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CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

A Special Report by Martin Spring, Editor of the South African Newsletter

ALTHOUGH much of the legal structure of the system of separate development remains intact, there have been major changes in conditions affecting Blacks and Browns in South Africa in recent years. We think it would be useful briefly to summarize those changes, as the very real (and in some respects, astonishing) progress that has been made tends to get drowned in the tidal wave of negative propaganda.

Changes have been of four kinds:

- Abolition or softening of traditional colour-bar practices that have never been enforced by law, but by custom.
- Laws have started to be ignored, usually with the connivance of the Government, which has chosen to look the other way; or their application has been humanized.
- Some laws (such as those discriminating against Black trade unions, and that allowing enforcement of job reservation) have been scrapped.
- Greatly increased efforts to improve the circumstances of Blacks and Browns through channelling more resources into meeting their needs.

That changes are real and far-reaching, and not merely cosmetic in nature, can be seen from the following comments.

The Star, South Africa's largest-selling (and strongly anti-Government) daily newspaper, reported on July

29, 1983: 'Petty apartheid is ailing and getting sicker. Blacks, Indians and Coloured people are getting jobs, forming trade unions and eating, sleeping, studying and playing in places where this would have been inconceivable five or six years ago.

'As the social and economic needs of the nation assert themselves, South Africans are finding desegregation easier than they had been conditioned to believe.

'While the major pillars of apartheid remain intact, significant changes at lower levels are occurring steadily. Perhaps the most important development has been in the minds of people, where a revolution of sorts has taken place.

'Office cafeterias and toilet areas throughout Johannesburg are largely integrated. Job reservation is virtually history, with all races serving behind cash desks, wrapping food, dealing with clients in banks, and being employed as personal assistants and secretaries to managing directors.

APARTHEID TAKES A TUMBLE

'A short while ago the idea of anyone but a White being employed in these capacities, or using a 'White' toilet or cafeteria, would have produced instant protests. Today few seem even to notice.

'In the Johannesburg region libraries, parks, public toilets — in increasing numbers — and lifts, are fast seeing the end to the colour barrier.

'Many buses catering for Whites have drivers of other races and frequently they transport people of other races.

'Throughout South Africa, petty apartheid has been taking a tumble.'

GREATER MEASURE OF GOODWILL

Peter Tonge, who grew up in South Africa, returned for a visit recently and later reported in the *Christian Science Monitor* that although changes had been labelled as 'window dressing' by some critics, 'they seem more than that to me.

'The annual Christmas rendering of the Messiah by the Pietermaritzburg Philharmonic Society now sees Black faces turning up on the stage. In my days in the chorus, there wasn't a Black face in sight and it never occurred to us that there ever would be.

'Appeals for a greater measure of goodwill among the differing racial groups in South Africa are heard more frequently now. Without goodwill, "we will never solve

our problems", is a common consensus. And it does seem to me on this visit that interchanges between the races are more polite and natural than they used to be.'

In February 1983 the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Dr Chester Crocker, commented publicly: 'Anyone who would say there is no positive change going on in South Africa has utterly missed the boat.'

The dismantling of the official structure of racial separation began in 1973 with a Government order that all lifts in public buildings were to be desegregated. This was followed by desegregation of Post Office, railways and airline facilities (all of which fall under the control of State enterprises).

In the same year Pietermaritzburg City Council opened its parks, children's playgrounds and bus shelters to all races. The next year the municipalities of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban followed this lead by desegregating their parks, libraries, museums, art galleries, and rates and licensing halls.

The Masters & Servants Act, which made any contract labourer who failed to fulfil the terms of his contract, guilty of a criminal offence, was scrapped.

In 1975 the Government introduced a procedure for permitting hotels to go multiracial. Since then a large number, including all major hotels, have been classified as such.

In 1978 the word 'Bantu', regarded by many as offensive, was replaced by 'Black' in laws and other official usages. Hospitals were given permission to treat patients irrespective of race, in emergencies. The Cape Provincial Council announced that in future all spending on beach facilities would be confined to those open to all races.

Since 1978 permission has been granted widely, and on a permanent basis, for restaurants, theatres, hotels, private hospitals and so on, to go multiracial if they wish. Many private clubs, including some of the most famous in the country, have been given permission to open their membership to Blacks.

In 1982 racial discrimination was removed from the gun ownership laws, while Coloured and Indian stewardesses began working on South African Airways' domestic flights.

In the same year an expert committee of the powerful and secret Broederbond organization issued a report calling for the abolition of nine major apartheid laws, including the Group Areas Act, the Separate Amenities Act, the Electoral Act, the Mixed Marriages Act and the Population Registration Act.

Earlier this year, the Natal Provincial Administration was promised Government funds to provide multiracial facilities on the province's beaches. Within a matter of weeks, Durban City Council voted to open beach-front

facilities to all races.

Nearly all libraries and reading rooms throughout the country have opened their doors to all races, and in many cities bus and ambulance services have been integrated.

TEAMS CHOSEN STRICTLY ON MERIT

Sport has been desegregated to the extent that mixed teams compete down to club level in most sports. All representative teams are chosen strictly on merit, regardless of race. The Government has scrapped racial divisions in the administration of sport, forming a single Department to serve all races.

David Miller of *The Times* of London reported recently: 'Something unique happened the other day which the United Nations would never believe unless they saw it with their own eyes. I had to rub my own.

'It was a rewarding experience to be at Stellenbosch among a crowd of 10 000 as they repeatedly rose to applaud the winners in the Nedbank-sponsored Prestige athletics meeting; winners who were mobbed by diminutive autograph hunters and embraced by the vanquished.

'Nothing remarkable in all that, you may say, until you know that two of the winners, Freddie Williams in the

800 m and Matthew Temane in the 5 000 m, are, in the terminology of this allegedly most racist nation on earth, respectively Coloured and Black. Indeed, the first four home in the 5 000 m were Black.

‘The autograph hunters, most of them under 12, demonstrating with the natural spontaneity of children’s admiration for any athlete who runs faster than his rivals, were predominantly White. They have given me what cannot fail to be my most enduring 1983 sporting memory. In this beautiful, hated country there is hope yet.

‘Williams, succeeding the brilliant Sydney Maree as Black national hero, is the first Coloured man in athletics to be awarded Springbok colours, the revered green blazer which must compensate for international isolation. After he had beaten Colin Lambert, the White man congratulated him with a warmth as genuine as the excitement in the children’s eyes — no hollow tokenism . . .

‘Temporarily sick from his second big race in three days, Williams went to the first-aid room where he was caringly tended by White medics. When a superb evening . . . came to a close and the crowd had dispersed, Williams and Temane ran a lap of honour with their White Springbok colleagues. A tribune bristling with Cabinet ministers applauded and a White woman of 20 or so waited patiently for a Coloured man to pack his

kitbag so that she might get her programme signed.

‘South Africa is not changing: it HAS changed.’

In the field of education, although a wide gap remains between White and Black in terms of quality, teacher qualifications and expenditure, the Government is committed to the principle of full equality and is moving as rapidly towards implementing this as funds allow. (Incidentally, there are no legal barriers to community involvement in improving schools through voluntary activities and fund-raising.)

Between the 1973/4 and 1982/3 fiscal years, the Government’s current expenditure on Black education — excluding Black universities, capital spending, and all expenditure by the national states — increased at an average annual rate of 25 per cent. The year-to-year statistics are as follows:

MASSIVE SPENDING ON EDUCATION

Fiscal year	Amount	Incr.	Fiscal year	Amount	Incr.
1973/74	R36 mn	30%	1978/79	R100 mn	25%
1974/75	R51 mn	42%	1979/80	R117 mn	17%
1975/76	R58 mn	14%	1980/81	R144 mn	23%
1976/77	R66 mn	14%	1981/82	R206 mn	43%
1977/78	R80 mn	21%	1982/83	R254 mn	23%

Over the same period current expenditure by the

governments of the national states (independent homelands) increased at an average annual rate of 16 per cent, to reach R179 mn in the 1982/83 fiscal year.

Current and capital expenditure on Black universities reached R115 mn in the 1982/83 fiscal year.

About a quarter of this was for Medunsa, easily the most advanced medical university in Africa, which graduated its first Black doctors in November 1982. The Government is investing more than R100 mn in the complex, which is intended to produce 250 new Black doctors, dentists and veterinarians every year.

PROGRESS IS SPEEDING UP

Capital expenditure by the Government on Black education — outside the national states, and excluding universities — reached R108 mn in the 1982/83 fiscal year.

Every school day, more than 11 additional classrooms are completed. Despite one of the world's highest birth rates (generating an expanding flow of primary school pupils), more than 17 per cent of Black pupils now at school in the RSA and national states are receiving secondary education. 22 per cent of the Black population is receiving full-time education (one of the highest figures in the world).

Over the past ten years the pupil/teacher ratio has improved significantly from 58:1 to 44:1. Special efforts have been made to raise the qualifications of Black teachers, and to introduce Black pupils to technological education.

Education is now free (on the same basis as for Whites), and compulsory attendance is being phased in where Black parents themselves approve this step.

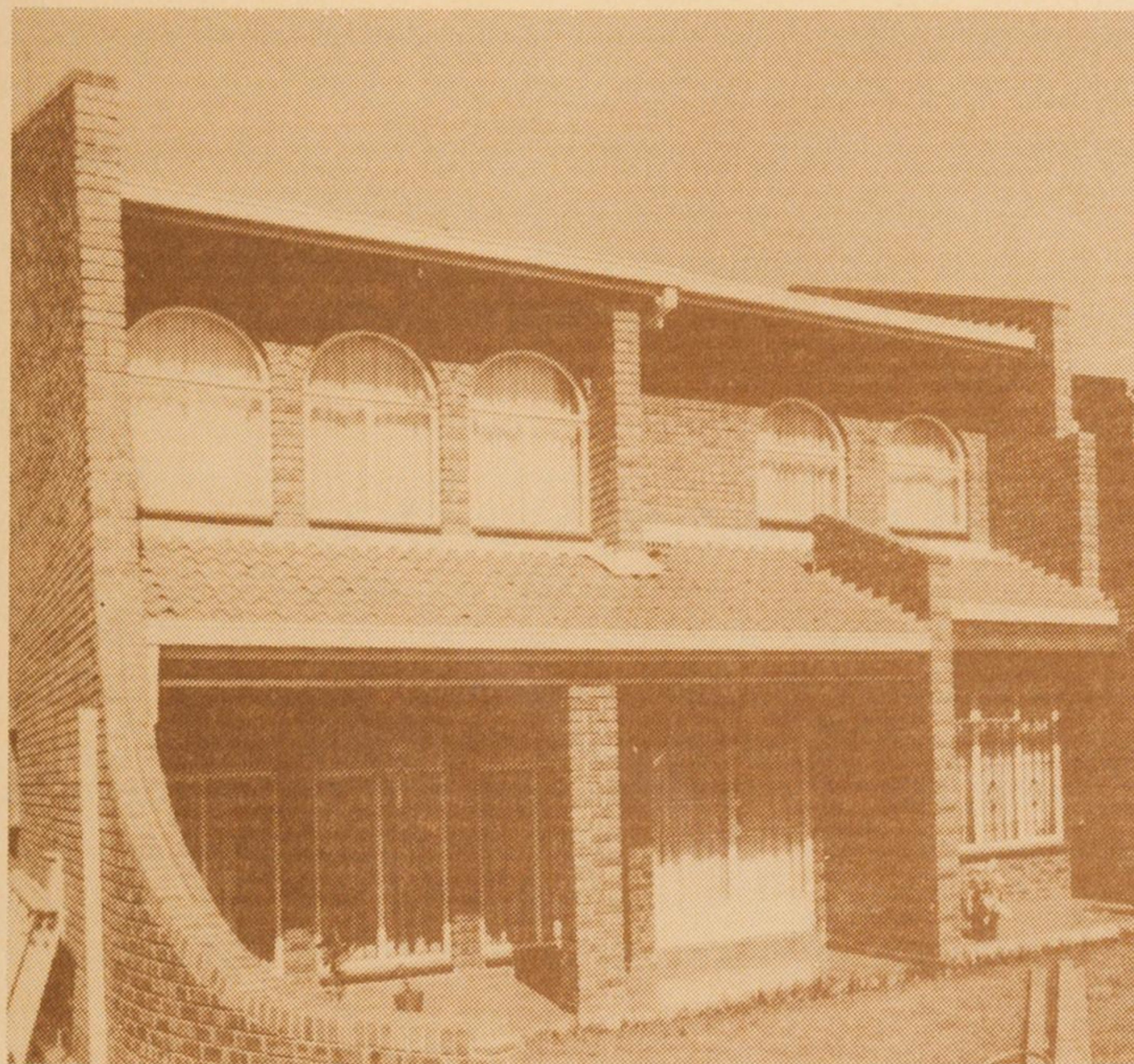
In the field of Black housing, progress is speeding up.

Until recently most Blacks lived in the White/Brown primacy area (that is, outside the independent and autonomous homelands) in State-owned houses at subsidized rentals.

In 1979 the Government scrapped its policy of opposing home ownership by Blacks in this area. It then became possible for Blacks to buy their rented houses from the State, or to build new ones.

This new policy of promoting home ownership was not very successful for several reasons, the most important being that tenants were unwilling to pay fair market prices for property, as servicing the loans required to meet those prices would be much more expensive than continuing to pay heavily-subsidized rents.

In July this year the Government implemented a new deal in terms of which for a limited period tenants of half-a-million State-owned houses can buy the proper-



Housing in some areas of Soweto is 'almost luxurious', says American expert.

ties for about half their market value. This massive privatization of State-owned property involves about one quarter of all homes in South Africa outside the tribal areas.

This does not mean, however, that the State will stop providing housing for Blacks on a rental basis. And in

this connection the view of an outside expert on the quality of accommodation provided is of interest.

Professor Floyd Slate, professor of engineering at Cornell University in the US and an internationally-known expert on low-cost housing, said at the end of a visit to South Africa in March this year that he was very im-

pressed with the way the housing crisis was being tackled in the RSA. 'South Africa is not only paying lip service to the problem (as most countries are) — but it is doing a great deal.'

He said that he was surprised by the affluence of Soweto and the almost luxurious housing in some areas. He also visited squatter areas. They were bad — but not nearly as bad as some he had seen elsewhere in the world.

The Times of London reported recently that, because of rule of law and an independent judiciary, in South Africa Blacks enjoy civil rights transcending those actually available to Blacks in neighbouring states such as Mozambique.

'By the same token, South Africa has been able to maintain levels of Press freedom which are foreign to its neighbours. Embarrassing characters like Bishop Desmond Tutu are able to speak, to publish and to broadcast their views. Ask yourself what has happened to the opposition voice in Angola or Mozambique . . .'

The *Daily Telegraph* of London also commented recently that the administration of justice in South Africa is 'usually surprisingly evenhanded'.

It reported that although the conditions under which prisoners such as Nelson Mandela were held were hardly idyllic, such prisoners were 'comparatively well fed, read uncensored newspapers and lived in

reasonably spacious cells'. For most of a day they have 'access to a library and an exercise yard'.

In 1982 there were several cases in which the KwaZulu (Black) authority sought court rulings to block transfer of territory to Swaziland. It was successful in its applications, and the Government cancelled the planned handover.

COURTS UPHOLD BLACK RIGHTS

In 1983 a Black contract worker, Mehlolo Rikhoto, took the Government to court over his right to continue living in a 'White' urban area and to bring his family to live with him. He won his case, and the Government announced that it would abide by the decision and not seek to overturn it by changing the law. This was an epochal case affecting the lives of many thousands of Blacks.

Although there are still bannings and detentions without trial, these should be seen in perspective. There are now only 11 people subject to banning orders, and the number of people in detention is rarely more than 100.

Between January 1 and November 18, 1982, for example, 310 were detained. Of those, 114 were released after they made statements; 71 were called as State witnesses (their detention was to protect them

against intimidation); 67 were charged with offences; and only one died.

These numbers (and even the availability of statistics) should be compared with the situations in many other African, as well as Asian and Communist, countries.

Having looked at positive change in Black society — the crumbling of colour bars, the revolution in education, the massive promotion of home ownership, we now consider positive change in the workplace and how it has affected the living standards and working conditions of Blacks and Browns.

Peter Tonge, who grew up in South Africa, reported recently in the *Christian Science Monitor* after a return visit to the country that although changes had been labelled as 'window dressing' by some critics, 'they seem more than that to me'. And in the context of material advancement, he had this to say:

PLEASURE OF HOME OWNERSHIP

'Changes in labour laws, allowing Blacks into unions, are substantive, not cosmetic. So is the right of Africans to own their own homes in Soweto — something the architects of apartheid never envisioned.

'While the majority of residents still cannot afford to buy their own homes, rising wages are slowly bringing the

pleasure of ownership within their grasp. You can tell owner-occupied housing at a glance. They have been "prettied up" by owners effecting improvements they would never undertake on a rental unit.

'A cousin of mine, who managed a branch office of a major insurance company until his retirement a year ago, says that two of the top salesmen on his staff, earning R35 000 to R40 000, were Black Africans.

'The stepped-up appearance of Black faces on advertising billboards stems from the new affluence among urban Blacks. While the disparity between White and Black salaries still is wide, Black incomes have risen at a much faster (300 per cent) rate in recent years, far outstripping inflation.'

The Rev. Leon Sullivan, the Black American church leader and father of the Sullivan Code of employment practices followed by most US-controlled companies in South Africa, said in November 1982 that conditions have changed in South Africa.

There were many more opportunities for Blacks than five years before. Education had improved, millions of Blacks were receiving high pay, Black trade unions had been founded, working conditions had improved, and thousands of Black people were being trained for technical work. Job reservation had, except on the mines, virtually disappeared. Black entrepreneurs were playing an increasing role.

It is in the field of labour training and industrial relations that the most dramatic changes have occurred in recent years.

Desegregation in the workplace got under way informally in the early Seventies, but gathered pace towards the end of that decade when it received official approval. More important, however, were the substantial efforts made to raise the earning capacity and job status of Black workers.

In 1975 the Government began establishing centres 'to enrich the technical background' of Black schoolchildren. By 1982, 16 such centres were in operation, with another 26 planned for the next five years.

Also in the mid-Seventies the Government built a chain of eight in-service training centres to upgrade the skills of Black workers, and major tax concessions were introduced to encourage training of Blacks.

JOB RESERVATION SCRAPPED

In 1977, 5 000 Black and Brown workers underwent training at public and private in-service centres, while 75 000 received on-the-job training qualifying for tax rebates. By 1981, the figures reached 91 000 for workers who attended courses at centres, and 226 000 for those who received on-the-job training.

The first sign of official approval of workplace desegregation came in 1977, with the scrapping of job reservation in 20 of the 25 categories covered by the relevant Act. But in 1979 the full scale of the abandonment of apartheid became apparent, with the reports of the Wiehahn and Riekert commissions.

The Wiehahn Commission recommended removal of racial discrimination from all industrial legislation, including abolition of job reservation, extension of full trade union rights to Blacks, opening to Blacks of apprenticeships in skilled crafts, and desegregation of all facilities (such as toilets and cafeterias) in factories, shops and offices.

The Riekert Commission recommended removal of the restriction on employment of Blacks in positions of authority over Whites in the White/Brown primacy area, removal of restrictions on Black businessmen in the same area, and application of the Labour Bureau system to all races on a non-discriminatory basis.

Implementation of these reforms began immediately, and some of the most important have been completed.

Most industrial legislation has already been amended to remove racial discrimination. The last remaining job reservation was scrapped in mid-1983. The first Black apprentices (82) were indentured in 1980; in 1981 the number increased to 495.

Segregation of workplace facilities has become the ex-

ception rather than the rule. By the early Eighties, a survey showed that 22 per cent of major companies were already employing Blacks and Browns in positions of authority over Whites.

FULL TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Black businessmen operating in the White/Brown primacy area used to be subject to extensive restrictions affecting matters such as size of their premises, types of business carried on, and the structure of shareholdings. Most such restrictions have been scrapped.

Regarding trade unions, Harry Oppenheimer (South Africa's richest businessman and a major opponent of apartheid for many years), described the changes that have taken place in the following terms in a speech on March 30, 1983, to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations:

'In 1979 full trade union rights were extended to Black workers on the same basis as to Whites. The Blacks are now free to organize themselves in recognized Black unions, or at their choice to join with workers of other races in the organization of racially mixed unions — something which had previously been an anathema in terms of Government policy.

'So far rather less than 10 per cent of the Black labour force has been unionized, but the movement is growing

rapidly and has already proved its effectiveness. In industry, if not in politics, there is now a real sense of power sharing, and indeed the industrial experience may have important lessons to teach in a wider sphere.'

In his Chicago speech, Oppenheimer gave the following figures to illustrate the degree of change already achieved in raising Black and Brown living standards:

'In 1970, and indeed as far back as 1924 when these statistics first became available, the White population's share of total personal income amounted to about 75 per cent of the whole, with only about 25 per cent going to the Blacks (with whom I am now including the "Coloureds" and Indians).

'By 1980, as a result of the economic upsurge associated with the rising price of gold, the Blacks' share had increased to 40 per cent, with a decline to 60 per cent in Whites' share.

'This is a quite remarkable redistribution within the comparatively short period of ten years, and there is no doubt that the process is continuing.

'Even more striking has been the effect of this change on the consumer market.

'From 1960 to 1970, increases in Black expenditure accounted for 26 per cent of the annual increase in the consumer goods market. Between 1970 and 1973, this rose to 35 per cent; and between 1973 and 1975, to 41 per cent; while it is estimated that over the five

years from 1975 to 1980, it rose to 48 per cent; and is probably now running in excess of 50 per cent.

'I should add that over the 20 years from 1960 to 1980 the proportion of Whites to Blacks in the population remained virtually unchanged at just short of 20 per cent.

'Such vast changes in income distribution and in shares of the consumer market, accompanied as they have been by an accelerating influx of Blacks from the tribal areas into the towns, means that a great structural change is taking place in the economy, and that whether our Government likes it or not, there has been a great increase in Black bargaining power, of which we are only now beginning to see the effects.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR BLACKS

'What has happened makes absolute nonsense of the arguments of those who maintain that our economic growth is based on the exploitation of the Blacks and bolsters the policy of apartheid.'

Between 1970 and 1981 the average pay of White workers in real terms (that is, after allowing for inflation) increased at an average annual rate of less than 1 per cent; of Coloured workers, at 2 per cent; of Indian workers, at 3¹/₂ per cent; and of Black workers, at 5¹/₂

per cent. In all cases, the figures exclude agricultural workers.

State-controlled enterprises have taken the lead in opening up job opportunities for Blacks and Browns. Leading private sector spokesmen have praised SA Transport Services and the Post Office for 'some of the best job restructuring in the country'. The Post Office launched its biggest-ever recruiting campaign for Black and Brown school-leavers to train as telecommunications technicians. SA Airways announced that it was seeking Blacks and Browns to train as pilots.

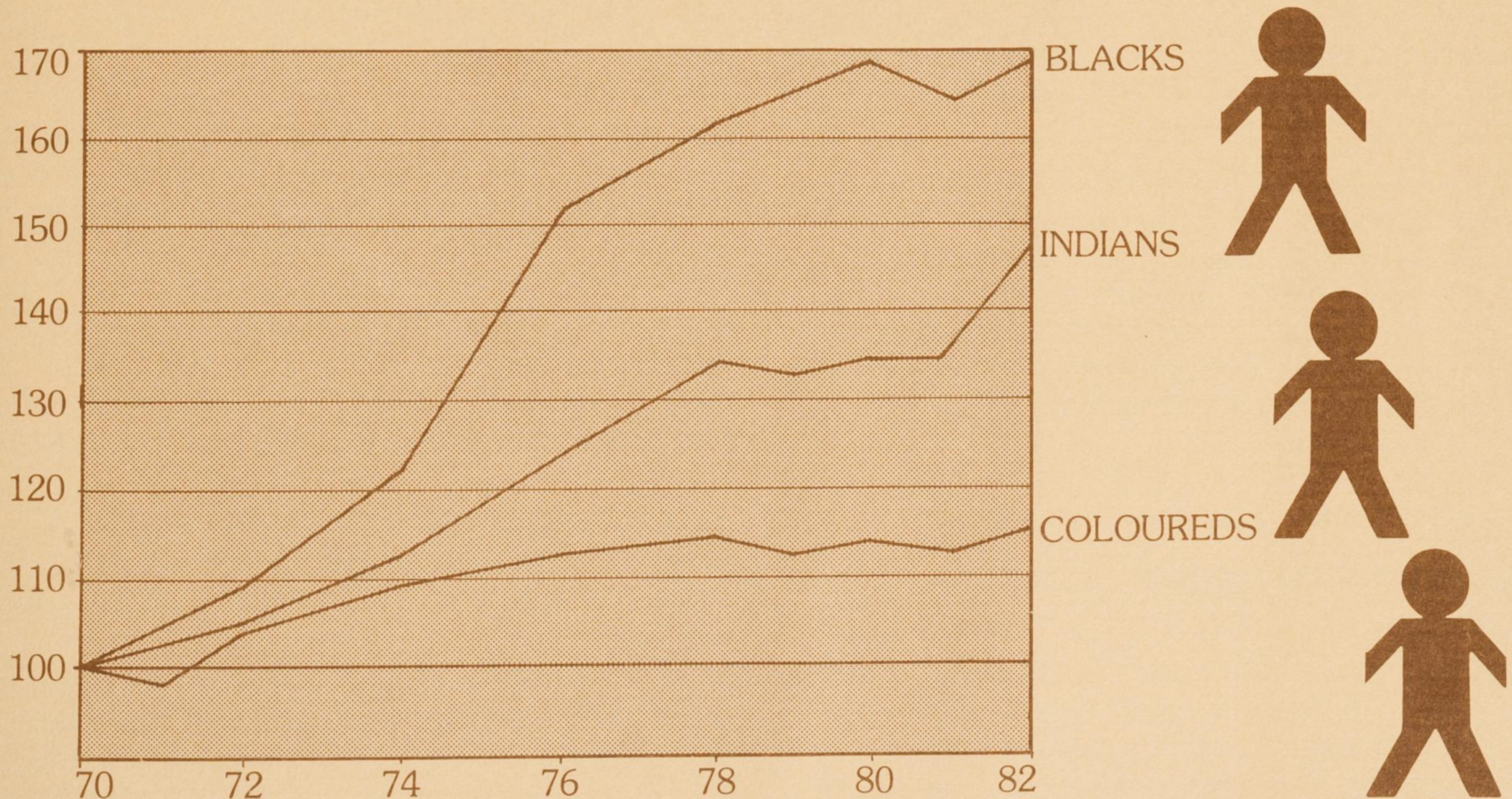
Although Black pay rose most dramatically in mining, due to the special factor of huge gold profits (average monthly pay rose 1 078 per cent between 1970 and 1981), the second highest rate of growth was in public administration (up 499 per cent over the same period), followed by the manufacturing sector (up 421 per cent).

There has also been strong official support for, and financing of, endeavours to promote small business. Although assistance is offered on a non-racial basis, it is concentrated on Black and Brown businessmen.

In its first two years of operation the Small Business Development Corporation granted loans to more than 400 independent businessmen, averaging almost R60 000 apiece. Another 270 received guarantees enabling them to raise bank loans.

CLOSING THE GAP

Increases in the real earnings of Blacks, Coloureds and Indians in relation to increases in the real earnings of Whites.



Massive efforts have also been made to stimulate economic development in those areas where the Black population is concentrated. For example, in the current fiscal year (ending March 1984), the Government will spend about R2 bn on development aid.

In relation to national resources, this is probably the biggest development programme in the world financed entirely out of domestic sources, and nearly all this expenditure is designed to promote the development of Black and Brown people.

In 1982 the Government scrapped its previous apartheidist approach to decentralization based on homelands and so-called 'border areas', replacing it with a scheme based on eight development regions determined on economic grounds and irrespective of political boundaries. Regional development authorities represent White, Black and Brown political authorities within each region.

INCENTIVES TO CREATE JOBS

Significantly larger incentives — such as a 40 to 80 per cent subsidy on loans, a wage subsidy per worker of R70 to R110 a month, training grants at 125 per cent of actual cost, 5 to 10 per cent price preferences on official tenders, and 40 to 60 per cent railage rebates — have

had dramatic effect.

For example, in the first 12 months the new scheme was in operation, the Decentralization Board approved 56 applications from foreign companies for concessions, involving investment of R144 million and expected creation of more than 14 000 jobs. The applications were from enterprises based in the US, Britain, West Germany, Israel, Australia, Taiwan, Philippines and Zimbabwe.

Last year the Government scrapped the Corporation for Economic Development, a body originally designed to undertake development of the homelands because private-sector White capital was excluded for ideological reasons.

Part of its functions has been taken over by the new Development Bank of Southern Africa, modelled on the World Bank, and drawing its membership from South Africa and the four independent Black homeland republics.

Because of its specialized nature and its backing, the Bank is expected to double the flow of development capital to Black areas of the region over the next five years.

Finally, the following figures based on sample analysis of the 1980 census, show how many Black and Brown people in South Africa have already advanced into the higher levels of society thanks to rapidly-improving education, erosion of the colour bar, and

scrapping of apartheid laws:	
Chemists	360
Physicists	240
Architects and town planners	140
Civil engineers	38
Electrical and electronics engineers	220
Mechanical engineers	320
Chemical engineers	140
Metallurgists	120
Mining engineers	280
Land surveyors	820
Pilots, navigators and flight engineers	200
Ship deck officers and pilots	300
Biologists, botanists, etc	160
Bacteriologists and pathologists	300
Agronomists and horticulturalists	400
Medical doctors	2 260
Dentists	240
Veterinarians	100
Pharmacists	460
Systems analysts and programmers	1 020
Accountants and auditors	1 760
Lawyers	560
Judges	80
Professors and lecturers	1 400
School principals, inspectors, etc	4 360
Ministers of religion	8 160
Authors, journalists, etc	760
Commercial artists and designers	2 420

Legislative officials & government administrators	460
General managers	3 220
Production managers	1 280
Sales managers	760
Transport managers	800
Credit managers	3 240
Executive officials	940
Bookkeepers	5 640
Credit controllers	1 560
Data processing machine operators	2 820
Postmasters	320
Wholesale and retail trade managers	6 120
Working proprietors in wholesale and retail trade	26 300
Technical salesmen and service advisors	1 160
Insurance and real estate salesmen	3 120
Managers in catering and accommodation	1 840
Working proprietors in catering and accommodation	4 280

Even though much remains to be done, the circumstances of Black and Brown in South Africa have improved considerably, and do compare favourably with those in other countries — especially those neighbours that are supposed to **be** models for South Africa to follow. □

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