

SECOND CARNEGIE INQUIRY INTO POVERTY  
AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Major problems as perceived  
by the community

by

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## I. INTRODUCTION.

This study was funded by the Ford Foundation as part of a programme for training epidemiologists, and the study was designed to provide information for the Carnegie enquiry into poverty among Black communities in South Africa. Our particular interest is the relationship between ill health and poverty.

The health problems of a community are usually defined by health professionals using "objective" research methods. We felt that subjective data (what people feel) is needed to complement and integrate the reality defined by objective research methods. There is, otherwise, the danger that professional judgement will overlook some "felt" problems of a particular community.

With this in mind, we decided to discover what a cross-section of people from different communities perceived as problems. We therefore decided to visit 14 areas and asked people to tell us what they saw as the 10 major problems in their communities. We then rated them according to the frequency with which they were mentioned. The interviews were conducted in 1982.

### 1. OBJECTIVES.

- (a) To generate a list of problems as perceived by a cross-section of the community, and to gain experience in interviewing of this sort.
- (b) To use the information gained to identify problems requiring in-depth study and perhaps to plan and undertake some more detailed studies.
- (c) To use the information as a foundation on which to build firm proposals for definitive action against some or all of the problems identified.

### 2. METHODS. /

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### Study Population.

- (a) We tried to incorporate urban, rural, resettlement and farm communities.
- (b) The selection of areas was arbitrary, but based largely on their accessibility.
- (c) In all the areas that we visited incidental sampling was used, that is, we interviewed people that were readily available as we walked around. However, we asked the interviewees to refer us to professional and other people as well, in order to get a cross-sectional opinion of what people perceive as their problems.
- (d) Although we tried to cover most of the areas we cannot make any generalisations because of the sample size.

### Sample size.

In every community an average of ten people were interviewed.

### Method of Interviewing.

People were asked to list their problems unprompted. Thereafter, other problems were prompted but the two were not differentiated.

When the need arose a copy of the University introductory letter was produced. Although studying community problems in general, the team was particularly interested in studying community health problems.

### Introduction of the Interviewer.

The interviewers introduced themselves as members of the research team from the Department of Community Health at Wits, that they were interested in knowing about the peoples' problems, and that the results would be presented to the Department, which would in turn advise the health planners about living conditions in Black communities.

## 3. PRESENTATION. /

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In the next sections, we present what emerged as the ten major problems in each area, according to the people interviewed. We have not restricted ourselves to health problems, as people mentioned political, socio-economic, environmental, educational and health related issues.

II. (a) PERCEIVED PROBLEMS IN URBAN AREAS.

For this section of our report we interviewed people from the following places:

(1) Mapetla Men's Hostel in Soweto - 5 Groups of Men.

Mapetla Men's Hostel is one of the 5 men's hostels in Soweto. It is situated in one of the Soweto townships called Mapetla, and accommodates migrant workers.

This hostel is under the authority of the West Rand Administration Board.

There were no problems encountered in driving into the hostel and interviewing the hostel inmates. Five groups of hostel inmates were interviewed.

People at this hostel live under very poor and unhygienic conditions, and there are lots of frustrations among the inmates.

(2) Mzimhlophe Women's Hostel - 6 Inmates.

Mzimhlophe Hostel, situated next to Mzimhlophe township in Soweto is the only hostel in Soweto which accommodates women.

Women who live in this hostel are mostly single; that is never married, widows or divorcees.

The hostel consists of the standard Soweto 4-roomed houses which makes it far different from the overcrowded unsightly Soweto male hostels.

The surroundings of this hostel are clean compared to most areas in Soweto.

(3) Soweto - /

(3) Soweto - 25 Individuals at schools or in their homes.

We interviewed 25 permanent residents of Soweto. Soweto lies about 20 kilometres from Johannesburg and has a population of more than 1 000 000 people. It consists of about 30 townships which fall under the West Rand Administration Board.

All ethnic groups in the Republic of South Africa are represented in Soweto.

The socio-economic status of the Soweto population varies from very poor to moderately rich.

Soweto townships are sub-divided according to different ethnic groups, and a fair proportion of the population commute to town.

Soweto population consists of stable residents and the migratory labourers who are either placed in hostels or are sub-tenants in residential places.

There were no problems encountered in talking to the Soweto people.

(4) Alexandra Township - 10 people.

Alexandra township, which lies 12 km from Johannesburg, dates back to 1905, when it was still under the authority of the Alexandra Health Committee, and was a White residential area.

Peri-urban took Alexandra over from the Health Committee in 1958, and the West Rand Board took over the administration in 1974. In 1980, Alexandra township was declared a permanent residential area for Blacks.

The living standards in this township are generally poor, and one can readily expect all the maladies associated with poor living conditions in this township.

If a slum is defined as an overcrowded, unhygienic, disorganised residential area, with poor sanitary conditions and an uninviting bad odour, then Alexandra is one.

We did not /

We did not experience any problems in interviewing the Alexandra residents.

(5) Domestic Workers from Yeoville and Bellevue - 11 Individuals.

Yeoville and Bellevue are two of the many White suburbs in Johannesburg. Most of the domestic workers in the suburbs are from outside Johannesburg. Employers were not around at the time the interviews were conducted. A total of 12 people were interviewed. Of these, one refused to be interviewed and another told us that she had no problems with the employer or the employment, and that her relationship with her madam was like the one between a mother and her daughter. Half the interviews were done at the park when "nannies" had brought the children to play. Nine of the 11 domestic workers interviewed were females.

II. (b) ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS AS EXPRESSED BY URBAN DWELLERS.

There was a great deal of overlap between the problems expressed by people from the different areas. There were some problems specific to certain groups, and some which, although common to all groups, were experienced in a slightly different way by each group.

Common Problems.

(1) Overcrowding/housing shortage.

Every group has some complaint about overcrowding and the shortage of housing.

In Mapetla Hostel the men live 16 to a room, and some men bring in relatives or sons, making the situation worse. There is a complete lack of any privacy.

In Mzimhlope Women's Hostel the problem is slightly different. Although the women do complain of a lack of privacy, their main complaint is that it is a lack of housing in Soweto as a whole, particularly for single women, which has forced them to live in the hostel in the first place. It is difficult for domestic workers to get accommodation at the employment place. If it is in a flat, only a limited number of servants rooms are available, and these are

not enough /

not enough for all servants. While those living in houses have readily available servants rooms, some employers do not want to have "staying-in" domestic servants.

In Soweto as a whole, and in Alexandra Township, many houses have more than one family living in them. In Alexandra in particular, the position is particularly bad, with large families cramped into very small single rooms. This situation forces people to build shacks as a relief from overcrowding. If found, the shacks are demolished instantly and all the material taken by WRAB.

(2) Crime.

This was a problem mentioned often by all five of the urban groups we spoke to. Alexandra was the area from which the gangsters of the 1950s came. Theft, rape and assault were mentioned as being very common. At Mzimhlope the women are occasionally subjected to raids by thugs who break into the hostel. At Mapetla the problem is made worse by the lack of privacy. Theft is common, and hooliganism and faction fights lead to stabbing and serious loss of life. Closely related are complaints about alcohol abuse and juvenile delinquency.

(3) Unemployment and low salaries.

Unemployment was raised as a problem particularly in Soweto and Alexandra. Migrant workers and domestic workers by definition are not unemployed. However, they and others, mentioned low wages and salaries as a major issue. Domestic workers in particular complained that their wages (R35-R100 per month) were too low to cope with the high cost of living. One result of low wages is the attempt by some to augment their wages by street selling or selling liquor, which leads to them being arrested. Prostitution is also one survival technique used by unemployed women.

Closely linked to the complaints about low wages are complaints of the high cost of living. The hostel dwellers in particular felt that they were being charged high rentals for very inadequate accommodation (R14 per bed per month).

(4) Living conditions. /

(4) Living conditions.

With the exception of the domestic workers, all groups listed complaints about their living environment as major problems.

Sanitation is felt to be a big issue in Mapetla, where the toilets are often blocked and the drains leak. There are three toilet pans to a block of 34 rooms, i.e., 544 inmates.

Alexandra, too, has a major sanitation problem. The bucket system is used and is totally inadequate, resulting in sewerage flowing in the streets.

There are only four dustbins for twenty families, and refuse is dumped all over the area. It was said that neighbouring firms dump refuse in Alexandra streets. In Soweto, people complain of frequent electricity and water cut offs, sometimes for two days without warning.

(5) Influx control and migrant labour.

The single permits issued to contract workers living in Alexandra prevent their wives and children from living with them. They are the victims of the continuous West Rand police raids.

In Soweto, people complained of harrassment by the police in relation to influx control and pass laws. People are forced into the homelands irrespective of whether they have been to such places or not.

The men at Mapetla are all contract workers, so their lives are ruled by the influx control legislation. They complained of being far from home and unable to assist with domestic difficulties at home.

The domestic workers are hard hit by influx control legislation. When trying to register, they are sometimes given 72 hours to leave the Johannesburg area. Some complained of separation from their families. Although the women at Mzimhlope are not all migrants,

they are forced /

they are forced to live separately from their children. Some suffer from depression as a result of this.

(6) Unhappiness about the police.

Three of the groups at Mapepla Hostel expressed police behaviour as a specific problem. Soweto people complained of the aggressive attitude of the police at roadblocks and the forcing of women to strip to ensure thorough searching. The men at Mapepla Hostel complained that the police did not investigate complaints. They also made allegations of harassment by police who raided the hostel at night. In Alexandra, people said they were subjected to continued raids by the WRAB police.

II. (c) PROBLEMS SPECIFIC TO ONE OR TWO GROUPS.

(1) Privacy and conflict.

At both the mens and womens hostels there were complaints of friction between inmates, which rose partly out of the lack of privacy and from people expressing their frustration by drinking.

(2) Facilities.

At Mapepla Hostel the men complained that there was no telephone and no canteen facilities, and this forced them to go out to the neighbouring township at night - a dangerous thing to do.

(3) Diseases.

Only in Alexandra did people specifically list illness as a major problem. TB and sexually-transmitted diseases were noted and gastroenteritis is rife, especially in summer.

(4) Problems with employers.

This is an issue for domestic workers particularly. They complained of long and irregular working hours, at the whim of their "madam", and also that they have no health coverage, and although they are promised food and uniforms, these often don't materialise.

(5) Political complaints. /

(5) Political complaints.

The Soweto people, in particular, expressed their grievances in more overtly political terms. They saw many of their problems as being related to apartheid, political oppression and racial discrimination. This showed itself in inferior health services and educational facilities and smaller pensions.

A last word goes to some of the Soweto people interviewed who said that there was no need to harp on their problems which are very well known to everyone who bothers to know about them.

III. (a) PERCEIVED PROBLEMS AMONGST PEOPLE LIVING ON FARMS.

We interviewed farm dwellers in 4 different areas:

(a) Groot Marico - 12 People.

This is a small town in the Western Transvaal, consisting of several farms. Two farms were visited, ten farm labourers and two domestic workers in the farm houses were interviewed.

(b) Zuurbekom - 5 People.

This is a large farm area with several farms owned by different farmers. It is located near the Potchefstroom Road, about 8 km west of Soweto. Not everyone who stays on the farm is employed by the farmer. Some people stay with their relatives because they do not have alternative accommodation. Five people were interviewed here.

(c) Lawley - 5 People.

This is situated about 7 km south of Lenasia. It is a very large farm owned by an Indian who lives in Lenasia. The area visited is very dry and dusty. People who live there are mostly squatters. They are given pieces of land on which to build their own houses, and pay rent on a monthly basis to the farmer.

All the houses on this farm are of corrugated iron. Therefore, it is not surprising that they are very cold during cold weather and very hot during hot weather. Because of the old material of corrugated iron used, the porous walls and the roof allow dust and rain water to penetrate the houses, and as a result, people suffer from continuous colds.

Five people were interviewed.

(d) Eikenhof - /

(d) Eikenhof - 5 People.

This is a large farm situated 13 km east of Lenasia. The farm is divided into plots belonging to different farmers. On the plot we visited there were ten families.

We interviewed five people.

III. (b) COMMONLY EXPRESSED PROBLEMS.

(1) Poverty.

This features prominently as a problem in all four areas.

At Zuurbekom the people said the farmer paid them between R7-R40 per month, and gave them a 2.5 kg ration of mealie meal once a month. At Eikenhof, wages range from R60-R100 per month. At Lawley, no one is employed on the farm. People have no land for agricultural purposes, and pay between R30-R35 per month rent. At Groot Marico farm workers earned between R16-R20 per month, and feel that this is too little.

(2) Lack of educational facilities.

This was a major problem for all four areas.

At Zuurbekom there is no scope for education. The children of those parents who can afford it, travel to schools in Soweto by train. At Lawley, the people said that there is one bad school which is quite a distance from where the people reside.

At Eikenhof, too, the available school is far from the plots. The children have to wake up early in order to foot it to school. Some farms at Groot Marico have no schools, and some children on other farms do not attend school because their parents have no money for fees.

(3) Health care services.

In all cases, these are distant and difficult for people to attend. People at Zuurbekom walk 5 km to Lenasia for their medical services and are sometimes refused treatment because the health facilities there are "Indian". At Lawley, people said that health facilities

are too far /

are too far away and too expensive - they prefer to spend the money on food. The farm workers in Groot Marico complain that they are dependent on the district surgeon, and that he won't touch them - just gives them medication or refers them to a clinic in Zeerust. In Eikenhof, the only health service is a voluntary clinic run by Wits Black Students Organisation on Sundays.

(4) Lack of transport.

In each area people complained of a lack of public transport and the expense of paying for taxis. This is particularly a problem where there is an emergency.

Related were complaints about the distance from the postal service and particularly the lack of a telephone at Eikenhof. Sometimes people die and the police only arrive two days later because it is difficult to get hold of them.

The people at Eikenhof and Zuurbekom also complained about the distance to the nearest shops. At Eikenhof people sometimes starve because of transport problems.

(5) Lack of fuel.

In three of the four places people complained that they could not get coal, either through lack of access or because of the cost. In one case, people steal from the farmer but are afraid of being caught.

(6) Lack of sanitation and clean water.

At Lawley and Groot Marico people complained that their water source was polluted - in Groot Marico by the cattle, and in Lawley because the reservoir is unprotected. The people suspect that this has caused three cases of cholera. The landlord has refused them permission to cover the water.

At Lawley /

At Lawley there are no toilets. At Eikenhof there is one toilet for all the people on the one farm and at Zuurbekom there are two pit latrines, one for one family and one for all the rest. Because of its poor sanitary condition, more people prefer to help themselves in the bush. At Eikenhof people mentioned that rats are a serious problem. They go to the extent of opening cooking pots to get their share of the food.

III. (c) SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.

(1) Fear of eviction.

People in Lawley live in fear. Although they pay rent, they live in the area illegally. "G-G" comes in and threatens to demolish the houses. Houses have been demolished in the past and people had no place to sleep. They reconstructed their corrugated iron houses and continued living in fear.

At Zuurbekom the women who are not employed, are often threatened with eviction. Frequently people are invaded by the police who harass and accuse them of staying illegally on the farm.

(2) Crime and alcoholism.

Only at Lawley did people complain specifically of crime. People are afraid to move around the farm, especially during weekends, because there have been incidents in which people were killed.

Alcoholism at Zuurbekom is the only available form of relaxation. Children who do not go to school also find pleasure in alcohol, and so there is no age limit to the problem.

(3) Specific diseases.

On the farms at Groot Marico, several illnesses were mentioned as major problems. Gastroenteritis is the main cause of death amongst children, who are also subject to scabies and malnutrition. People associate malnutrition with poverty, and say that their children

live almost exclusively on the mealie meal they receive from the farmers as rations. TB was listed as a major health problem, for which people did not receive treatment. Some of the people interviewed were able to give an accurate description of TB symptoms.

IV. (a) RESETTLEMENT AREAS.

We visited two resettlement areas.

Pienaar is a Trust Land in the Ntsikazi area of Kangwane.

Winterveldt lies west of Mabopane, a Black township 30 km from Pretoria.

Plot owners own land of 5 and 10 morgen and allow people to build shacks on their plots. It is said that some plot owners allow up to one hundred families on their plots.

We interviewed 10 people at Pienaar and 11 at Winterveldt. There was a substantial similarity in the problems experienced in the two areas.

Common Problems.

(1) Water.

At Pienaar piped water has been laid on, on one side of the village, after the cholera outbreak. People queue for almost three hours to get water, and some, because of the distance, use contaminated river water. Diseases such as cholera, typhoid and bilharzia are rife. At Winterveldt, plot owners erect water pumps and sell water to tenants at 5 cents a bucket. Otherwise people draw water from unprotected pits which are receptacles for dirty water when it rains.

At one school in the area it is said that the school spends R1 000 a year on water.

(2) Unemployment.

The relatively small industrial area at Nelspruit cannot provide jobs for the massive population in Pienaar. Some people become farm workers, some migrate. Those who cannot find jobs turn to crime or alcohol.

At Winterveldt many people have no jobs. The area is part of Bophuthatswana, but many tenants are not citizens of the "homeland". They struggle to get permits which would enable them to work in town.

(3) No access to land.

In both places people are allocated very small plots.

In Pienaar only the Chief has land to farm. Plot allocation is biased.

If one is not Swazi an application for a plot is put aside until all Swazis are covered. In Winterveldt, only citizens of Bophuthatswana have a right to own land.

(4) Poverty and the cost of living.

In Pienaar people express a great deal of poverty. They lack food, clothes and money and have no health care. Most people live in fragile houses which are just waiting for a stormy day to fall apart. Food costs in the local shops tend to be very expensive compared to town prices.

In Winterveldt people live in one or two-roomed houses, often 10 people to a house. People cannot afford to build bigger or better quality houses. They have to pay rental of between R8-R12 per room each month.

(5) Lack of schooling.

In Winterveldt, people who are not Bophuthatswana citizens are not allowed into the schools. The people have sometimes built a few private schools but they are sometimes harassed by the police. The parents cannot afford to pay for furniture, or to pay the teachers properly.

In Pienaar many schools are overcrowded and a considerable number of children are turned away each year. People see this as the root of teenage delinquency.

(6) Crime.

In both areas housebreaking and robbery are very common. People keep their doors locked all the time. In Winterveldt, people complained that the police give no protection, and are only seen when they come to harass people for illegal residence and private schools. Alcoholism is a common problem in both areas.

IV. (b) INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS.

(1) Transport.

In Pienaar people complained of a gross shortage of transport. People have to wake up very early in the morning to be first in the queue. This problem is made worse by the roads which are dusty and full of dongas. This means that the buses cannot pass the dongas and people have to walk long distances to catch them.

(2) Sanitation.

At Winterveldt some plots are so overcrowded that people have no space to make toilets. Some manage to dig pit latrines very close to their houses, resulting in a constant foul odour.

(3) Rats.

The people at Pienaar said that big, vicious rats were a serious problem in the area.

V. (a) VISITS TO RURAL VILLAGES.

We visited three rural villages: Tlokweg in Bophuthatswana, Kabokweni in Kangwane and Nkomeni Trust Land in the Ntsikazi area due to become part of Kangwane. At Nkomeni we were refused permission to interview people, so that is not included in our report.

(a) Kabokweni - 11 Individuals.

Ngodini, officially known as Kabokweni, is situated 30 km north-east of Nelspruit. This settlement is said to be 14 years old and the residents were formerly staying in White River which was then proclaimed a "White" area.

The residents, who are mainly Swazis, are under the administration of a local authority.

Kabokweni does not look different from other Black townships in as far as the standard four-roomed houses are concerned.

We made contacts through which we gained access to the residents. After an introduction of ourselves and the mission of our visit an atmosphere of trust was established. Because the interviews were basically through contacts we did not meet any pressure which could have forced us to obtain an official permission.

We interviewed 6 professionals and 5 lay people.

(b) Tlokweg.

This village which lies about 35 km from Zwarttruggens, is under the authority of the Chief.

Although most of the decisions and planning concerning the village is done at headquarters level in Mmabatho, the Chief still has authority over his people. The Chief heading this village, like most of the Chiefs in Bophuthatswana, is part of the Bophuthatswana government.

Most of the villagers /

Most of the villagers have been long in this village and a very small percentage come from the farms and other areas.

Although most of the people come from a low socio-economic group they built good standard houses.

V. (b) COMMON PROBLEMS.

(1) Water.

This was cited as a major problem in both areas.

In Kabokweni people say they cannot grow vegetables because of water restrictions. Sometimes the water supply is cut without notification - sometimes for three days. This forces people to draw water from the exposed dam. This results in occasional occurrences of typhoid and cholera.

In Tlokweg people struggle for water. Government installed pumps often draw no water or are out of order. Some people buy water from those with boreholes at R1.20 a drum. Some buy from a farmer at 2 cents a bucket. Others use stagnant water from the village. The water problems lead to a lack of hygiene, which causes illness such as scabies, eye diseases, etc.

(2) Unemployment, low wages, poor working conditions.

Unemployment is very high. For people from Tlokweg it means that they accept jobs as migrant workers, leaving their families behind. This contributes to many social problems. Others travel daily to work in towns long distances away. They wake up very early and get home late, tired and not in a position to talk to their families, while farmers in the area also exploit child labour for seasonal wo

Unemployment in Kabokweni is also high and the township is used as a labour reservoir for both migratory labour and farm labour. Many are poorly paid, unskilled workers earning as little as R45-R100 per month.

(3) Bad roads /

(3) Bad roads and poor transport.

In both areas this was listed as a problem. In Kabokweni people complained that the roads were dusty and full of dongas, with unguarded drains that are dangerous at night. Homes and washing are difficult to keep clean with all the dust. Public transport is irregular, and this affects non-workers and school children

At Tlokweg the gravel roads have been eroded by buses and by rain. The buses are full and dusty, which makes travelling difficult.

(4) Poor education facilities.

In both areas people complained of overcrowded schools with poor facilities. In Tlokweg the schools are also far from one side of the village. In Kabokweni, despite using the platoon system, the schools cater for less than half of the children. Others travel about 30 km to neighbouring townships for their schooling.

(5) Poor health care facilities.

In Kabokweni there is a gross shortage of health care facilities. Themba Hospital caters for all the people from the Nsikazi area. The area has 12 clinics which refer cases to this hospital. There are no general practitioners in the whole Nsikazi area. Most of the medical services in this hospital are provided by army doctors. The lay people view these people as learners who use them as guinea pigs.

Tlokweg is served by a small satellite clinic which refers to the Modimong hospital about 50 km away. The clinic is very small for the size of the population served. There are only 2 registered nurses serving this population. The doctor comes only twice a week to attend to the referrals. There is no available transport in the clinic. In cases of emergency transport is ordered from Modimong Hospital which usually takes a very long time to arrive. Although the health service is small for the size of the population, the nurses expressed that utilization of the health service especially ante-natal service was very poor.

V. (c) SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.

(a) Kabokweni.

People complain that the township is overcrowded, with the people living in small township houses. They also say there are no recreational facilities and that this is one of the reasons why people indulge in alcohol.

(b) Tlokweg.

- People in Tlokweg had a number of complaints related to the political situation and independence. They said that there was little if any communication between themselves and the Government, and that they are not consulted. They said that independence has made the rich richer and the poor poorer, and that all the good jobs were occupied by relatives of those in power. They gave, as examples, the fact that roads were only fixed in the area of those at the top of the hierarchy and that the area is being given electricity, which only a few can afford, while most people suffer from a shortage of water.

People in Tlokweg say that they used to subsist off agriculture but can no longer do so. Recently settled people get no land but for others the drought and a shortage of cattle and the cost of tractors means that they cannot plough.

V. (d) PROBLEMS OF ACCESS.

One of the most interesting aspects of putting together these interviews was how careful we had to be with various kinds of authorities.

At Nkomeni in Kangwane the Chief refused us permission to carry out interviews because we did not have official permission from the State.

He scrutinised our reference books, drivers licences and letter of introduction from the University. These were also photocopied. We were told that there were good facilities for the people and that there were no problems in the area. If there were any problems, they had the means to solve the problems themselves.

At Pienaar the Induna to whom we first spoke expressed fears that we were bringing in "Communism" and was reluctant to let us into the village. The Chief in the area, although concerned that we did not have permission from the Commissioner, was more amenable and persuaded the Induna to allow us to carry out our interviews.

At Eikenhof we were welcomed by the people living on the farm, and told there would be no problem because the farmer was not on the farm at the time.

At Zuurbekom we were advised to hide our car so as not to attract the attention of the farmer.

On one farm in Groot Marico, we were on our way to ask for permission from the farmer to interview his workers when he stopped us. He had us guarded by his father while he went to call the police. We were taken to the Police Station and kept there for seven hours, after which we were interrogated by the Security Police who then let us go.

Such widespread resistance to having questions asked is a clear indication that the authorities know that people live with many difficulties. They are afraid of these difficulties receiving publicity, and are also scared of "agitators".

There is another side to this as well. We found that the people we were interviewing were suspicious of us and often afraid to speak openly. This obviously indicates a fear of "spies" and of reprisals, and a refusal to trust outsiders.

One consequence of this is that it is only in Soweto and Tlokwenj that people related their problems openly to political considerations. A conclusion to draw is not that people view their problems a-politically but rather that they are scared to make public any political feelings that they have.

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