after they have left their jobs. This is especially so in terms of access to unemployment and other benefits. Part-time work is a characteristic form of women's work in capitalist societies. It masks the extent of unemployment, makes it easy for management to hire and fire workers at will, and saves both the bosses and the government having to provide social security for their workers. In the South African context, part-time and temporary employment of African women can act as a disguised form of illegal employment. The difficulties this means for women who are employed in this way and then lose their jobs can be immense as Sara's story shows:

"I am unemployed. I was working at a Southdale supermarket. I started here in 1981-82 being a casual cashier, starting at 3-7pm on Fridays and Saturday 7am to 5pm and Sundays 9am to 1pm. I happened to lose this job when they were reducing the staff. I was really disappointed at this because I was not aiming for this to happen. Now I am at home here when I could be helping my husband in other things. The worst part of it is I could never get any benefits like the Unemployment Fund. This is because I was not registered. I used to earn R39 per week." (66)

As a result of this 'temporary status Sara has found it almost impossible to find a job.
"I've been without a job since from October last year until the present day. Yes, I want a job. If it could be anywhere. Even if it could be far from home - as long as I get something like money to help my husband with all the needies. I always go looking for a job and only go for places where there are advertisements concerning jobs. It is hard because whenever you get to a place where jobs are advertised you would find by the time you come in someone else has already taken it. At other places they want to see an unemployment card. I don't have it. All employers are looking for experienced people with unemployment cards." (67)

In other words, employers want proof that prospective employees have been working, and want to see if they were fired or left for other reasons. Without providing this it is hard to find work.

The women in this survey are all urban women - the majority of them have lived all their lives in urban areas and have urban qualification in their passes. Yet their lives constitute a massive battle to find work, stay well, try to manage on meagre salaries. For them, getting sick, having a child, taking a day off work, getting old, not being registered are all devastating in their implications. In addition, the unskilled nature of the work these women do, and the large numbers of unemployed looking for work, mean that for most there is little job security.

The long hard search for work is also a debilitating experience for many women. The women interviewed used a number of methods to find work: One was to go door to door - from factory to factory and shop to shop. Many women claimed this was an expensive and unsatisfactory way to find work:

"I usually look for a job through asking at doors. It is hard to get a job, because when you get to a place looking for a job you can never know whether that place is a right one. You, the one in need, you just go in and at times the boss just says, 'I don't need people!' One has to move out disappointed because you were with the hope of being employed.'" (68)

The most common method of finding work was to ask friends and relatives to look out for vacancies at their places of employment. Two of the working women had got their jobs in this way. On the other hand, there were women who resented this bitterly because they felt it disadvantaged them if they did not have personal contacts in a
specific place. Others found the experience of going to factory gates and being turned down extremely discouraging and depressing.

"It is hard to find a job because one would find that there are many people coming at the lines for jobs, so it will be difficult to be picked up from that lot." (69)

In one case a negative experience had discouraged one woman from ever looking for work again:

"I once went to Baragwanath looking for a job as a cleaner, and was told by the superintendent that I was too old. Since then I have not looked for work." (70)

This woman was only 42 when this happened to her.

The last mentioned method of finding work was to go to the Polly street labour bureau:

"I sometimes used to go to Polly, line up and wait for the clerks to come and call you one by one. It means to be the first one you had to wake up early, and if not, you didn't ever get anything." (71)

Other women had similarly unfruitful experiences at the labour bureau:

"I live through marketing and I also look for a job by going to Polly. We always report in those offices at 7am and stand in a queue. The clerks will call us one by one to the offices if there is a job they can offer. When you are called inside you might get it, but usually not and you are then unfortunate. At times we are given cards with numbers on them on rotation as they call it. It is hard because it is not easy to find a job you want through that system. It would be a question of luck." (72)

All of the unemployed women saw finding a job as a task that was almost impossible. Many of them spoke of the difficulties of finding a job in a situation of such high unemployment.

"It is hard to get a job because there are many people who are unemployed and work in the factories." (73)

and,

"It is hard to get a job because most of the factories are closing down and there are a lot of people who are looking for jobs." (74)

Many of these women felt guilt about their inability to find work and so help their families:
"I am unemployed. I have been without a job since last year. It is now a year ever since I have been without a job. I am actively looking for a job. Since a lot of people are unemployed I don't mind to do any kind of job. As long as I can work and get something to help my husband in maintaining the children." (75)

Other women experienced depression as a result of their unemployed state.

"Unemployment has brought me loneliness and frustration. Because what happens is that the whole day when all my family members are away at work I stay alone and there isn't enough money. So sometimes I stay without money for the whole month until my daughter comes in to give me something." (76)

The most succinct statement of the issue was that of a woman who said:

"Unemployment brings three difficulties: sickness, starvation and staying without clothes." (77)

Many of the unemployed women had drifted into informal sector activities, initially as a stop-gap whilst they were still looking for jobs. Then, as the search became harder, this tended to become a more or less permanent form of economic activity.

The fifteen women involved in informal sector activities mostly saw themselves as still being unemployed and looking for work. In this sense then, this form of activity was seen as a way of making money whilst people were in-between jobs. In practice, the length of time for which women had been unemployed, show that this kind of 'temporary' work, tended to become more permanent as time went on.

All except one of the women in informal sector activities was involved in selling. The exception was a woman who was a childminder. Eight out of the fifteen, sold food and vegetables. Another four women made their living by selling clothes and other articles they had made. One woman made her living by running a shebeen, and one other sold detergents on a door-to-door basis and on commission.

The incomes of the majority of these women tended to be far lower than those of women in wage labour. Seven of the women earned up to R75 a month. Another three, had an income of between R76 and R150 a month. Four earned between R151 and R200, and only the woman
who sold detergents earned more than R201 a month. The level of these incomes make it clear that for working class women with little capital or resources to back up their activities, the informal sector offers small rewards. The following extract shows vividly how great the effort is that goes into the marketing that women do, and at the same time, how small the profit. In addition, the illegal nature of many informal sector activities mean that harassment by police is a constant worry for many women.

"I make money by selling beers. A dozen costs R8.10 and I normally buy four dozen. I use a refrigerator to cool them and I buy a litre of paraffin at 63c. My customers buy them and take them away, and those who don't spend the day up to 8pm. At times we get arrested and our stock gets confiscated. A fine is R10 and there is no place where you can claim for the confiscation. It is better when you work because this business is not always profitable. At times there are no customers and you might land up not having sold a thing through the week. The profit is R50 or R54 a week, depending on how I sell. This includes the brandy and the spirits." (78)

Other women had similar stories to tell:

"I spend my time by selling vegetables, especially spinach. I manage to get this through a friend's transport. He usually collects us - we are about five - from our different places to the farms. For a return trip it is about R5 depending on the distance. Then for the stock R14, and a bundle when selling is about 20c which could make a total of R22 profit depending how it sells. One should be stationed at a spot where there are many people passing so that they can see and buy. But on rainy and very sunny days there is not business. At times we are harassed by police when conditions are not favourable because they claim the private sector is not hygienic. My problem is money because I don't afford this expensive life. It's rent food etc. I don't even afford to bank due to money problems. I make about R25 a week by selling." (79)

The costs involved in informal sector activity are calculated in minute detail by the women who sell. This is because their profits are so low they have to able to account for every cent they spend:

"I have been without a job since 1975 to the present day. So now I live by selling. I usually
buy a big bag of cake flour at R42, fish oil at R8.50, yeast at R1.05, sugar at R14.80 a big bag, snoekfish - depending at times I get a big piece at R2.10 and achaar a big tin is R15. My total score comes roughly up to E120 every month. I have been doing this from 1980 to the present day. It is worse than a proper job because when I was working I used to earn more than that per month." (80)

Other women made it clear their informal sector earnings were only regarded as a supplement to money they got from other sources:

"I make money by selling pillow cases and sheets. Normally I buy for R20 and a profit would be R5 every week per stock. This has been for a period of three years. It is worse because the R5 gain cannot come up to all my demands. But for the meantime it is not too bad, because it is just an addition to what my boyfriend offers." (81)

Lastly, there were a number of women whose main source of income was their pension payments every two months. All these pensioners complained bitterly that the amount of money they received was not nearly enough for their needs. Although they were pensioners they all described themselves as being unemployed. At least two of the pensioners were also involved in informal sector activity in an attempt to supplement their income.

"I spend my time by getting the pension money. After every two months I get a sum of R100 and some cents. This money is not stable. It fluctuates. So when I receive it I should pay rent, buy food and coal etc. By the end of the next two months I am broke and have nothing to live on. I have a lot of problems because that money comes after a long duration and again I should use all. So what am I left with for survival. It would be better if we were earning every month. It has been a period of ten years I have been earning this little money. I starve at times, but what can I do if it is arranged in that fashion." (82)

The above interviews show graphically the lives of hardship that these women lead. It is in this context that the issue of their status in terms of the influx control system should be raised.

Urban African Women and Influx Control

The majority of the women interviewed had permanent urban rights based on the fact of their being born in an urban area and having lived there all their lives. This group accounted for thirty out of forty-five women - two thirds of the total sample. The other fifteen women were in a variety of different legal positions.
None of the women had section 10(1)(b) qualifications. There were two women with section 10(1)(c) qualifications. Both of them had come from rural areas to join their husbands living in urban areas during the late 1960's. Both of them had been put on their husbands' lodgers permits at that time, and on this basis had got their qualifications. Currently, as was explained earlier in this paper it is almost impossible to get these qualifications.

There were two women with section 10(1)(d) qualifications. One comes from Swaziland and is a migrant worker. The other is a woman who was born in Soweto, but who grew up near Nafeking, and so, unwittingly forfeited her 10(1)(a) rights. She now has a Bophutatswana identity document.

Two other women also had 10(1)(d) stamps. They had both been working illegally (ie. without being registered), until the crackdown on the employment of unregistered workers in 1979. Their employers registered them in the ensuing moratorium. The present contract worker status of these women means that if they lose their jobs they will be sent back to their 'area of origin' to await re-recruitment. In practise, as was explained, this does not happen - women are not recruited for work in urban areas. Paradoxically one of these women was actually born in Johannesburg. However, she lost her pass, and because the officials wouldn't accept the proof she offered of her urban status, she never got another one. She worked illegally for some years, and during the moratorium jumped at the chance to sort out her pass problems. Unfortunately, she never realised the implications, or that she would be in a position fundamentally detrimental to her continued ability to work in an urban area.

The other woman registered during the moratorium, worked illegally from 1979 for a Soweto supermarket. She was horrified when she realised the implications of her section 10(1)(d) stamp. She informed the interviewer she was in the process of changing to a 10(1)(a) stamp. When asked how this was possible, she merely said: "My husband is a policeman."(83)

The women in the worst position of all were those defined as 'illegals'. Three of these women, were in fact 'illegal' only because of bureaucratic problems with documents. Two had in fact been born in
the prescribed area of Johannesburg, and the other woman in the prescribed area of Vereeniging. Two of these women had lost their passes and the new ones did not give them rights to live or work in the Johannesburg area. Neither of these women had anywhere else to go. The third woman had been orphaned at an early age and couldn't prove to the satisfaction of the authorities that she was born in an urban area.

The last two 'illegals' had both come to Johannesburg from the bantustans in order to look for work, because of 'starvation.'

The attitudes of these women to passes was very interesting. The majority, those with trouble-free section 10(1)(a) qualifications, did not see passes as an issue of any importance, (unless they had ever been wrongfully arrested for a pass offence.) Otherwise they tended to see passes as a convenient form of identity:

"Pass laws are good because you can be easily identified if you happen to pass away or be in trouble." (84)

Another woman said:

"Pass laws are just part of one's life." (85)

Other women, with experience of suffering because of pass problems felt differently:

"Pass laws - what can we do, if a law applies there is nothing we can do. It is a problem when one happens to be from the homelands and happens to come this side for work. He or she cannot get a job or a house. No matter how interested you can be you have to suffer like this." (86)

and,

"I have not worked due to pass problems. I have been without a job for two years now, ever since I left school. I am actively looking for work anywhere but I have not found as I have no pass. I have been living in Johannesburg since 1962 when I was born." (87)

Ironically, this woman's attitudes to passes was, that,

"Pass laws are a help, because right now, if I had a pass I would be working." (88)

Urban qualifications it seems, for many women, are only of significance when they do not have them and are faced with the full weight of the problems this causes. In this sense, women with urban qualifications
are a privileged group in relation to those without section 10 stamps. Yet, as has been demonstrated their lives are by no means easy.

Some conclusions
On the one hand this paper has looked at the influx control system both as a means of political domination and control, and as a means to divide the reserve army of labour. On the other, it has looked specifically at the nature of the oppression experienced by urban African women, both in terms of this overall system of political control as well as in relation to their place in the capitalist sexual division of labour.

There are a number of tentative conclusions that can be drawn from this: Firstly, it is clear that the influx control system bears down upon rural women far more heavily than it does upon their urban sisters. Nevertheless, these urban women are also subject to a system of political domination and control which affects their lives in fundamentally important ways. Their living and working conditions, their daily hardships, their poverty and the endless struggle to make ends meet are in important ways a consequence of this system.

Secondly, these women are locked into a sexual division of labour which creates enormous difficulties for them. On the one hand they experience the burden of the double shift, on the other, the extreme exploitation that is a consequence of the vulnerable position of the female reserve army of labour under capitalism.

Taking these points jointly, it then becomes clear that in no way can urban African women be seen as any kind of privileged grouping. They constitute one layer of the female reserve army of labour. To be sure, the layer, that relative to others has the greatest potential to find employment. Nevertheless, it is also a grouping that is subject to extreme exploitation and oppression.

In this paper, I have sketched the elements that go to make up the lives of urban African women. In so doing, I have suggested that
the relationship between their structural and economic situation, and their position in an overall system of political domination is of critical importance.

More thorough-going analyses of the complexities of this relationship need to be undertaken if the meaning and content of the poverty these women face is to be thoroughly understood.
Footnotes

* This paper is drawn directly from my MA Thesis, "The Relation between African Female Employment and Influx Control in South Africa 1950-1983". Accordingly, many of the arguments and issues dealt with here, are summaries of the thesis.


3. Ibid


5. Yawitch, J. op cit chapter 3

6. Ibid

7. The Sauer Commission established by the National Party clearly expressed this philosophy in its influential report.

8. This is one of the central arguments of the thesis cited above.

9. Hindson, D. op.cit. p 120

10. Act 54/1952

12. Section 10(1) Act 25/1945, as amended by section 27 Act 54/1952 and substituted by section 47 Act 42/1964

13. This section is now known as Section 10(1)(d). It is the section which provides for contract workers to stay in urban areas whilst their contracts are valid.

14. Hindson, D. op.cit. p 166


16. Ibid p 54


20. Simons, J. op.cit p282
21. It is this ruling which the Komani judgement overruled.
22. Interview with Sheena Duncan, 20th March 1983.
23. The case in which the Supreme Court in the Transvaal ruled
that there was no such thing as 'unlawful entry' into an urban
area, was State vs Madevu, 1966 (3) SA 222 (c).

27. Duncan, S., op.cit. p59
28. Duncan, S. interview 20th March 1983
29. Ibid
30. See the discussion on housing policy towards African women, in
Yawitch, J., "op.cit. chapter two.
31. Duncan, S. interview 29th February 1984
32. Labour Research Committee, Ruling the Townships. Housing, services
Influx Control, and Local Government p 38.
33. Duncan, S. interview 20th March 1983
34. Black Sash, You and the Rhikoto Case, Johannesburg, August 1983
p.18.
35. Simkins, C. "The Distribution of the African Population of South
Africa by Age, Sex and Region-type, 1950-1980", in Four Essays
on the Past, Present and Possible Future of the Distribution of
the Black Population of South Africa Saldu, Cape Town, 1983. p57
36. Ibid
37. Simkins, C. op.cit p.57.
38. Cock, J. et al "Women and Changing Relations of Control", in
South African Research Services (eds), South African Review
39. Ibid. p.286.
41. See Yawitch, J. op.cit. chapter three for a fuller discussion of
this.
42. Simkins, C. op.cit. p57.
43. This refers especially to domestic service. See for example,
Shindler, J. "The Effects of Influx Control and Labour Saving
Appliances on Domestic Service ", in South African Labour Bulletin
Vol 6 No 1, July 1980.
44. This is especially true of agriculture. See Yawitch, J. op.cit.
for a discussion of this (chapter three).
45. Many authors have both commented on and analysed this. Amongst others Cock, J Maids and Madams. A study in the Politics of Exploitation, Ravan Press, JHB, 1980, and Shindler, J op. cit. are amongst the two most thorough discussions of this.


47. Ibid

48. An article in The Star (23/2/84), quoted the Central Statistical Services as estimating African female unemployment to be 13.9%, as opposed to 10% for men. These figures, it should be remembered are likely to be an underestimation of the real scale of female unemployment as a whole, because so many women are categorised as 'not economically active housewives' rather than as unemployed people. In addition these figures are not likely to include the so-called 'independent' bantustans.

49. This survey comprises a chapter of my thesis. The material used here is drawn from two sections of this chapter.

50. This is a phenomenon that is being remarked upon by an increasing number of researchers. In a variety of publications researchers of women's status such as J. Barrett, A. Mullins, J. Cock, etc have commented on it. However, none of this work has this as its main focus of interest, and as yet it is difficult to make categorical statements on the issue.

51. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 16
52. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 34
53. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 11
54. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 16
55. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 45
56. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 3
57. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 44
58. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 27
59. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 29
60. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 36
61. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 6
62. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 12
63. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 20
64. Ibid
65. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 37
66. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 1
67. Ibid.
68. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 25
69. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 42
70. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 6
71. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 33
72. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 36
73. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 42
74. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 13
75. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 28
76. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 17
77. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 30
78. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 20
79. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 35
80. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 31
81. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 25
82. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 2
83. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 11
84. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 3
85. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 21
86. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 28
87. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 42
88. Soweto Interview March/April 1983 No. 42
These papers constitute the preliminary findings of the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa, and were prepared for presentation at a Conference at the University of Cape Town from 13-19 April, 1984.

The Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa was launched in April 1982, and is scheduled to run until June 1985.

Quoting (in context) from these preliminary papers with due acknowledgement is of course allowed, but for permission to reprint any material, or for further information about the Inquiry, please write to:

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